

Unlock, for people with criminal records

England & Wales · Charity number 1079046

Details

Other names	UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LIMITED, UNLOCK THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS, Unlock - for people with criminal records
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	03791535
Registered	2000-01-21
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Unlock Maidstone Community Support Centre Marsham Street Maidstone ME14 1HH
Phone	01634 247350
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Website	www.unlock.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO ADVANCE EDUCATION AND PROMOTE THE REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE RECEIVED A CRIMINAL RECORD (INCLUDING THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED A LEGAL RESTRICTION ON THEIR LIBERTY AT ANY PENAL ESTABLISHMENT AS A PUNISHMENT IMPOSED BY A COURT OF LAW, RECEIVED A NON-CUSTODIAL SENTENCE, FINE OR ANY OTHER COURT OR OTHER RECORDED DISPOSAL, SUCH AS A POLICE CAUTION), IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY BY THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION, ADVICE, ADVOCACY AND TRAINING, AND THE UNDERTAKING OF RESEARCH AND POLICY WORK, WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS OF LIFE OF THE AFOREMENTIONED PERSONS.

Activities: Driven by the needs of people, Unlock works to help people overcome the long-term disadvantages caused by criminal records. We do this by providing information, advice, advocacy and other forms of support; undertaking research; as well as working with government, employers and others to achieve a fairer and more inclusive society.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£327,170	£434,606	-	-
2024-03-31	£416,849	£523,822	-	-
2023-03-31	£380,724	£414,120	-	-
2022-03-31	£390,967	£358,859	-	-
2021-03-31	£378,151	£308,906	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Anne Elizabeth Fox		2026-03-18
Carolyn Braby		2024-07-17
Fionnuala Agnes Ratcliffe		2024-10-16
Hamish Douglas MacLellan		2020-05-18
Harmohinder Kaur Sanghera		2024-10-16
Professor Belinda Carole Winder		2024-10-16
Richard John McStraw		2024-10-16
Steven John Lorber		2020-02-03
Tajah Kamali Stevens		2024-10-16
Thomas Richard Wheatley		2022-10-19
Trevor Leslie Dighton		2024-07-17

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England & Wales - Charity number 1079046

Accounts

Registered number: 03791535
Charity number: 1079046

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
formerly known as Unlock, National Association of Ex-Offenders
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Unaudited

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

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Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Reference and Administrative Details of the Charity, its Trustees and Advisers
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Trustees	Faye Goldman Trevor Dighton (appointed 17 July 2024) Carolyn Braby (appointed 17 July 2024) Thomas Wheatley Hamis MacLellan Steven Lorber Mandeep Mahil (resigned 16 October 2024) Leigh Hardy Mark Day (resigned 14 May 2024) Emma Wilson (resigned 17 June 2024) Tajah Stevens (appointed 16 October 2024) Peter Atherton (appointed 16 October 2024, resigned 24 September 2025) Belinda Winder (appointed 16 October 2024) Rich McStraw (appointed 16 October 2024) Harmohinder Sanghera (appointed 16 October 2024) Fionnuala Ratcliffe (appointed 16 October 2024)
Company registered number	03791535
Charity registered number	1079046
Registered office	Maidstone Community Support Centre 39-48 Marsham Street Maidstone Kent ME14 1HH
Accountants	Kreston Reeves LLP Chartered Accountants 37 St Margaret's Street Canterbury Kent CT1 2TU
Independent Examiner	Samantha Rouse FCCA DChA Kreston Reeves LLP 37 St Margarets Street Canterbury Kent CT1 2TU

Governance and management

Governing document

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

In July 2025, the Trustees approved a special resolution to adopt new Articles of Association and to change the charity's name from 'Unlock – National Association of Ex-offenders' to 'Unlock – for people with criminal records'. The change better reflects the people we support and our core mission. It acknowledges that a criminal record can affect anyone and reinforces our commitment to supporting all individuals with criminal records recognising that is not the only thing that defines them.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

During the year, a new Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer were appointed. Further Trustee vacancies arose as two Trustees completed their terms, and another stepped down after becoming chair of the Board of Trustees at a different charity. We are grateful to Emma Wilson, Mark Day and Mandy Mahil for their valuable contributions and commitment to Unlock.

In response to the vacancies, a targeted recruitment programme was launched. Its aims were to fill the immediate vacancies, strengthen succession planning and broaden the Board's experience, expertise and representation. This proactive approach was designed to support continuity and stability as more trustees will complete their terms within the next two years.

All new appointments, including the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer, followed an open recruitment process. The opportunities were advertised across relevant forums to attract a diverse and qualified pool of candidates. In total eight new Trustees were appointed during the year.

A second Vice-Chair, Peter Atherton, was elected to fill the vacancy created by Emma Wilson's departure.

Trustee induction and training

To ensure our new Trustees were well prepared for, and supported in, their roles we reviewed our trustee induction programme.

The updated programme included structured sessions with the senior leadership team and Chair. These sessions provided an overview of Unlock's work, strategic priorities, and operational approach. Opportunities to understand our risk management and charity governance processes were included and essential reading assigned. This included guidance from the Charity Commission and Companies House as well as key organisational documents.

Organisational structure

Unlock is a charitable company governed by a Board of Trustees with day-to-day operations delegated to the Chief Executive.

Risk management

The Trustee Board has carried out a review of the major risks facing the charity. A risk register is in place which prioritises these risks and identifies mitigating factors, controls and actions in relation to each. Trustees follow a comprehensive monitoring and review process to re-assess identified risks regularly, capture new risks that may arise and ensure that systems are in place to manage and mitigate these risks. The full risk register is reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis. During the year, the risk management process has also been reviewed and updated by the Trustees.

Governance

Trustees attend scheduled board meetings four times a year. In 2024-25 the Trustee attendance rate was 86%. One additional board meeting was held to discuss the annual plan and budget for 2024-25. Trustees are encouraged to attend training events and seminars to develop their roles and increase their contribution to the charity's governance. Trustees also undertake ad-hoc tasks as and when required and task-specific working groups are formed as needed and meet separately.

Unlock operates within an equal opportunities framework that is inclusive of people with criminal records and seeks to attract trustees with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. Fifty-six per cent of our Trustees and staff have a criminal record. A working group which involves staff and trustees oversees and drives forward Unlock's equity, equality, diversity and inclusion agenda in line with our strategic priorities.

To support organisational development and enhance strategic oversight, additional sub-committees were established during the year all with Terms of Reference approved by the Board of Trustees. These include the People Sub-Committee, the Development and Funding Sub-Committee, and the Policy, Advocacy and Research Sub-Committee. As with our established EEDI (Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) sub-committee, these do not hold decision-making powers. However, they offer valuable forums for trustees and the senior leadership team. They allow key issues to be explored in greater depth and provide space to share expertise and help shape the organisation's direction.

Safeguarding

Unlock has a robust safeguarding policy and other related policies including whistleblowing with named lead trustees for both. In this reporting period, no safeguarding incidents were identified as relevant for reporting to the Charity Commission via a serious incident report. No whistleblowing concerns were raised.

Management

Management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive who reports directly to the Chair of Trustees. A framework of financial delegation is set out in finance policies and procedures. Systems for line management, appraisal, staff development and supervision are in place, together with grievance and complaints procedures.

Remuneration policy

The Board of Trustees conduct an annual review of staff salaries. As part of this process, the Chief Executive submits recommendations for salary adjustments, supported by a clear rationale. The Board carefully considers these proposals in the context of the organisation's strategic priorities, financial position and benchmarking data from both the sector and the broader employment and economic landscape before approving any increases.

Public Benefit

Unlock assists people with criminal records to live positive lives, move on from their past and contribute fully to society. In setting objectives and planning for activities, the Trustees have given due consideration to general guidance published by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit, including the guidance '*Public benefit: running a charity*' (PB2). Our activities and beneficiaries are described below and in the 'About Us' section of our website:

www.unlock.org.uk.

Compliance with prevailing laws and regulations

The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a Directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives

As stated in our governing document, Unlock's charitable objectives are:

"To advance education and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of people who have received a criminal record (including those who have suffered a legal restriction on their liberty at any penal establishment as a punishment imposed by a court of law, received a non-custodial sentence, fine or any other court or other recorded disposal, such as a police caution), in particular but not exclusively by the provision of information, advice, advocacy and training, and the undertaking of research and policy work, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the aforementioned persons."

Purpose

Unlock is a national independent advocacy charity that supports, speaks up and campaigns for people facing stigma, prejudice and discrimination because of their criminal record. We believe that everyone should be able to move on from their past and contribute fully to society. We provide information, give advice and take on cases to help people overcome the obstacles they are facing because of their criminal record. Many people feel like they are serving a second sentence of stigma and discrimination. To challenge this injustice we collect evidence, speak out and campaign for change so that policies, practices and attitudes allow people the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Vision

Our vision is of a fair and inclusive society where people with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination.

Mission

Our mission is to advocate for people with criminal records so they can move on positively in their lives. Specifically, we:

- Support people with criminal records to navigate their way through challenges.
- Campaign for changes to legislation, policies and practices of government, employers and others.
- Research, present evidence and raise awareness of the systemic issues faced by people with criminal records.

The issues faced by people with criminal records

Prevailing attitudes and language such as 'offenders', 'ex-offenders' and 'prisoners', fail to acknowledge the substantial number (over 12.5 million people) and wide diversity of people in this country, from all walks of life, who have a criminal record. Most people are convicted on only one occasion, 90% do not receive a prison sentence and, of those who do go to prison, 47% have sentences of less than six months and 71% have committed a non-violent offence.

The Long Shadow of a criminal record

The current criminal record system requires disclosure of cautions and convictions beyond the completion of any sentences – sometimes for the rest of someone's life. There is a popular emphasis on an individual's responsibility to rehabilitate themselves following a conviction but, regardless of how much effort a person makes, there are many significant barriers to getting jobs and promotions, accessing education, training, housing, financial services, travel abroad, volunteering and in many other areas of everyday life. The situation is further complicated by issues of intersectionality and the complex relationship between disadvantage, discrimination and criminal records that entrenches social and economic inequality.

Our approach

Independent

We believe that it is vital that we hold government, agencies and others to account. We also believe it is important that people with criminal records trust us and that we represent them with integrity and courage. While we always aim to work constructively with government and organisational partners wherever possible, we are clear that we may take a critical stance on any policies and practices that unfairly restrict opportunities for people with criminal records.

We are committed to speaking truth to power. As a result, the people for whom we exist, and our supporters and funders can be sure that our sole motivation is to improve the life chances of people with criminal records. Our power comes from our knowledge of what's happening to people with criminal records, publishing reports, persuading the unwilling, encouraging good practices and exposing those practices which are unacceptable. We are politically independent - but we are not neutral about our agenda of change to the criminal record system.

Involve and include people with criminal records

We believe that personal lived experience of having a criminal record is intrinsically valuable. Recruiting people with criminal records at all levels including within our Board means that people with lived experience make up over 56% of the team. This visibility of lived experience in Unlock creates trust with our beneficiaries and creates a diversity of thought and leadership in our broader work. In our direct advice work with beneficiaries, peer experience offers a bridge of understanding, awareness and empathy to people who sometimes find it hard to talk about the issues they face.

We have developed Unlock Insight panels made up of people with criminal records. These panels support our staff recruitment process and our Better Advice for All Network. Over the past year, we have also created several lived experience advisory and insight panels to help shape our policy and research projects.

We use our newsletter to share more opportunities to give our beneficiaries the opportunity to get involved in policy, campaigns, and research. Our goal is for Unlock to become a leading voice in the lived experience movement. We want to help people with criminal records access a wide range of opportunities to improve their experiences.

Ear to the ground, voice at the top

Every day we listen and engage with around 40 people who face difficulties because of their criminal record. They get in touch with us in numerous ways, from ringing our helpline to WhatsApp messaging us, to email and in person or virtual meetings. Through our direct engagement and our outreach as part of our Better Advice for All network, we listen to a steady flow of issues and ideas. Our team has a proven track record of identifying issues, finding solutions and planning work to create much needed change. We seek to influence policy and support systemic change, continually punching above our weight to achieve ambitious and significant outcomes with employers, service providers, advice agencies and government. Too often, policies and systems divide and disempower people, and politicians and organisations hoard rather than share power. Through our engagement activities and our lived experience leadership expertise, we build confidence and capacity for individuals to take more power and to influence.

Think big. Act big. Recognise our limitations.

We are a small charity with big ambitions. We constantly adapt and refine our work so that we better meet the needs of the people for whom we exist. To do this, we need to make tough choices and recognise that we cannot achieve everything. Longer term, it is important that we can ensure that the organisation's core work continues, which means working efficiently and effectively and focusing on our financial and organisational health to ensure our long-term strength.

Work in partnership

We believe in the power of collaboration and build strategic partnerships with like-minded organisations to maximise our impact. We create platforms and build partnerships in the sector, such as with our FairChecks campaign partnership with Transform Justice. We also recognise the importance of working with people and organisations that are different to Unlock to test and challenge our own assumptions and to create opportunities to influence the way in which they think and behave.

Activities and impact 2024-25

Organisational development

Strategy and planning

In April 2021 we launched our strategic plan '*Tackling Injustice, Changing Lives*'. An annual organisational workplan allows us to track progress towards the key priorities included in the strategic plan, ensuring implementation is in line with the strategy. The Board receives a quarterly update report. This shares activities, opportunities, challenges and outcomes against both the workplan and Unlock's strategic priorities.

Our three overarching priorities

1. People should have knowledge, skills, confidence and support to overcome the disadvantages related to their criminal record. We will reach more people by helping them to self-serve digitally, and we will strengthen our capacity to support people more. Together, this will enable people with criminal records to be aware of their rights, know where to turn for advice, and be able to challenge the stigma and discrimination they are facing.
2. People with criminal records should be free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination as a result of government, employers and others having policies, practices and attitudes that support their fair treatment. We will be a powerful voice in pushing for change to legislation, policies, and practices, using strategic litigation to bring about change, and increasing the research and evidence base to support us to achieve change at a policy and systemic level.

3. We will maintain good governance and develop Unlock's sustainability and resilience. We will translate our priorities into fully funded and resourced delivery, develop unrestricted funding streams including support from donors and philanthropists, and by growing earned income, continue to measure ourselves against the Charity Governance Code and ensure that we maintain a focus on increasing diversity and inclusion, with the aim of being representative of all sections of society.

The appointment of Paula Harriott as CEO in August 2024 created an opportunity to reflect on our current strategy and enhance it with an interim vision prior to the development of our new strategy in 2026. The vision introduces a theme: 'The Long Shadow of the Criminal Record'. Under this umbrella we bring together our focus on the full range of issues that affect the individual with a criminal record:

- access to employment
- access to housing,
- access to education
- financial well-being
- mental and physical wellbeing
- restoring family and interpersonal relationships

We do this with a coherent message that a criminal record has a long-lasting impact and stretches far into an individual's future. This new vision for the future commits Unlock to taking its place as a prominent lived experience led organisation. It also honours Unlock's roots as an organisation founded by people with lived experience. Finally, the theme, '*The Long Shadow of the Criminal Record*', enables us to reinforce initiatives in the sector that build the capacity of people with criminal records, helping them to engage in and lead debate, policy and practice to dismantle the challenges that lie in their path.

Employees and volunteers

The beginning of the year saw us continue with joint interim CEOs Justina Forristall and Jo Easton providing stability during a transitional period. We were delighted to later appoint Paula Harriott as our permanent CEO in August 2024. Paula brings a wealth of lived experience, strong sector connections, and is widely respected across the criminal justice landscape. These qualities that significantly strengthen Unlock's leadership and influence.

Alongside this long-term positive development, short-term funding challenges led to a restructure of our policy function. As a result, the Director of Policy and Advocacy role and one Policy Officer role were made redundant. Further changes followed, with the remaining Policy Officer and our Communications Manager both moving on to new opportunities. We are sincerely grateful to all of our former colleagues for their dedication and contributions to Unlock's mission.

In response, and with careful consideration of our financial position, we created a new combined Policy and Communications role to ensure continuity in key areas of work. Thanks to the strength, versatility and expertise of the remaining team, we were able to continue delivering core policy work while actively seeking funding to rebuild the policy function.

Volunteers with lived experience continue to be at the heart of our helpline, offering invaluable insight and support to those who reach out to us. We are truly grateful for the time, compassion and dedication they bring to Unlock and the people we serve.

This year we were pleased to welcome seven new volunteers, including three who joined us through Release on Temporary Licence from prison. Each has shared their unique perspective and added strength to our work.

While we said goodbye to six volunteers during the year, we also celebrated their next steps – four have moved into paid employment, and two are pursuing new paths in different sectors. Their contributions have left a lasting impact, and we thank them sincerely for all they have given to Unlock.

Advice, information and support

The Helpline

Unlock’s helpline provides confidential, accurate, trustworthy and non-judgmental information, advice and support to anyone with a criminal record. We offer a range of communication channels that people can use to get advice and support including the telephone, WhatsApp, email, or through our online resources. The helpline is run by trained staff and volunteers who have lived experience of a criminal record. Their personal journeys mean they truly understand what those using the helpline are going through and can offer empathetic, meaningful support.

This year, we launched a new one-to-one support programme, Support Plus, designed to assist individuals facing challenges with disclosure while seeking employment. The structured, three-stage programme offers tailored guidance to help people navigate the disclosure process with confidence.

To ensure our helpline resources were used effectively and aligned with the needs of our service users, we conducted a comprehensive review of helpline demand. We also enhanced our data collection processes to gain deeper insights into the demographics of those accessing our services.

	2023-24	2024-25
Direct Support		
Helpline contacts	9,942	10,049
Casework (Completed)	4	3
Self-help Support		
Visits to information/advice pages of website	1,727,877	1,294,362
Disclosure calculator	49,594	49,285

Whilst visitor numbers to the website shows a fall of 25%, we believe this drop is primarily due to the significant advances in user tracking introduced through Google Analytics 4 (GA4). The introduction of GA4 was designed to provide a more accurate reflection of user engagement allowing organisations to better understand how visitors navigate our website. However, since its introduction many organisations have reported a reduction in the number of users being counted. This is due to several factors including changes in the way data is collected, stricter privacy controls and changes to Google's search algorithms.

Helpline impact

We empower everyone who reaches out to our helpline with clear, helpful information that can make a real difference in their lives. Whether it is finding a job, exploring education and training opportunities, or planning to travel abroad, we aim to help people better understand and improve their individual circumstances.

Many of those we support tell us they feel more confident facing the challenges of living with a criminal record. They feel less alone, knowing they are part of a community of people who share the same hope of moving forward. With our support, they often feel more ready to reconnect with society and take positive steps toward a brighter future.

To demonstrate the impact of our work we collect a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data. Identifying recurring and new issues helps us build an evidence base which underpins our work, advocating for changes to policy, practice and legislation.

Examples of helpline feedback

"Thank you for being there to listen to me when I needed you and thank you for going out of your way to provide such detailed advice and instructions for me to follow."

"Thank you to everybody I spoke to at Unlock. With the amazing advice and support you gave me, it enabled me to successfully apply to have my 17-year-old restraining order revoked, meaning my conviction is finally spent."

Volunteering at Unlock

Since 2009, Unlock's volunteering scheme has offered meaningful opportunities for people with criminal records. Volunteering provides people with the chance to support others, build self-confidence and develop valuable skills and experience that enhance employability. The programme is open to individuals living in the community as well as those on temporary day release from prison.

This year we spent time reviewing and updating our volunteer induction and training programme, incorporating valuable feedback from previous volunteers. All helpline volunteers undergo a comprehensive training programme, which includes our CIPD accredited 'Advising with Conviction' workshop, along with modules on safeguarding and confidentiality. Volunteers also have the opportunity to work toward a Level 2 NVQ in Information, Advice and Guidance.

Over the past year, our volunteer advisors have contributed an impressive 1,801 hours and handled 16% of all helpline enquiries. Our home-based volunteers have assisted with research, content writing and reviewing information before publication on our website. We are grateful for their dedication and recognise that without their support, we could not reach as many people as we do each year.

Individual case work

From time to time, our helpline team may take on a case directly to provide additional support to an individual. This typically happens when doing so could lead to a positive outcome for the person. It may also occur when the case aligns with our current policy work. In those instances, the case work helps to strengthen our evidence base and potentially benefit a wider group of people.

Examples of case work

- During the year, we worked with two people to challenge decisions made by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA). These were based on CICA's exclusionary rule preventing people with unspent convictions from accessing compensation if they are a victim of crime. Unlock has campaigned for many years to have this exclusionary rule removed and both cases demonstrated how disproportionate the rule is, failing to take account of whether the offence an individual committed is related to that which they are claiming compensation for.
- JS v local authority: Unlock assisted JS to appeal the decision made by a local authority not to be added to their housing list due to a refusal to disclose a spent conviction.

As of March 2025, the helpline team had 13 ongoing cases.

Support for people in prison

Our helpline frequently receives letters and calls from people in prison, often about a variety of issues, most commonly, resettlement. Unlock's helpline number is included on the prison's pre-approved contact list, allowing individuals in prison to call us directly for information and advice without needing prior permission.

Throughout the year, we have delivered our *'Moving on with Conviction'* workshops in prisons across England including at HMP Oakwood and HMP Featherstone (category C prisons in Staffordshire) and HMP Bronzefield (a women's prison in Surrey). We have attended job resettlement fairs at HMP Elmley (a category B/C prison in Kent) and HMP Lewes (a category B prison in East Sussex) preparing men for interview and disclosing their convictions to employers. We have continued to support the Connect Resettlement Team at HMP Rye Hill (a category B prison in Warwickshire exclusively housing individuals convicted of sexual offences) by developing resources for prison leavers.

Supporting people digitally

With around 12.5 million people in the UK having a criminal record, our website serves as a vital source of information and support. We offer guidance on a wide range of issues, including employment, insurance, travel, education, housing, relationships, finance and disclosure. Our online resources are designed to help individuals access the information they need, whenever and however it suits them.

Thanks to funding from the National Lottery, we launched our '*Better Advice for All*' project in October 2024. The project aims to make our online information and advice more accessible to individuals who have difficulty with literacy or for whom English is not their first language.

As part of this initiative, we began recruiting members for our Insight Panel. This panel will review how written information is presented on our website and provide suggestions to improve its accessibility and inclusivity.

Work started on a new 'DBS Checker' online tool which will help individuals, organisations and employers understand the correct level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which can be applied for. The tool will go live in 2025/26.

Training – supporting organisations and practitioners

Unlock ran 17 training workshops/webinars with a total of 172 attendees. In-house training sessions were delivered to organisations such as London School of Economics, Lincolnshire Action Trust, Seven Trent, South London and Maudsley NHS Trust and Veolia. During the year, a new online self-directed training course was developed for organisations and practitioners who support people with criminal records into employment, volunteering or education. With this new resource added to our training offer, our aim is to increase Unlock's earned income in 2025/26.

[Policy and advocacy](#)

Parliamentary work

This year has seen a General Election and change of government which has impacted on our policy work. Some items on which we were working with parliamentarians and civil service officials were disrupted by the change of government. This change also meant that we were faced with the challenge of rapidly building new relationships with a fresh cohort of parliamentarians and advisors. Once the new members of parliament were in place and new ministers appointed, all current MPs were contacted with an introduction to Unlock. Particular efforts were made to contact relevant ministers, receiving replies from Lord James Timpson (Prisons and Probation Minister in the Ministry of Justice) and Jess Phillips (Safeguarding Minister at the Home Office). After this initial contact we were invited to introductory ministerial stakeholder roundtables with Minister Timpson.

We were invited to speak at the Modernising Employment APPG at a session on 'hiring people with convictions'. We submitted written evidence to a variety of open government consultations such as the Employment Rights Bill, the Crime and Policing Bill 2025 and the Independent Sentencing Review. We also submitted consultation responses to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and NatCen research on 'What works' for people with criminal records seeking employment.

October 2024 marked the 50th anniversary of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA). The digitisation of information and the explosion of the internet since then means individuals' criminal records can be accessed in ways the ROA never intended. Using the anniversary as a way of starting further discussion, Unlock published a briefing calling on the government to review and update the ROA to ensure it is still as fair and effective as it was 50 years ago.

We continued to hold regular meetings with the policy team at the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to discuss demographic data collection, ineligible checks, barring and the DBS Review. These meetings provide us with the opportunity to share concerns raised by individuals contacting our helpline and to be part of any consultations.

Throughout the year, we focused on the FairChecks campaign in partnership with Transform Justice. A central aim of the campaign is to push for a new approach to childhood offences. To support this, we developed a dedicated briefing on childhood offences and disclosure.

Campaign activities included meetings with Home Office officials, proposing an amendment to the Police and Crime Bill, and hosting a parliamentary briefing event.

We also convened a policy roundtable with key stakeholders to raise awareness and drive action. Following the roundtable, we continued engagement with officials from the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Home Office.

We continued to raise awareness of how employers use internet searches to find details of an applicant's criminal record which they would not be entitled to legally. Unlock's findings highlighted that individuals with non-anglicised names were likely to be most disproportionately affected.

During the year we have continued our work on pressing for improved access to banking and financial products for people with criminal records.

We strengthened our collaborative work across the sector this year. We joined the Homelessness Alliance, contributing to shared efforts and understanding around homelessness. We also worked with other charity CEOs on an open letter advocating for the establishment of a Women's Justice Board.

To further our commitment to evidence-based reform, we became a member of the Criminal Record Research and Reform Network. This network brings together academics and practitioners focused on improving understanding and policy around criminal records.

Fair Access to Employment

During the year, we supported the launch of the Fair Chance Business Alliance helping them to build their charter mark standards.

We continued to collaborate with the Responsible Business Initiative for Justice (RBIJ), attending their Workforce and Justice Summit and a Parliamentary Reception hosted by Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick. A consultancy service for employers was launched at a roundtable event in partnership with the RBIJ. In preparation for the start of the consultancy work, we reviewed and updated our Recruit website to align with the offer. We also co-produced a new resource with the Institute of Employability Professionals on best practice supporting people with criminal records into employment.

Fair Access to Study

We continued our work in supporting access to education for those with criminal records with bespoke advice and consultancy to multiple academic institutions. In collaboration with colleagues from Liverpool John Moores and Leeds Trinity Universities, we submitted a report to the Office for Students advocating for a change to their risk register (which identifies target groups for access to education) which made the case for including applicants with criminal records.

Unlock publications

We published nine comment, briefings and consultation responses (which can be found on our news page and/or our publications page).

- April 2024: Unlock evidence to UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery
- May 2024: Crossovers for people with criminal records who are also victims of crime
- May 2024: Young Adults Panel: What we learned
- May 2024: Unlock response to DfE call for evidence concerning safeguarding children in schools and colleges
- July 2024: Unlock submission to the Times Crime and Justice Commission
- September 2024: Short and suspended sentences: the criminal record implications
- October 2024: Employment Rights Bill briefing
- November 2024: Unlock briefing on the Employment Rights Bill – Committee Stage
- February 2025: Briefing on the complexity of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)

Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion

In the past year Unlock has committed to a continued focus on our EEDI strategy, which runs from 2023-26 and guides all aspects of our work. Read the full strategy here: [Unlock's EEDI strategy 2023-26](#). Progress against the strategy and accompanying action plan are overseen by the EEDI sub-committee formed of Trustees and the CEO.

A key achievement this year was securing funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for our 'Better Advice for All' project. This initiative aims to build a network of equity-led community organisations, ensuring they have access to vital knowledge about criminal record disclosure and can actively contribute to our ongoing efforts to promote equitable access to support and advice.

Communication and engagement

Press and media

Unlock increased its media presence this year, using national and regional outlets to raise awareness of criminal records issues and advocate for reform. One of our focuses was to amplify lived experience, ensuring the voices of people affected by the criminal justice system were central to coverage. Our Chief Executive, Paula Harriott, has been frequently invited to speak on national radio and television about early release, criminal records and rehabilitation. This has further helped to position Unlock as a trusted, informed commentator on justice reform.

High-profile media opportunities (including BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour, BBC 5 Live, and The Telegraph) were used strategically to reinforce campaign messaging and build long-term relationships with journalists.

Social media

LinkedIn remained our strongest platform, strengthening engagement with employers, job seekers, academics, allies and justice professionals. We surpassed 4,700 followers, with engagement rates consistently above 6%, peaking at over 8% in some quarters. High-performing posts included our Better Advice for All project and interviews with sector leaders. Twitter/X saw more modest engagement, while Facebook passed 1,000 followers but engagement was affected by algorithm changes. A renewed focus on personal stories and campaign-led content is planned for the coming year. Collaboration with allies such as Transform Justice helped amplify impact across channels.

Newsletters and stakeholder engagement

Our newsletter audience grew steadily to 8,162 subscribers by the end of March 2025, with average open rates, throughout the year, of 32.2%. Topic-specific mailings, such as our Rehabilitation of Offenders Act briefing, achieved significantly higher engagement than the general newsletter. A tailored welcome journey now connects new subscribers to our FairChecks campaign and 'Pay It Forward' donation ask.

Campaign communications and digital strategy

This year, we sought to take a coordinated approach to digital communications, ensuring that campaigns were supported by integrated activity across email, website content and social media. We used targeted e-bulletins, refreshed resources such as the “Is it spent?” tool.

Plans for 2025-26

Our priorities for the year ahead are as follows:

- Continue our focus on making impact in areas of concern for people with criminal records, under the umbrella of the Long Shadow of the Criminal Record.
- Continue Unlock’s advice and information service including our helpline.
- Expand our community of practice through extending membership of our Better Advice for All network.
- Press for reform of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, including maintaining pressure for reform of law and practice in the field of childhood records and protection from internet exposure.
- Work with employers and educational institutions to ensure access and fair treatment in work and education and travel opportunities, including a focus on vetting and exclusion barriers.
- Increase democratic participation of people in prison and in community.
- Focus on challenging discriminatory and stigmatising narratives about people with criminal records.
- Continue work on dismantling financial barriers such as access to bank accounts and the long-term consequences of the Proceeds of Crime Act.
- Continue our FairChecks campaign in partnership with Transform Justice.
- Curate and develop opportunities for people with criminal records to take part in research, policy and practice.
- Expand our newsletter reach to increase the number of subscribers.
- Ensure Unlock’s financial health through diversification of funding streams and increase the commercialisation of our funding offers, including through the launch of Unlock Talent and Unlock DBS.
- Ensure organisational wellbeing and resilience.

Financial review

2024–25 proved to be a challenging year due to difficulties raising funds to support our policy work after a period of organisational transition and wider economic challenges for all charities. This situation led to an organisational restructure and an even sharper focus on cost management. These measures were effective and helped to reduce the projected budget deficit considerably.

Towards the end of the year, new funding opportunities emerged through Paula Harriott's expertise in Public Participation and Involvement in Engagement (PPIE), creating a new and valuable income stream. The grant funding picture also improved in the latter part of the year, with several high-value opportunities becoming available, further strengthening our financial outlook.

The statement of Financial Activities is shown on page 22. The deficit for the year was £107,436 and net assets amounted to £224,152

Reserves policy

As a consequence of the financial challenges faced at the beginning of the year, the Board adopted a revised approach to the reserves policy. Recognising the need for greater flexibility, the previous approach to maintain six to nine months of unrestricted reserves was adjusted. This redefined the appropriate level of unrestricted as the amount required to cover closure liabilities plus two months of operating costs. This more pragmatic and risk-aware framework directly informed the decisions made during the organisational restructure, ensuring that financial sustainability remained a priority while adapting to a changing funding landscape.

At the end of the financial year, unrestricted funds stood at £182,237 (2023–24: £299,211), while restricted funds totalled £41,915 (2023–24: £32,377). This resulted in an unrestricted reserves position that was slightly above the minimum level of £178,757 required.

Designated funding

There was no designated funding in 2024-25.

Future funding

Despite these funding challenges, the emergence of new opportunities and the development of a strong funding pipeline laid the foundation for a more positive year-end and a return to financial stability.

Looking ahead, we are focused on increasing earned income through our Unlock Talent programme. This initiative brings together our existing training and consultancy services, creating a solid platform for future growth. As part of this expansion, we plan to enhance our training offer and launch Unlock DBS. With expert-led, reliable processing, Unlock DBS will ensure every disclosure and barring check is appropriate and fully compliant, providing certainty for organisations and individuals alike.

We are also excited to introduce Unlock Experts, a new initiative rooted in lived experience leadership. Building on our work in patient and public involvement and engagement, Unlock Experts will support other organisations in developing meaningful, authentic, and inclusive lived experience programmes. This marks a significant step in deepening our impact, driving sector-wide change and creating new income opportunities.

Options for people to donate to us increased during the year with the introduction of 'Pay it Forward', a prompt on our website inviting visitors to donate £1 after using our advice pages. We plan to add to the donate options by introducing text giving, making it even easier for people to support our work.

Alongside our efforts to diversify income and increase the options to donate, we are strengthening relationships with both existing and new funders to support long-term sustainability. To maximise every opportunity, we have increased our fundraising capacity and adopted a more collaborative approach to funding applications and research. This ensures each proposal is high-quality, mission-aligned and resonates with the values of our funders.

Fundraising report

Unlock is committed to responsible fundraising and follows all the relevant regulations. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and follow the Fundraising Promise and the Code of Fundraising Practice. This report meets the requirements set out in the Charities Act 2016. We do not use agencies although during the year, we contracted with two fundraising consultants for funder prospecting and research and to assist in the development of a small number of applications.

Our website clearly explains how to make a complaint. We received no complaints during the 2024–25 financial year.

Principal funding sources

Our total income for the year was £327,170, which was received from the following sources:

	2024-25	2023/24
Grants from trusts and foundations	242,129 (74%)	343,532 (82%)
Donations	23,415 (7%)	22,817 (5%)
Earned income	56,639 (17%)	43,773 (11%)
Investment	4,791 (1%)	5,181 (1%)
Legacies	0 (0%)	1,546 (0%)
Other	196 (0%)	0 (0%)

We are grateful to the following grant-giving funders for the generous support throughout the year. Their contributions have made a real difference to our work and the people we support.

1772 The Debtor's Relief Funds Charity, 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust, AB Charitable Trust, CB and HH Taylor Charitable Trust Chapman Charitable Trust, The Cobtree Charity Trust, Colyer Ferguson Charitable Trust, Garfield Weston, J Leon Philanthropy, JG Hogg Charitable Trust, Kent Community Foundation, Lord Barnby's Foundation Trust, The National Lottery Community Fund, The Noel Buxton Trust, The Oakdale Trust, Persula Foundation, The Society Foundation, The Lankelly Chase Foundation, The Law Society, The Lawson Trust, The Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust, WF Southall Trust.

Our thanks also to the many individual donors who kindly supported our work.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on [add date] and signed on its behalf by:

Faye Goldman, Chair of Trustees

Faye Goldman

15 October 2025

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Statement of Trustees' responsibilities
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

Faye Goldman

Faye Goldman
Chair of Trustees
Date: 15 October 2025

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Independent Examiner's Report
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Unlock, for people with criminal records ('the Charity')

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the Trustees of the Charity (and its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

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

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

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

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

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

This report is made solely to the Charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.

Signed: *S M Rouse*
Samantha Rouse

Dated: 15 October 2025
FCCA DChA

Kreston Reeves LLP
Chartered Accountants
37 St Margaret's Street
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 2TU

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating income and expenditure account)
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	194,386	127,797	322,183	411,668
Investments	4	-	4,791	4,791	5,181
Other income	5	-	196	196	-
Total income		194,386	132,784	327,170	416,849
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	184,848	249,758	434,606	523,822
Total expenditure		184,848	249,758	434,606	523,822
Net movement in funds		9,538	(116,974)	(107,436)	(106,973)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		32,377	299,211	331,588	438,561
Net movement in funds		9,538	(116,974)	(107,436)	(106,973)
Total funds carried forward		41,915	182,237	224,152	331,588

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 24 to 36 form part of these financial statements.

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
Registered number: 03791535

Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible assets	10	6,960	13,920
Tangible assets	11	2,843	5,001
		<u>9,803</u>	<u>18,921</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	12	5,705	3,764
Cash at bank and in hand		211,224	311,483
		<u>216,929</u>	<u>315,247</u>
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(2,580)	(2,580)
		<u>214,349</u>	<u>312,667</u>
Net current assets		<u>214,349</u>	<u>312,667</u>
Total net assets		<u><u>224,152</u></u>	<u><u>331,588</u></u>
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	14	41,915	32,377
Unrestricted funds	14	182,237	299,211
Total funds		<u><u>224,152</u></u>	<u><u>331,588</u></u>

The Charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

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

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Faye Goldman

Faye Goldman
Chair of Trustees
Date: 15 October 2025

The notes on pages 24 to 36 form part of these financial statements.

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

1. General information

Unlock, for people with criminal records is a charitable company, limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with the company number 03791535 and the charity number 1079046. The Charity's registered office is Maidstone Community Support Centre, 39-48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1HH.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

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

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

The financial statements are presented in British Sterling and rounded to the nearest Pound.

2.2 Going concern

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the Charity to continue as a going concern. The Trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements and have concluded that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Income

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

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the Charity has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the Charity, can be reliably measured.

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet. Where income is received in advance of entitlement of receipt, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Income (continued)

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

2.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the Charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

2.5 Intangible assets and amortisation

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, intangible assets are measured at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Amortisation is provided on intangible assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful life.

Amortisation is provided on the following basis:

Development expenditure	-	20 % straight line
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2.6 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £200 or more with an expected useful life of more than four years are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Fixtures and fittings	-	25%
Computer equipment	-	25%

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.7 Debtors

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

2.8 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and 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.

2.9 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as a finance cost.

2.10 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 with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.11 Pensions

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the pension charge represents the amounts payable by the Charity to the fund in respect of the year.

2.12 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Donations	6,454	16,961	23,415	22,817
Legacies	-	-	-	1,546
Grants	164,332	77,797	242,129	343,532
Earned income	23,600	33,039	56,639	43,773
	<u>194,386</u>	<u>127,797</u>	<u>322,183</u>	<u>411,668</u>
Total 2024	<u>202,199</u>	<u>209,469</u>	<u>411,668</u>	

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Deposit account interest	4,791	4,791	5,181
	<u>5,181</u>	<u>5,181</u>	
Total 2024	<u>5,181</u>	<u>5,181</u>	

5. Other incoming resources

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Other income	196	196	-
	<u>196</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>-</u>

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

6. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Charitable activities	184,848	249,758	434,606	523,822
Total 2024	<u>192,071</u>	<u>331,751</u>	<u>523,822</u>	

7. Charitable activities

	Advice & Support £	Policy & Advocacy £	Support costs £	Fundraising £	Governance £	2025 Total £	As restated 2024 Total £
Direct costs							
Wages	139,043	113,114	17,078	45,645	13,952	328,832	363,702
CEO Consultancy	5,342	5,342	5,342	5,342	5,342	26,712	26,149
Recruitment	247	247	-	247	-	740	26,864
Travel	2,176	1,567	2,924	563	86	7,317	6,230
Training	158	378	686	74	-	1,296	7,534
Office sundries	333	-	-	-	-	333	463
Volunteer costs	5,021	-	-	-	-	5,021	6,156
Income generation	2,250	-	-	810	-	3,060	-
Lived experience	8,568	-	-	-	-	8,568	-
	<u>163,138</u>	<u>120,649</u>	<u>26,030</u>	<u>52,681</u>	<u>19,380</u>	<u>381,879</u>	<u>437,098</u>

Unlock, for people with criminal records
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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Charitable activities (continued)

Support costs							
Amortisation	6,960	-	-	-	-	6,960	6,960
Depreciation	-	-	2,075	-	-	2,075	2,130
Accountancy	418	340	628	139	2,614	4,140	3,707
Trustees expenses	-	-	-	-	627	627	236
Training	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,100
Postage, stationery and conference fees	315	248	581	14	50	1,208	600
Telephone	1,012	310	270	90	-	1,682	1,776
Computer costs	5,232	2,137	3,106	889	-	11,364	12,939
Subscriptions	3,645	1,742	2,646	617	-	8,651	10,951
Communications	-	-	102	-	-	102	1,588
Repairs	54	135	144	-	-	333	543
Rent	13,701	-	10	-	-	13,711	13,166
Insurance	1,074	113	113	113	113	1,526	1,403
Consultancy	-	75	-	-	-	75	28,219
Bank charges	-	-	273	-	-	273	427
	32,412	5,101	9,948	1,862	3,404	52,727	86,725
Total 2025 costs	195,550	125,749	35,979	54,544	22,785	434,606	523,822
As restated							
Total 2024 costs	213,509	179,958	46,372	58,765	25,219	523,822	

8. Staff costs

	2025	As restated
	£	2024
		£
Wages and salaries	291,196	320,877
Social security costs	21,989	25,412
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	15,647	17,413
	328,832	363,702

During the year, a termination payment was made of £5,797 (2024: £11,646).

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

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
Employees	10	10

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

8. Staff costs (continued)

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

During the year, the key management personnel of the Charity received remuneration of £156,269 (2024: £162,201). The key management personnel remuneration figure includes the CEO Consultancy figure disclosed at Note 7.

9. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2024 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 March 2025, expenses totalling £627 were reimbursed or paid directly to 4 Trustees (2024 - £236 to 3 Trustees) for travel expenses.

10. Intangible assets

	Develop- ment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2024	34,800
At 31 March 2025	34,800
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2024	20,880
Charge for the year	6,960
At 31 March 2025	27,840
Net book value	
At 31 March 2025	6,960
At 31 March 2024	13,920

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2024	19,128	27,136	46,264
Disposals	-	(900)	(900)
At 31 March 2025	<u>19,128</u>	<u>26,236</u>	<u>45,364</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	19,128	22,135	41,263
Charge for the year	-	2,075	2,075
On disposals	-	(817)	(817)
At 31 March 2025	<u>19,128</u>	<u>23,393</u>	<u>42,521</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2025	<u>-</u>	<u>2,843</u>	<u>2,843</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>5,001</u>	<u>5,001</u>

12. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	4,050	3,764
Prepayments and accrued income	1,655	-
	<u>5,705</u>	<u>3,764</u>

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Accruals and deferred income	<u>2,580</u>	<u>2,580</u>

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

14. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Organisation Development and Research Opportunity Fund	-	-	-	-	-
Fixed and Intangible Asset Fund	18,921	-	-	(9,118)	9,803
	<u>18,921</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(9,118)</u>	<u>9,803</u>
General funds					
General Funds	280,290	132,784	(249,758)	9,118	172,434
Total Unrestricted funds	<u>299,211</u>	<u>132,784</u>	<u>(249,758)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>182,237</u>
Restricted funds					
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
AB Charitable	-	3,480	-	-	3,480
Big Give Christmas Challenge	5,417	-	(5,417)	-	-
Bruno Schroder Trust	3,585	-	(3,585)	-	-
CB & HH Taylor	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Chapman Charitable Trust	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	-
Cobtree	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	4,023	15,000	(19,023)	-	-
Drapers Charity	3,171	-	(3,171)	-	-
Hedley Foundation	3,000	-	(3,000)	-	-
Kent Community Foundation	-	15,000	(15,000)	-	-
Lankelly Chase Foundation	-	31,788	(24,357)	-	7,431
Lawson Trust	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Midlands Partnership/Uni of Durham	-	7,301	(7,301)	-	-
National Lottery Community Fund	-	27,243	(22,787)	-	4,456
Nottingham Trent University	-	5,820	(5,820)	-	-
Oakdale Trust	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Pursula Foundation	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	-
Society Foundation	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
The Big Give 24/25	-	8,454	(8,454)	-	-
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	10,201	20,000	(21,532)	-	8,669
The Law Society	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
The Noel Buxton Trust	3,000	-	(3,000)	-	-
Uni of Chester	-	7,700	(7,700)	-	-
Uni of Manchester	-	23,800	(5,721)	-	17,879
	<u>32,377</u>	<u>194,386</u>	<u>(184,848)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>41,915</u>
Total funds	<u>331,588</u>	<u>327,170</u>	<u>(434,606)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>224,152</u>

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Organisation Development and Research Opportunity Fund	80,000	-	-	(80,000)	-
Fixed and Intangible Asset Fund	-	-	-	18,921	18,921
	<u>80,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(61,079)</u>	<u>18,921</u>
General funds					
General Funds	<u>313,535</u>	<u>214,650</u>	<u>(331,751)</u>	<u>83,856</u>	<u>280,290</u>
Total Unrestricted funds	<u>393,535</u>	<u>214,650</u>	<u>(331,751)</u>	<u>22,777</u>	<u>299,211</u>
Restricted funds					
The 1772 Charity	1,600	-	-	(1,600)	-
Barrow Cadbury Trust	1,127	550	(550)	(1,127)	-
Big Give Christmas Challenge	4,358	5,417	(4,358)	-	5,417
Bruno Schroder Trust	6,681	60,030	(61,935)	(1,211)	3,565
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	3,200	-	-	(3,200)	-
Cole Charitable Trust	918	-	-	(918)	-
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	6,519	10,000	(12,496)	-	4,023
Drapers Charity	-	15,000	(11,829)	-	3,171
Esmee Fairburn Future Plus	-	7,980	(7,980)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	8,052	-	-	(8,052)	-
Hedley Foundation	-	3,000	-	-	3,000
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	2,902	20,000	(12,701)	-	10,201
National Lottery Community Fund	5,368	76,222	(76,222)	(5,368)	-
The Noel Buxton Trust	3,000	3,000	(3,000)	-	3,000
Porticus UK	1,301	1,000	(1,000)	(1,301)	-
	<u>45,026</u>	<u>202,199</u>	<u>(192,071)</u>	<u>(22,777)</u>	<u>32,377</u>
Total of funds	<u>438,561</u>	<u>416,849</u>	<u>(523,822)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>331,588</u>

**Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

Nature and purpose of designated funds

Organisation development and research opportunity fund – this fund related to money set aside for the charity to undertake a training placement and develop their IT infrastructure. It also included money set aside for the charity to use for research opportunities. £40k of the fund was fully utilised for the training placement and IT infrastructure. However, it was agreed to un-designate the money set aside for research opportunities in the prior year and as such this fund has a £NIL balance at 31 March 2025.

Fixed and Intangible Asset Fund - this fund makes up the balance of the value of the fixed and intangible assets held by the Charity.

Nature and purpose of restricted funds

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust - A three-year grant contributing to core costs for our helpline.

AB Charitable - A one off grant to funding management development and training.

Big Give Christmas Challenge 23/24 - Various donations via the 2023 Big Give Christmas Challenge supporting our campaign work to advocate for reform of the criminal record system relating to childhood offences.

Bruno Schroder Trust - The final year of a three year grant supporting our policy work to increase access to higher education for people with criminal records. Part of the funds contributed to the development of Unlock's website. During the period, the Charity reviewed it's restricted funds and deemed the fund had been fully spent at point of development, and as such the amortisation has been transferred to the unrestricted fund as the restriction had been discharged.

CB & HH Taylor - A grant supporting the delivery of our Moving on With Convictions workshop in HMP Featherstone and HMP Oakwood.

Chapman Charitable Trust - A grant funding our peer led helpline providing advice to people with criminal records.

Cobtree Charitable Trust - A grant funding our peer led helpline providing advice to people with criminal records.

Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust - A three-year grant to develop Unlock's volunteer program, enhance volunteers' digital skills, extend volunteer training, and involve volunteers in Unlock's policy work.

Colyer Ferguson 24/26 - Year one of a two year grant contributing to the cost of our information, advice and support helpline enabling people to receive expert advice via our helpline and website including the development of our support plus programme, mental health referral processes and audio/visual advice.

Drapers Charity - A one-year contribution to the advice and help salaries, premises, IT and other running costs.

Hedley Foundation - A one-year grant to cover the costs of our volunteer scheme.

Kent Community Foundation - Two grants funding our peer led helpline providing advice to people with criminal records.

Lawson Trust - A grant contributing to the running of our volunteer scheme.

Lankelly Chase Foundation - A grant supporting Paula Harriott to become involved in the Knowledge Network and specifically looking at how knowledge is produced and creation of new ways of knowledge production in social justice spaces.

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Midlands NHS Partnership/University of Durham - A grant supporting Unlock's contribution to research focusing on serious mental illness of women in prison and through the gate.

National Lottery Community Fund - A three year grant to deliver our Better Advice for All project to increase the reach of our help and advice.

Nottingham Trent University - A one-off grant supporting the analysis of our advice date.

Oakdale Trust - A one-off grant supporting our policy work to increase access to higher education and employment.

Pursula Foundation - A one-off grant funding our peer led helpline providing advice we give to people with criminal records.

Society Foundation - A one-off grant funding the development of a new online tool to allow people to check the relevant DBS check for individual job roles.

Big Give Christmas Challenge 24/25 - Various donations via the 2024 Big Give Christmas Challenge supporting our advice and support work.

The J G Hogg Charitable Trust - A three-year grant for our policy work to challenge the misuse of criminal record checks and raise the confidence of people to challenge ineligible checks.

The Law Society - A one-off grant to fund our peer led helpline providing advice we give to people with criminal records.

The Noel Buxton Trust - A three-year grant to fund our volunteer led helpline providing advice to people with criminal records.

University of Chester - A four year grant supporting Unlock's contribution to a UK Research and Innovation project mapping lived experienced leadership in the criminal justice system.

University of Manchester - A grant supporting lived experience input to research into the extent and quality of care in prison.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	2,843	2,843
Intangible fixed assets	-	6,960	6,960
Current assets	41,915	175,014	216,929
Creditors due within one year	-	(2,580)	(2,580)
Total	41,915	182,237	224,152

Unlock, for people with criminal records
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

15. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	5,001	5,001
Intangible fixed assets	-	13,920	13,920
Current assets	32,377	282,870	315,247
Creditors due within one year	-	(2,580)	(2,580)
Total	32,377	299,211	331,588

16. Pension commitments

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charity to the fund and amounted to £15,647 (2024 - £17,413). A balance of £NIL (2024 - £NIL) was payable to the scheme at the balance sheet date and is included in creditors.

17. Related party transactions

The Charity has not entered into any related party transaction during the year, nor are there any outstanding balances owing between related parties and the Charity at 31 March 2025.

Unlock, for people with criminal records

England & Wales - Charity number 1079046

Accounts

Registered number: 03791535
Charity number: 1079046

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Unaudited

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Reference and Administrative Details of the Charity, its Trustees and Advisers
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Trustees	Faye Goldman Trevor Dighton (appointed 17 July 2024) Carolyn Braby (appointed 17 July 2024) Thomas Wheatley Hamis MacLellan Steven Lorber Mandeep Mahil Leigh Hardy Caroline Bald (resigned 18 October 2023) Mark Day (resigned 14 May 2024) Michael Reinsoo (resigned 17 November 2023) Mark Rowe (resigned 21 March 2024) Emma Wilson (resigned 17 June 2024) Kam Stevens (appointed 16 October 2024) Peter Atherton (appointed 16 October 2024) Belinda Winder (appointed 16 October 2024) Rich McStraw (appointed 16 October 2024) Harmohinder Sanghera (appointed 16 October 2024) Fionnuala Ratcliffe (appointed 16 October 2024)
Company registered number	03791535
Charity registered number	1079046
Registered office	Maidstone Community Support Centre 39-48 Marsham Street Maidstone Kent ME14 1HH
Accountants	Kreston Reeves LLP Chartered Accountants 37 St Margaret's Street Canterbury Kent CT1 2TU
Independent Examiner	Samantha Rouse FCCA DChA Kreston Reeves LLP 37 St Margarets Street Canterbury Kent CT1 2TU

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

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

Following an extensive review of Unlock's memorandum and articles of association, the board of trustees unanimously passed a new set of articles of association by special resolution in June 2020. The new articles of association provide for greater clarity and practical ease of administration, including setting trustee tenure periods and the appointment of a vice chair. There were no changes to the objects, rules on paying a trustee or what happens if the charity is wound up. The articles of association were submitted to and accepted by the Charity Commission, with the Commission's records being updated accordingly in July 2020. Companies House was also notified.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The board carries out an annual review to decide whether there is a need to recruit new trustees. If during the year a trustee leaves, the board will decide whether to recruit at that time. New trustees are openly recruited through advertisement across appropriate forums. No new trustees were appointed this year.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees have an induction session at Unlock's office or virtually to meet other trustees, staff, and volunteers to gain a better understanding of Unlock's work, priorities, and how it operates. They are given the charity's key documents and assigned guidance to read issued by the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Organisational structure

Unlock is a charitable company governed by a board of trustees with day-to-day operations delegated to the Chief Executive.

Risk management

The trustee board has carried out a review of the major risks facing the charity. A risk register is in place which prioritises these risks and identifies mitigating factors, systems, and controls in relation to each. Trustees follow a comprehensive monitoring and review process to review identified risks regularly and to capture new risks that may arise and ensure that systems are in place to manage and mitigate these risks.

Governance

Trustees attend scheduled board meetings four times a year. In 2023-24 the trustee attendance rate was 83%. One additional board meeting was held to discuss the annual plan and budget for 2024/25. Individual trustees lead on identified portfolios including safeguarding, risk management, whistleblowing, finance, GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), digital development, human resources, Charity Governance Code, and fundraising. They are encouraged to attend training events and seminars to develop their roles and increase their contribution to the charity's governance. Trustees also undertake ad-hoc tasks as and when required and task-specific working groups are formed as needed and meet separately.

Unlock operates within an equal opportunities framework that is inclusive of people with criminal convictions and seeks to attract trustees with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. Approximately a third of our trustees and staff have a criminal record.

A working group which involves staff and trustees oversees and drives forward Unlock's equity, equality, diversity and inclusion agenda in line with our strategic priorities.

Safeguarding

Unlock has a robust safeguarding policy and other related policies including whistleblowing with named lead trustees for both. In this reporting period, no safeguarding incidents have been identified as relevant for reporting to the Charity Commission via a serious incident report and no whistleblowing concerns were raised.

Management

Management and development of the charity are delegated to the Chief Executive who reports directly to the chair of trustees. A framework of financial delegation is set out in finance policies and procedures. Systems for line management, appraisal, staff development and supervision are in place, together with grievance and complaints procedures.

Remuneration policy

A remuneration committee review staff salaries and related terms and conditions annually and propose increases. The CEO submits recommendations and the rationale for salary increases to the remuneration committee for review. The remuneration committee consider the proposal and recommend increases for approval by the full board.

Public Benefit

Unlock assists people with criminal records to live positive lives, move on from their past and contribute fully to society. In setting objectives and planning for activities, the Trustees have given due consideration to general guidance published by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit, including the guidance 'Public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. Our activities and beneficiaries are described below and in the 'About Us' section of our website: www.unlock.org.uk.

Compliance with prevailing laws and regulations

The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019)."

OBJECTIVES

As stated in our governing document, Unlock's charitable objects are:

"To advance education and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of people who have received a criminal record (including those who have suffered a legal restriction on their liberty at any penal establishment as a punishment imposed by a court of law, received a non-custodial sentence, fine or any other court or other recorded disposal, such as a police caution), in particular but not exclusively by the provision of information, advice, advocacy and training, and the undertaking of research and policy work, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the aforementioned persons."

Purpose

Unlock is a national independent advocacy charity that supports, speaks up and campaigns for people facing stigma, prejudice and discrimination because of their criminal record. We believe that everyone should be able to move on from their past and contribute fully to society. We provide information, give advice and take on cases to help people overcome the obstacles they are facing because of their criminal record. Many people feel like they are serving a second sentence of stigma and discrimination. To challenge this injustice we collect evidence, speak out and campaign for change so that policies, practices and attitudes allow people the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Vision

Our vision is of a fair and inclusive society where people with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination.

Mission

Our mission is to advocate for people with criminal records so they can move on positively in their lives. Specifically, we:

- Support people with criminal records to navigate their way through challenges.
- Campaign for changes to legislation, policies and practices of government, employers and others.
- Research, present evidence and raise awareness of the systemic issues faced by people with criminal records.

The issues faced by people with criminal records

Prevailing attitudes and language such as “offenders”, “ex-offenders” and “prisoners”, fail to acknowledge the substantial number (over 12.5 million people) and wide diversity of people in this country, from all walks of life, who have a criminal record. Most people are convicted on only one occasion, 90% do not receive a prison sentence and of those who do go to prison, 47% have sentences of less than 6 months and 71% have committed a non-violent offence.

Disclosure

The current criminal record system requires disclosure of cautions and convictions beyond the completion of any sentences – sometimes for the rest of someone’s life. There is a popular emphasis on an individual’s responsibility to rehabilitate themselves following a conviction but regardless of how much effort a person makes, there are many significant barriers to getting jobs and promotions, accessing education, training, housing, financial services, travel abroad, volunteering and in many other areas of everyday life. The situation is further complicated by issues of intersectionality and the complex relationship between disadvantage, discrimination and criminal records that entrenches social and economic inequality.

Our approach

Independent

We believe it is important that we hold government, agencies and others to account. We also believe it is important that people with criminal records trust us. That’s why we’re independent: Unlock neither seeks nor accepts direct funding from Ministry of Justice and this is crucial to our model of working. While we aim to work constructively with government and other partners wherever possible, we are also at liberty to take a critical stance on policies which unfairly restrict opportunities for people with criminal records.

We speak truth to power. As a result, the people for whom we exist, and our supporters and funders can be sure that our sole motivation is to improve the life chances of people with criminal records. Our power comes from our knowledge of what's happening to people with criminal records, publishing reports, persuading the unwilling, encouraging good practices and exposing those practices which are unacceptable. We're politically independent - but we are not neutral about our agenda of change to criminal records.

Involve and include people with criminal records

We believe that personal experience is intrinsically valuable, so we recruit people with criminal records throughout the organisation (and particularly as staff and volunteers to deliver our frontline support). Peer experience offers a bridge of understanding, awareness and empathy to people who sometimes find it hard to talk about the issues they face. We also have a trustee board where a third of the members have a criminal record. We proactively involve and support people to contribute to our advocacy, campaigns and policy work, because people with criminal records know best about the problems that they face. We also acknowledge the value that people with criminal records bring to Unlock due to their knowledge, skills and experience, apart from their specific life experience of the justice system.

Ear to the ground, voice at the top

Every day we listen and engage with around 40 people who face difficulties because of their criminal record. We have a proven track record of identifying issues, finding solutions and putting them into practice. We influence policy and create systemic change, continually punching above our weight to achieve large-scale outcomes with employers, service providers, advice agencies and government. Too often, policies and systems divide and disempower people, and politicians and organisations hoard rather than share power. We create platforms and build confidence and capacity for individuals to take more power and to influence.

Think big. Act big. Stay small.

We are a small charity with big ambitions. We constantly adapt our work so that we better meet the needs of the people for whom we exist. To do this, we need to make tough choices; we can't do everything. Longer term, it is important that we can ensure that the organisation's core work continues, which means working efficiently and effectively.

Work in partnership

We collaborate and build strategic partnerships with like-minded organisations to maximise our impact. If we are to achieve real change, we also need to work with people and organisations that are different to Unlock, and to develop partnerships that influence the way in which they think and behave.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT 2023-24

Organisational development

Strategy and planning

In April 2021 we launched our strategic plan, **Tackling Injustice, Changing Lives**. An annual organisational workplan allows us to track progress towards our key priorities, ensuring implementation is in line with our strategy. The board receives a quarterly update report against the activities, opportunities, challenges and outcomes in both the workplan and Unlock's strategic priorities.

Our three overarching priorities

1. **People should have knowledge, skills, confidence and support to overcome the disadvantages related to their criminal record.** We will reach more people by helping them to self-serve digitally, and we will strengthen our capacity to support people more. Together, this will enable people with criminal records to be aware of their rights, know where to turn for advice, and be able to challenge the stigma and discrimination they are facing.
2. **People with criminal records should be free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination as a result of government, employers and others having policies, practices and attitudes that support their fair treatment.** We will be a powerful voice in pushing for change to legislation, policies, and practices, using strategic litigation to bring about change, and increasing the research and evidence base to support us to achieve change at a policy and systemic level.
3. **We will maintain good governance and develop Unlock's sustainability and resilience.** We will translate our priorities into fully funded and resourced delivery, develop unrestricted funding streams including support from donors and philanthropists, and by growing earned income, continue to measure ourselves against the Charity Governance Code and ensure that we maintain a focus on increasing diversity and inclusion, with the aim of being representative of all sections of society

Board, employees and volunteers

Following the departure of Angela Cairns (CEO) in May 2023, two Joint Interim CEOs were appointed. During the year, our fundraising manager left Unlock and was replaced. We recruited someone with lived experience for a newly created 12-month training placement role. Additionally, we temporarily welcomed a policy worker to support our university project and a strategic policy advisor.

Caroline Bald (Trustee) and Michael Reisno (Treasurer) resigned from the board. The Chair of Trustees, Mark Rowe resigned from the board and was replaced by Faye Goldman. Mark's support to Unlock, first as a trustee and most recently as Chair has been invaluable and we wish to place on record our sincere thanks to Mark for his commitment and leadership.

Volunteers with lived experience continue to provide expert advice to people who contact our helpline. We are grateful for their time and the commitment they give to Unlock and the people we support. During the year, we have welcomed five new volunteers including three who joined us on Release on Temporary Licence from prison. A total of five volunteers left Unlock during the period, three having secured paid work and two pursuing new opportunities in different sectors.

Advice, information and support

Unlock provides information, advice and support for people with criminal records, their families and friends and the professionals who work with them. These are delivered directly through our helpline, volunteering scheme and training for professionals working to support people with criminal records within their own organisations, and indirectly through our online resources.

The Helpline

Unlock's helpline provides confidential, accurate and reliable and non-judgemental information, advice and support for people with criminal records. People can talk to an advisor on the telephone and get support and advice via WhatsApp, email and online resources. The helpline is delivered by trained staff and volunteers with a criminal record. Their personal experience allows them to offer an empathetic response to people seeking our help.

	2022/2023	2023/2024
Direct Support		
Helpline contacts	8,730	9,942
Case Work (Completed)	5	4
Self-help Support		
Visits to information/advice pages of website	1,889,899	1,727,877
Disclosure calculator	37,912	49,594

The number of contacts to the helpline in 2023/24 rose by approximately 14% to 9,942. The top five topics were:

Employment disclosure advice
Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
Filtering
Basic DBS checks
Police records

Helpline Impact

We empower helpline users with information that will help them to understand and improve their individual circumstances. For example, getting jobs, accessing education opportunities and training and travelling abroad. Individuals will often feel better able to cope with the challenges of living with a criminal record. They feel less isolated because they have access to a community of others who share their desire to move on in life. They become better able to engage with wider society.

Feedback from helpline contacts helps us to monitor the quality of support we provide, track outcomes and identify recurring and arising issues. It helps build an evidence base which underpins our work advocating for changes to policy, practice and legislation.

"Thanks for existing. You've made it very easy for people like myself to find good advice and provide reassurance."

"I'm so grateful, you cannot imagine. Your email response means so much to me. When you sink so low as a family, as a person, you need to find a way to support your son in clawing his way back. The time you took to answer my many questions is helping so much. Thank you for replying without any judgement."

The following examples show some of the ways one-to-one support can be positive for Unlock callers:

Terry – When Terry contacted the helpline he had been trying to get car insurance for his 20-year-old son who had an unspent conviction for a motoring offence. Terry had bought his son's first car but then found that the majority of insurers wouldn't insure him. Those that would quoted premiums of between £11,600 and £26,000 per annum.

We advised Terry to contact one of the insurance brokers on our list of specialist brokers who provide insurance to people with unspent convictions. After speaking with one of them, Terry was offered a fully comprehensive policy at a cost of £5178 per annum.

Within an hour of providing the quote, the broker had sent Terry all the policy documents which Terry presented to his son when he got home from work.

Khalid – In 2004 Khalid was convicted of three counts of aggravated bodily harm (ABH) and sentenced to 12 months in prison. He advised us that he had travelled to the USA for work in the past and had applied for a visa from the US Embassy. His visa was due to be renewed and as his conviction was spent, Khalid assumed that he would be able to travel under the Visa Waiver Scheme (ESTA).

We explained to Khalid that visa applications were exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and he would be required to disclose both spent and unspent convictions on the ESTA application form. If he were to tick the 'No' box on the form, the US Embassy could potentially link this back to his previous visa application when he had disclosed his 12-month prison sentence. Non-disclosure on the ESTA form could potentially lead to not only his ESTA being refused but also future visa applications.

Several months later Khalid advised that he had applied to the US Embassy, disclosing his conviction and his visa had been renewed for a further ten years. The Embassy confirmed that while he was required to disclose his ABH conviction, his offence was no longer considered inadmissible.

Volunteering at Unlock

Unlock's volunteering scheme has been running for 15 years and provides opportunities for people with criminal records to support others, build confidence and self-esteem and gain valuable employability skills and experience. Volunteers train as frontline advisors working alongside staff to provide peer-delivered information, advice and support. Volunteering is open to those living in the community as well as those on day release from prison. Remote volunteers offer support as content writers and researchers.

All frontline volunteers go through an intensive training programme including our CIPD accredited Advising with Conviction workshop, safeguarding and confidentiality modules. Volunteers are also offered the opportunity to study for a Level 2 NVQ in Information, advice and guidance which one volunteer achieved this year.

During the year Unlock's volunteers gave 1,248 hours of their time and dealt with 10% of all helpline enquiries. We are incredibly grateful for this support as without it, we would be unable to assist the number of people we do each year.

We had planned to open a new advice hub in London in 2023/24 to provide more people from marginalised communities the opportunity to volunteer with us. Due to the current economic climate and resourcing issues, this was put on hold for a minimum of six months. In 2024/25 we aim to extend the range of volunteering opportunities available including increasing the number of remote volunteers.

Individual case work

On occasion, our helpline team will go beyond normal helpline support to take up a case on behalf of an individual. Cases are taken on to achieve a positive outcome for the person, or where the intervention supports our current policy work and could potentially increase our body of evidence and/or benefit many people.

The following are examples of successful challenges:

- MY v DBS – Unlock assisted MY in an application to the DBS to be removed from the Adult's Barred List. He had been placed on the barred list following a caution for common assault in 2011 which meant he was unable to apply for a taxi licence.
- MM v DBS – Following the discharge of an indefinite restraining order MM's conviction remained on his basic DBS certificate. Unlock supported MM to challenge the DBS view that an indefinite order which had been varied would never be spent.
- LW v DBS – Unlock worked with LW to make an application to the Upper Tribunal to appeal a DBS decision to add him to the Adult's barred list.
- TM v DBS – Having been given permission to appeal a barring decision through the Upper Tribunal, Unlock assisted TM in preparing his representations and to find legal support.

Support for people in prison

Our helpline regularly receives letters and calls from people in prison on a range of issues, but particularly about resettlement. Unlock's helpline telephone number is on the prison pre-approved list meaning a person in prison can call us for information and advice without having to get prior permission.

We have continued to work with a group of men from HMP Oakwood (a Category C prison in Staffordshire) and HMP Sudbury (a Category D prison in Derbyshire) to prepare them for work whilst on ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence). We also supported the Connect Resettlement Team at HMP Rye Hill (a Category B prison in Warwickshire exclusively housing individuals convicted of sexual offences) to develop resettlement packs for prison leavers.

In July 2023 we provided information on 'What, when and how to disclose a criminal record' together with examples of self-disclosure statements for prison in-cell services. As well as providing information on Unlock's services, it is hoped that these guides will better prepare individuals leaving prison to disclose their criminal record.

During the year we recorded a series of podcasts for Prison Radio's 'Life after Prison' programme. These podcasts covered a range of subjects including how to find paid employment, common licence restrictions and progression once in employment.

Supporting people digitally

With approximately 12.5 million people in the UK having a criminal record, our website is a useful source of information and guidance on issues such as employment, insurance, travel, education, housing, relationships, finance and disclosure. Our online resources enable people to find the information they need, at a time and in a way that suits them.

In 2023/24 there were 1,727,877 visits to our information and advice pages. This is a slight decrease on the number of visitors in 2022/23 but we believe this was due to the introduction of Google Analytics 4 (GA4) which is considered more accurate in collecting website and app data than previous versions. The most popular pages viewed were our guides to filtering and travelling to the USA.

Our online disclosure calculator which helps people find out if/when their conviction is spent and filtered was used by 49,594 people during the year.

Training: supporting organisations and practitioners

Unlock ran 22 training workshops/webinars during the year with a total of 242 attendees. In-house training sessions were delivered to organisations such as Crisis, Portsmouth City Council, Mind, EDF, Social Care Wales, Ingeus, Black Country NHS Trust, Uber Thames Clippers, City of London and the Longford Trust.

“Another gargantuan thank you to Unlock for delivering an exceptional training session today. We have all come away with a wealth of invaluable knowledge and I can’t tell you how empowering and affirming it is to have this in the tool kit.”

The income generated from training supports our wider work.

Our aim during 2024/25 is to increase Unlock’s earned income through the delivery of more workshops/webinars to support organisations, practitioners and employers and the development of a new online learning course.

Policy and advocacy

Unlock’s “ear to the ground, voice at the top” approach means we listen to people with criminal records to learn about the issues they face. Then we identify where we can advocate for change at systemic, structural and legal levels to resolve them.

The change to reduce spending periods set out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act were brought in on October 28 2023. This had an immediate positive impact for thousands of people, giving hope to some people whose convictions would previously never have become spent. We worked closely with the Ministry of Justice to celebrate this change and ensure everyone affected knew about it.

There also continued to be challenges in relation to pushing for a fairer system, with safeguarding concerns often countering more progressive policies. This is a consequence of the complexity of the system leading to misunderstandings about the distinction between disclosing criminal records and the barring process, which exists to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This means the focus of our policy work has had to include arguing against regressive change as well as looking for opportunities for progression.

Some key activities and achievements this year

- Engaged with ACRO (Criminal Records Office) following their website going down after a cyber-attack to ensure people still had access to the necessary information.
- Met with the Information Commissioner's Office and Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) to discuss issues such as new data protection legislation and the advice available to people with criminal records.
- Engaged with researchers on topics including additional orders, young people, resettlement passports, the Criminal Injury and Compensation Authority (CICA) exclusionary rule and disproportionality faced by women.
- Attended meetings for Alliance for Youth Justice and the Transition to Adulthood network.

#FairChecks campaign

We work with our partner Transform Justice on the FairChecks campaign, which looks to build parliamentary support for fundamental reform of the criminal record system.

We continue to call for the following changes to legislation:

- No automatic disclosure of cautions
- Wipe the slate clean for childhood offences
- Stop forcing people to reveal short prison sentences forever

As well as raising awareness about the campaign, we also produced draft legislative changes and discussed possible bills which could be used to introduce the changes.

In addition to the three specific asks, we also called for a fundamental review of the legislation governing the criminal record system.

We spoke or presented at the following events:

- Westminster Legal Policy Forum event on tackling drug and alcohol-fuelled crime
- Just for Kids Law webinar on impact of criminal records for children
- Criminal Justice Alliance event on tackling inequality
- Institute of Government and Public Policy event on the future of prisons and rehabilitation
- Levelling Up Commission inquiry session on crime, justice and rehabilitation
- Ingeus event on lived experience in the justice system

Parliamentary work

We continued to push for a root and branch review of the criminal records system, referencing the need for this in most briefings and posts we have published and/or shared with parliamentarians, linking specific issues to the wider reform that is needed.

Some key activities and achievements this year

- Met with ministers to discuss issues including the need for a distinct criminal record system for childhood offences, FairChecks asks, the Criminal Injury Compensation Scheme and employment for people leaving prison.
- Met with officials from the Ministry of Justice, Home Office and other civil servants on topics including adding roles to the Exceptions Order, the youth custody system, access to insurance for people leaving prison, the PCSC Act.
- Liaised with MPs on several issues including problems with the ACRO website, DBS checks, the use of elevated checks in the fire service and relevant bills going through parliament (see below)
- We joined the Cabinet Office government digital service One-Login Advisory Group to provide expertise on the impact of this programme for people with criminal records.

We worked on the following bills as they passed through parliament, including engaging with relevant officials and parliamentarians and publishing briefings on key issues.

- Criminal Justice Bill
 - Unlock focused on the negative impact of taking a more punitive approach rather than prioritising effective and successful rehabilitation – specifically looking at the long term impact of a criminal record, especially that of a custodial sentence on someone’s opportunities to get a job.
- Data Protection and Digital Information (DPDI) Bill
 - There were a number of issues relevant to Unlock’s work including proposals to replace the Information Commissioner’s Office, the definition of a legitimate interest for collecting data, the role of a data controller, the processing of data by law enforcement, proposals to replace data protection impact assessments, the reduction of the burden relating to identifying the purpose for data collection and the complaint process for individuals.
- Sentencing Bill
 - Looking at the proposals to reduce the use of short prison sentences by presuming any sentence of less than 12 months should be suspended. As the disclosure of a suspended sentence is the same as that of an immediate custodial sentence, Unlock proposed community sentence alternatives should be encouraged.

- Victims and Prisoners Bill
 - Unlock proposed that this bill be used to change the unfair exclusionary rule that means someone with an unspent caution or conviction cannot access the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.

Fair access to employment

We know that one of the biggest barriers faced by people with criminal records relates to finding a job or progressing with their career. Our work aims to tackle the underlying systemic and practical barriers by pushing for legislative change, overarching guidance encouraging better practice and supporting individual employers to introduce fairer recruitment practices.

Some key activities and achievements this year

- Provided advice for 24 employers including charities, one NHS trust, one local authority, and companies of varied size and reach
- Provided feedback for a number of overarching bodies or networks on websites, published guidance, charters or internal policies
- Contributed to the Clinks Special Interest Group forum on employment for people leaving prison, advocating for better recognition of the long-term impacts of criminal records
- Shared advice and updates with several charities concerned about probation vetting, building an evidence base of the challenges faced by criminal justice charities
- Ongoing work with the Fair Chance Business Alliance – part of the overarching strategic group and providing feedback on all resources as drafted
- Submitted proposal for the Treasury Autumn Statement, advocating for better training for Department of Work and Pensions staff for people with criminal records and financial incentives for employers
- Developed a guide for the Institute of Employment Professionals
- Conducted a full review of our Recruit website for employers
- Developed a consultancy model for advice for employers

We also spoke at a number of events or webinars about inclusive recruitment, including those organised by Business in the Community, the Responsible Business Initiative for Justice, Saracens Foundation and Inclusive Employers.

Unlocking students with criminal records

This work was funded by the Bruno Schroder Trust.

People with criminal records face numerous barriers in accessing higher education. Many higher education institutions (HEIs) ask about cautions/convictions as part of their admissions policy, which can deter people from applying as well as being used to exclude those who do apply.

Our universities work aims to increase the number of HEIs with fair and inclusive policies and practices from the point that prospective students apply to study and throughout their university stay. The aim is that more people with criminal records can access and benefit from higher education.

Some key activities and achievements this year

We developed and published the Fair Study Toolkit for Higher Education Institutions to support them being more inclusive in relation to admissions from people with criminal records as well as ongoing support for students with criminal records. It was visited more than 2,200 times since its launch at the end of 2023/4 and is now linked from the UCAS website.

We attended about 50 meetings with HEIs or sector organisations which included:

- Supporting 12 universities to change their policies and process in respect of admitting students with criminal records
- Engaging with Universities UK, Universities Scotland and UCAS on the overarching sector position on criminal record checks
- Engaging with the Office for Students about ensuring their material is inclusive and fair for people with criminal records

By March 2024, at least **41%** of universities in England and Wales were using Unlock as a source of information for best practice in relation to applicants and students with criminal records.

We also supported individuals with criminal records to either navigate the admissions process or challenge unfair decisions.

Unlock publications

Throughout the year we published reports and briefings and responded to government consultations.

Consultation responses:

- Consultation on reforms to social housing allocations
- Sentencing Council consultation on imposition of community and custodial sentence guidelines
- Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs consultation on the drug prevention policies
- Ministry of Justice consultation the Diversionary and Community Cautions Draft Code of Practice
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme Review: additional consultation
- Ministry of Justice consultation on Open Justice

Original research

- A question of fairness – research into employers asking about criminal records at application stage
- Access to higher education for people with criminal records – research into the issues faced by people using our Helpline service
- Observations from DBS data
- The impact of criminal records on women
- Problems accessing insurance with a criminal record

Briefings

- Impact of changes to the criminal records system through the PCSC Act
- Unlock response to the Review of the Disclosure and Barring Regime
- CICA exclusionary rule

We also developed and published a new toolkit to help people take action if they have concerns about how their criminal record information is being used.

Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We developed a new EEDI strategy, which runs from 2023-26 and guides all aspects of our work.

Read the full strategy here: [Unlock's EEDI strategy 2023-26](#)

We introduced some new measures in respect to equality, equity, diversity and inclusion (EEDI). This included adding it as a standing item to Board meetings and regular staff meetings, adding it to the annual appraisal forms and changing the diversity forms that we use for recruitment purposes.

We reviewed and updated Unlock's criminal record policy.

There were two half-day training sessions on EEDI for staff and trustees, funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

We set up and worked with a young adult panel, who gave us feedback, both written and verbal, on the following areas of Unlock's work: digital and communications, advice and helpline, policy and advocacy. They were extremely helpful and enthusiastic and gave us particularly instructive feedback about the way we present information, how we could improve this for their demographic, how we could reach more young adults and how we can ensure that the policy messages we promote resonate with them.

Communication and engagement

Press and media

Our press and media engagement work underpins everything we do at Unlock. It raises awareness about our advice services, signposting people to our website and helpline as well as supporting our campaign and policy objectives. The stories of people with criminal records continue to be central to our message – we continually review and update our internal processes to ensure we are including not only their experiences but their voices in a supportive and respectful way.

This year we have built more positive relationships with media contacts on a wider range of topics, as we not only talk about the criminal record system but also wider issues that impact people with criminal records. In particular, it was great to have positive national media interest in the PCSC changes, which was a great opportunity for us to celebrate the right to be rehabilitated. There is also increasing interest in the importance of employment for people released from prison, and this allowed us to talk more widely about inclusive recruitment.

Here are a few key examples of positive media engagement:

- Live interviews discussing the PCSC changes on LBC and BBC 5 Live as well as an article in The Times
- Commenting on the expansion of Turing pardons on BBC news
- Raising specific issues faced by women with criminal records in the Independent
- Interviewed about Unlock's award from the High Sheriff of Kent on Radio Kent
- Quoted on inclusive recruitment in People Management Magazine, Civil Society and Third Sector

Social media

We use various social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. We find that they are each useful for slightly different audiences. Even with the exodus of people from Twitter, it is still used for engagement by the media and key policy stakeholders – although positive engagement on the site does continue to drop off. Facebook is a good way of reaching people with criminal records more directly, as we have an engaged group of people engaging with us there. LinkedIn is the channel that continues to grow, and has been especially useful in building our contacts and networks relating to employment as well as proving a more useful space for criminal justice experts to share ideas.

News & updates mailing lists

Unlock has an open subscription mailing list with over 6,729 subscribers. We send out a range of news and updates about our latest information and advice content, training for frontline practitioners, opportunities for people with criminal records, our policy work, media and vacancies, and fundraising.

Achievements

- We carried out some key user research to understand how our beneficiaries connect with others, including through our Forum, with 119 responses from people with criminal records.
- We welcomed Anna as maternity cover for the role of Communications and Digital Manager in mid-February.

Future Plans 2024-25

Our priorities for the year ahead are:

- Recruitment of a permanent CEO
- Diversification of income sources to include increased donations from individuals and increased sales of training courses.
- Create a low-cost digital training for advisors who work with people with criminal records.
- Review demand on the helpline and improve data collection to help us better keep in touch with people who use our services.
- Increase levels of 1:1 support around disclosure statements via the helpline and training
- Review volunteer training and induction programme, implementing feedback from previous volunteer's experience.

- Host round table event with Responsible Business Initiative for Justice for employers to launch new consultancy service to support employers to transform their recruitment of people with criminal records.
- Review of Recruit! Website, ensuring it is a valuable resource for employers and those seeking employment
- Increasing engagement from Universities with the Fair Study principles
- Engagement with the new government and ministers, to both present our policy priorities and seek support on specific issues
- Roundtable event on developing a better and distinct system for childhood offences

Financial review

The statement of Financial Activities is shown on page 24 The deficit for the year was £106,973 and net assets amounted to £331,588 .

Reserves policy

Unlock's ability to operate is reliant on receiving grants to support its activities. The charity has a policy to maintain enough unrestricted reserves to cover normal operating expenses for up to nine months in the event of an income shortfall. This also accounts for potential risks and unexpected expenses. The trustees have agreed to maintain reserves in the unrestricted general fund equal to six to nine months of expected operating expenses for 2024-25. This will ensure that the charity can continue its work and fulfil its commitments to staff and other obligations in case future income is not secured.

Reserves in restricted funds are set aside for specific projects or programs for which the funds were granted. It's common for income to be received in one year while program expenses are spread over one or two years. Therefore, reserves for restricted funds represent funds for ongoing programs. Unrestricted funds amounted to £299,211 at the end of the year (2023- £292,652), while restricted funds amounted to £32,377 at the end of the year (2022 - £45,026).

Designated funding

During 2023-24, a total of £80,000 in unrestricted funds was designated for investment in infrastructure, organisational development, and research opportunities. This allocation included funding for cyber security and infrastructure improvements, as well as organisational development focusing on equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives. Additionally, the allocation provided for the creation of a 12-month training placement for an individual with a criminal record. Throughout the year, the board revisited the designated funding and ultimately decided to reverse the designation for research opportunities.

Future funding

Our strategy for future funding is to increase income from a range of sources in addition to grants from trusts and foundations. This will include increasing donations from individuals and increasing earned income from training and consultancy services. The additional income will reduce our reliance on grants from trusts and foundations, but we still expect that grant funding will remain the primary source of income for Unlock.

Fundraising report

Donors to Unlock can be assured that we follow the regulatory standards for fundraising. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and are committed to the Fundraising Promise and adherence to the Code of Fundraising Practice. This report covers the requirements which charities must follow as set out in the Charities Act 2016. We do not employ agencies, external workers or suppliers to fundraise for us. Our website outlines our complaints policy and clearly explains how an individual can complain. We received no complaints in the 2023-24 financial year.

Principal funding sources

Our total income for the year was £416,849, which was received from the following sources:

	2023/24	2022/23
Grants from trusts and foundations	83%	83%
Donations	5%	4%
Earned income	1%	12%
Investment	1%	<1%
Legacies	<1%	
Other	0%	<1%

Our grateful thanks to the following grant giving funders for their generous support during the year:

AB Charitable Trust, Barrow Cadbury Trust, Bruno Schroder Trust, Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust, Drapers Charity, Garfield Weston Foundation, Esmee Fairbairn, The Hedley Foundation, The High Sheriff of Kent, J Leon Philanthropy, JG Hogg Charitable Trust, Kent Community Foundation, National Lottery Community Fund, The Noel Buxon Trust, Sir James Roll Charitable Trust, The Robert Gavron Trust, Transform Justice, WF Southall

Our thanks also to the many individual donors who kindly supported our work.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on

and signed on its behalf by:

Faye Goldman

28 October 2024

Faye Goldman, Chair of Trustees

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Examiner's Report
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited ('the Charity')

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

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the Trustees of the Charity (and its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

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

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

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

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

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

This report is made solely to the Charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.

Signed:



Samantha Rouse

Dated: 28 October 2024

FCCA DChA

Kreston Reeves LLP
Chartered Accountants
37 St Margaret's Street
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 2TU

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating income and expenditure account)
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	202,199	209,469	411,668	377,789
Investments	4	-	5,181	5,181	1,848
Other income	5	-	-	-	1,085
Total income		202,199	214,650	416,849	380,722
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	192,071	331,751	523,822	414,118
Total expenditure		192,071	331,751	523,822	414,118
Net income/(expenditure)		10,128	(117,101)	(106,973)	(33,396)
Transfers between funds	14	(22,777)	22,777	-	-
Net movement in funds		(12,649)	(94,324)	(106,973)	(33,396)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		45,026	393,535	438,561	471,957
Net movement in funds		(12,649)	(94,324)	(106,973)	(33,396)
Total funds carried forward		32,377	299,211	331,588	438,561

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 26 to 39 form part of these financial statements.

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
Registered number: 03791535

Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible assets	10	13,920	20,880
Tangible assets	11	5,001	7,131
		<u>18,921</u>	<u>28,011</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	12	3,764	3,315
Cash at bank and in hand		311,483	411,675
		<u>315,247</u>	<u>414,990</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(2,580)	(4,440)
		<u>312,667</u>	<u>410,550</u>
Net current assets		<u>312,667</u>	<u>410,550</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>331,588</u>	<u>438,561</u>
Total net assets		<u>331,588</u>	<u>438,561</u>
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	14	32,377	45,026
Unrestricted funds	14	299,211	393,535
Total funds		<u>331,588</u>	<u>438,561</u>

The Charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

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

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Faye Goldman

Faye Goldman

Date: 28 October 2024

The notes on pages 26 to 39 form part of these financial statements.

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

1. General information

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited is a charitable company, limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with the company number 03791535 and the charity number 1079046. The Charity's registered office is Maidstone Community Support Centre, 39-48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1HH.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

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

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

The financial statements are presented in British Sterling and rounded to the nearest Pound.

2.2 Going concern

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the Charity to continue as a going concern. The Trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements and have concluded that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Income

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

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the Charity has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the Charity, can be reliably measured.

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet. Where income is received in advance of entitlement of receipt, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

2.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the Charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

2.5 Intangible assets and amortisation

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, intangible assets are measured at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Amortisation is provided on intangible assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful life.

Amortisation is provided on the following basis:

Development expenditure - 20 % straight line

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.6 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £NIL or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Fixtures and fittings	-	25%
Computer equipment	-	25%

2.7 Debtors

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

2.8 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and 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.

2.9 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as a finance cost.

2.10 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 with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.11 Pensions

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the pension charge represents the amounts payable by the Charity to the fund in respect of the year.

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.12 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Donations	5,417	17,400	22,817	21,079
Legacies	-	1,546	1,546	-
Grants	196,782	146,750	343,532	312,450
Earned income	-	43,773	43,773	44,260
	<u>202,199</u>	<u>209,469</u>	<u>411,668</u>	<u>377,789</u>
Total 2023	<u>199,418</u>	<u>178,371</u>	<u>377,789</u>	

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Deposit account interest	5,181	5,181	1,848
	<u>1,848</u>	<u>1,848</u>	
Total 2023	<u>1,848</u>	<u>1,848</u>	

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

5. Other incoming resources

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Other income	-	-	1,085
Total 2023	1,085	1,085	

6. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Charitable activities	192,071	331,751	523,822	414,118
Total 2023	247,313	166,805	414,118	

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

7. Charitable activities

	Advice & Support	Policy & Advocacy	Support costs	Fundraising	Governance	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Direct costs							
Wages	159,008	143,961	28,890	43,003	14,988	389,851	325,943
Recruitment	5,315	5,315	5,614	5,459	5,160	26,864	-
Travel	2,847	2,174	1,052	158	-	6,230	5,679
Training	2,145	2,575	2,777	36	-	7,534	2,872
Sundries	463	-	-	-	-	463	13
Volunteer costs	6,156	-	-	-	-	6,156	20,408
	175,935	154,025	38,334	48,656	20,148	437,098	354,915
Support costs							
Amortisation	6,960	-	-	-	-	6,960	6,960
Depreciation	-	-	2,130	-	-	2,130	1,060
Accountancy	356	322	291	97	2,641	3,707	3,896
Trustees expenses	-	-	-	-	236	236	550
Training	-	-	-	-	2,100	2,100	-
Sundries	240	54	176	132	-	601	220
Telephone	889	390	385	111	-	1,776	2,167
Computer costs	7,133	2,576	2,535	695	-	12,939	19,184
Subscriptions	7,631	1,374	1,215	731	-	10,951	10,482
Communications	-	-	390	1,178	-	1,568	-
Repairs	171	142	160	71	-	543	668
Rent	13,166	-	-	-	-	13,166	12,195
Insurance	1,028	94	94	94	94	1,403	1,368
Consultancy	-	20,981	238	7,000	-	28,219	-
Bank charges	-	-	427	-	-	427	455
	37,574	25,932	8,040	10,109	5,070	86,726	59,205
Total 2024 costs	213,509	179,958	46,374	58,765	25,219	523,824	414,120
Total 2023 costs	150,656	161,392	62,692	29,022	10,358	414,120	

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

8. Staff costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	386,389	288,938
Social security costs	25,412	15,545
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	17,413	21,460
	<u>429,214</u>	<u>325,943</u>

During the year, a termination payment was made of £11,646 (2023: £Nil). This has been fully accounted for in the year.

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

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Employees	10	9

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

9. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2023 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 March 2024, expenses totalling £236 were reimbursed or paid directly to 3 Trustees (2023 - £NIL to 1 Trustee) for travel expenses.

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

10. Intangible assets

	Develop- ment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	34,800
At 31 March 2024	<u>34,800</u>
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2023	13,920
Charge for the year	6,960
At 31 March 2024	<u>20,880</u>
Net book value	
At 31 March 2024	<u><u>13,920</u></u>
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>20,880</u></u>

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2023	19,128	27,136	46,264
At 31 March 2024	<u>19,128</u>	<u>27,136</u>	<u>46,264</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	19,128	20,005	39,133
Charge for the year	-	2,130	2,130
At 31 March 2024	<u>19,128</u>	<u>22,135</u>	<u>41,263</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2024	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>5,001</u></u>	<u><u>5,001</u></u>
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>7,131</u></u>	<u><u>7,131</u></u>

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

12. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	3,764	1,800
Prepayments and accrued income	-	1,515
	3,764	3,315

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	2,580	4,440

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

14. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Organisation Development and Research Opportunity Fund	80,000	-	-	(80,000)	-
Fixed and Intangible Asset Fund	-	-	-	18,921	18,921
	<u>80,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(61,079)</u>	<u>18,921</u>
General funds					
General Funds	313,535	214,650	(331,751)	83,856	280,290
Total Unrestricted funds	<u>393,535</u>	<u>214,650</u>	<u>(331,751)</u>	<u>22,777</u>	<u>299,211</u>
Restricted funds					
The 1772 Charity	1,600	-	-	(1,600)	-
Barrow Cadbury Trust	1,127	550	(550)	(1,127)	-
Big Give Christmas Challenge	4,358	5,417	(4,358)	-	5,417
Bruno Schroder Trust	6,681	60,030	(61,935)	(1,211)	3,565
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	3,200	-	-	(3,200)	-
Cole Charitable Trust	918	-	-	(918)	-
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	6,519	10,000	(12,496)	-	4,023
Drapers Charity	-	15,000	(11,829)	-	3,171
Esmee Fairburn Future Plus	-	7,980	(7,980)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	8,052	-	-	(8,052)	-
Hedley Foundation	-	3,000	-	-	3,000
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	2,902	20,000	(12,701)	-	10,201
National Lottery Community Fund	5,368	76,222	(76,222)	(5,368)	-
The Noel Buxton Trust	3,000	3,000	(3,000)	-	3,000
Porticus UK	1,301	1,000	(1,000)	(1,301)	-
	<u>45,026</u>	<u>202,199</u>	<u>(192,071)</u>	<u>(22,777)</u>	<u>32,377</u>
Total of funds	<u><u>438,561</u></u>	<u><u>416,849</u></u>	<u><u>(523,822)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>331,588</u></u>

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

14. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 (restated) £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March 2023 (restated) £
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds				
Organisation Development and Research Opportunity Fund	80,000	-	-	80,000
General funds				
General Funds	292,652	181,306	(160,423)	313,535
Total Unrestricted funds	372,652	181,306	(160,423)	393,535
Restricted funds				
The 1772 Charity	2,000	1,000	(1,400)	1,600
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	250	-	(250)	-
Allen and Overy	5,000	-	(5,000)	-
Barrow Cadbury Trust	-	30,001	(28,874)	1,127
Big Give Christmas Challenge	-	4,358	-	4,358
Bruno Schroder Trust	6,150	59,911	(59,380)	6,681
Charles Hayward Foundation	834	-	(834)	-
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	4,000	-	(800)	3,200
Cole Charitable Trust	1,200	-	(282)	918
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	16,382	15,000	(24,863)	6,519
Garfield Weston Foundation	17,500	-	(9,448)	8,052
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	-	20,000	(17,098)	2,902
Lawson Endowment for Kent	3,332	-	(3,332)	-
National Lottery Community Fund	6,291	66,148	(67,071)	5,368
The Noel Buxton Trust	2,750	3,000	(2,750)	3,000
Porticus UK	33,614	-	(32,313)	1,301
	99,303	199,418	(253,695)	45,026
Total of funds	471,955	380,724	(414,118)	438,561

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

14. Statement of funds (continued)

Nature and purpose of designated funds

Organisation development and research opportunity fund – this fund related to money set aside for the charity to undertake a training placement and develop their IT infrastructure. It also included money set aside for the charity to use for research opportunities. £40k of the fund was fully utilised for the training placement and IT infrastructure. However, it was agreed to un-designate the money set aside for research opportunities.

Fixed and Intangible Asset Fund - this fund makes up the balance of the value of the fixed and intangible assets held by the Charity.

Nature and purpose of restricted funds

The 1772 Charity - A fund given related to the development of Unlock's website. During the period, the Charity reviewed its restricted funds and deemed the fund had been fully spent at point of development, and as such the amortisation has been transferred to the unrestricted fund as the restriction had been discharged.

Barrow Cadbury Trust - A three-year grant supporting policy work to reform criminal records policy for children and young adults. During the period, the Charity reviewed its restricted funds and it was deemed that this balance had previously been spent in the prior year on the required costs, and as such the balance was transferred to general funds.

Big Give Christmas Challenge - 22/23

Various donations through the 2022 Big Give Christmas Challenge to help us understand how the current complex criminal record system prevents young people from accessing education, training, and employment, and how we can assist them in breaking the cycle of disadvantage.

Big Give Christmas Challenge - 23/24

Various donations via the 2023 Big Give Christmas Challenge to support our campaign work to advocate for reform of the criminal record system relating to childhood offences.

Bruno Schroder Trust - A three-year grant supporting our policy work to increase access to higher education for people with criminal records. Part of the funds contributed to the development of Unlock's website. During the period, the Charity reviewed its restricted funds and deemed the fund had been fully spent at point of development, and as such the amortisation has been transferred to the unrestricted fund as the restriction had been discharged.

City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity - A one-year grant used to expand our helpline and volunteer scheme and to develop our website. During the period, the Charity reviewed its restricted funds and deemed the fund had been fully spent at point of development, and as such the amortisation has been transferred to the unrestricted fund as the restriction had been discharged.

Cole Charitable Trust - A grant to support the development of Unlock's website. During the period, the Charity reviewed its restricted funds and deemed the fund had been fully spent at point of development, and as such the amortisation has been transferred to the unrestricted fund as the restriction had been discharged.

Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust - A three-year grant to develop Unlock's volunteer program, enhance volunteers' digital skills, extend volunteer training, and involve volunteers in Unlock's policy work.

Drapers Charity - A one-year contribution to the advice and help salaries, premises, IT and other running costs.

Esmee Fairburn FuturePlus - A one-off grant for organisational development focused on Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training and systems training.

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

14. Statement of funds (continued)

Garfield Weston Foundation - A three-year grant to cover core costs of delivering our help and advice service. Part of the funds contributed to the development of Unlock's website. During the period, the Charity reviewed its restricted funds and deemed the fund had been fully spent at point of development, and as such the amortisation has been transferred to the unrestricted fund as the restriction had been discharged.

Hedley Foundation - A one-year grant to cover the costs of our volunteer scheme.

The J G Hogg Charitable Trust - A three-year grant for our policy work to challenge the misuse of criminal record checks and raise the confidence of people to challenge ineligible checks.

National Lottery Community Fund - A three-year grant to expand our reach by developing digital self-help resources, a website, and our volunteer scheme to supporting individuals with criminal records. Part of the fund contributed to the development of Unlock's website

The Noel Buxton Trust - A three-year grant to fund our volunteer led helpline providing advice to people with criminal records.

Porticus UK - A three-year grant contributing our work aimed at reducing barriers to employment, training and education for people with criminal records. Part of the funds contributed to the development of Unlock's website. During the period, the Charity reviewed its restricted funds and deemed the fund had been fully spent at point of development, and as such the amortisation has been transferred to the unrestricted fund as the restriction had been discharged.

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust - A three-year grant contributing to core costs for our helpline.

Allen and Overy - A grant to support the development on an online toolkit to give people who have faced discrimination the confidence to legally challenge unfair practice.

Charles Hayward Foundation - A grant contributing to the salary of our Helpline Coordinator.

Lawson Endowment - A grant contributing to the running of our volunteer scheme.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current period

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	5,001	5,001
Intangible fixed assets	-	13,920	13,920
Current assets	32,377	282,870	315,247
Creditors due within one year	-	(2,580)	(2,580)
Total	32,377	299,211	331,588

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

15. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	Restricted funds (restated) 2023 £	Unrestricted funds (restated) 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	3,919	3,212	7,131
Intangible fixed assets	16,970	3,910	20,880
Current assets	24,137	390,853	414,990
Creditors due within one year	-	(4,440)	(4,440)
Total	45,026	393,535	438,561

16. Pension commitments

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charity to the fund and amounted to £17,413 (2023 - £16,954). A balance of £Nil (2023 - £Nil) was payable to the scheme at the balance sheet date and is included in creditors.

17. Related party transactions

The Charity has not entered into any related party transaction during the year, nor are there any outstanding balances owing between related parties and the Charity at 31 March 2024.

Unlock, for people with criminal records

England & Wales - Charity number 1079046

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03791535 (England and Wales)

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1079046

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023
FOR UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LIMITED**

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LIMITED

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The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006) present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited

Working name	Unlock – for people with criminal records
Registered Company number	03791535 (England and Wales)
Registered Charity number	1079046
Registered office & operational address	Maidstone Community Support Centre 39-48 Marsham Street Maidstone Kent ME14 1HH

Trustees	Caroline Bald (joined 19 October 2022) Salima Budhani (left 27 July 2022) Mark Day (Chair) Faye Goldman (Vice-chair) Leigh Hardy Steven Lorber Hamish MacLellan Mandeep Mahil Michael Pattinson, Vice-chair and Treasurer (left 18 January 2023) Michael Reinsoo (joined 23 March 2022) Mark Rowe, Chair Tom Wheatley (joined 19 October 2022) Emma Wilson
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Senior Management	Angela Cairns, CEO, Jo Easton, Director of Policy and Advocacy Debbie Sadler, Head of Advice
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President	General The Lord David Ramsbotham GCB CBE (deceased 13 December 2022)
Vice-President	Judge John Samuels QC

Patrons	Kate Adie OBE DL Dr Silvia Casale Dr Deborah Cheney Prof Andrew Coyle CMG Dexter Dias QC The Rt Hon the Lord Garnier QC Prof Nick Hardwick Matt Hyde FRSA Baroness Helena Kennedy QC Flo Krause LLB Prof Shadd Maruna Jill Stevens
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Bankers NatWest (Larkfield), 718 London Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6AN

Independent Examiner Calcutt Matthews, 19 North Street, Ashford, Kent TN24 8LF

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

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

Following an extensive review of Unlock's memorandum and articles of association, the board of trustees unanimously passed a new set of articles of association by special resolution in June 2020. The new articles of association provide for greater clarity and practical ease of administration, including setting trustee tenure periods and the appointment of a vice chair. There were no changes to the objects, rules on paying a trustee or what happens if the charity is wound up. The articles of association were submitted to and accepted by the Charity Commission, with the Commission's records being updated accordingly in July 2020. Companies House was also notified.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The board carries out an annual review to decide whether there is a need to recruit new trustees. If during the year a trustee leaves, the board will decide whether to recruit at that time. New trustees are openly recruited through advertisement across appropriate forums. Two new trustees were appointed this year: Caroline Bald and Tom Wheatley.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees have an induction session at Unlock's office or virtually to meet other trustees, staff, and volunteers to gain a better understanding of Unlock's work, priorities, and how it operates. They are given the charity's key documents and assigned guidance to read issued by the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Organisational structure

Unlock is a charitable company governed by a board of trustees with day-to-day operations delegated to the Chief Executive.

Related parties

No related parties exist other than the funders identified below.

Risk management

The trustee board has carried out a review of the major risks facing the charity. A risk register is in place which prioritises these risks and identifies mitigating factors, systems, and controls in relation to each. Trustees follow a comprehensive monitoring and review process to review identified risks regularly and to capture new risks that may arise and ensure that systems are in place to manage and mitigate these risks.

Governance

Trustees attend scheduled board meetings four times a year; in 2022-23 the trustee attendance rate was 83%. One additional board meeting was held to discuss the annual plan and budget for 2023/24. Individual trustees lead on identified portfolios including safeguarding, risk management, whistleblowing, finance, GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), digital development, human resources, Charity Governance Code, and fundraising. They are encouraged to attend training events and seminars to develop their roles and increase their contribution to the charity's governance. Trustees also undertake ad-hoc tasks as and when required and task-specific working groups are formed as needed and meet separately.

In working towards fulfilling Unlock's vision and achieving high standards of governance and leadership, the trustee board applies the Charity Governance Code. Overseen by the Charity Commission, the Code sets out principles and recommended practice to help us achieve the highest standards of governance and leadership. The board undertakes self-assessment against the Code annually.

Unlock operates within an equal opportunities framework that is inclusive of people with criminal convictions and seeks to attract trustees with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. Approximately a third of our trustees and staff have a criminal record.

A working group which involves staff and trustees oversees and drives forward Unlock's equality, diversity and inclusion agenda in line with our strategic priorities.

Interests

The trustee board maintains a register of members' interests as a measure of good practice and to manage any conflicts that arise. The register is updated and reviewed annually.

Safeguarding

Unlock has a robust safeguarding policy and other related policies including whistleblowing with named lead trustees for both. In this reporting period, no safeguarding incidents have been identified as relevant for reporting to the Charity Commission via a serious incident report and no whistleblowing concerns were raised.

Management

Management and development of the charity are delegated to the Chief Executive who reports directly to the chair of trustees. A framework of financial delegation is set out in a policy and procedures manual. Systems for line management, appraisal, staff development and supervision are in place, together with grievance and complaints procedures.

Remuneration policy

The trustee board sets staff's salaries. In 2022/3 a remuneration committee was set up to annually review staff salaries and related terms and conditions. A benchmarking and cost of living exercise was carried out to inform proposed changes. Changes were then approved by the board.

Public Benefit

Unlock assists people with criminal records to live positive, crime-free lives. In planning the charity's activities this year, the trustees paid due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. Our activities and beneficiaries are described below and in the 'About Us' section of our website: www.unlock.org.uk

OBJECTIVES

As stated in our governing document, Unlock's charitable objects are:

"To advance education and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of people who have received a criminal record (including those who have suffered a legal restriction on their liberty at any penal establishment as a punishment imposed by a court of law, received a non-custodial sentence, fine or any other court or other recorded disposal, such as a police caution), in particular but not exclusively by the provision of information, advice, advocacy and training, and the undertaking of research and policy work, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the aforementioned persons."

Purpose

Unlock is a national independent advocacy charity that supports, speaks up and campaigns for people facing stigma, prejudice and discrimination because of their criminal record. We believe that everyone should be able to move on from their past and contribute fully to society. We provide information, give advice and take on cases to help people overcome the obstacles they are facing because of their criminal record. Many people feel like they are serving a second sentence of stigma and discrimination. To challenge this injustice we collect evidence, speak out and campaign for change so that policies, practices and attitudes allow people the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Vision

Our vision is of a fair and inclusive society where people with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination.

Mission

Our mission is to advocate for people with criminal records so they can move on positively in their lives. Specifically we:

- Support people with criminal records to navigate their way through challenges.
- Campaign for changes to legislation, policies and practices of government, employers and others.
- Research, present evidence and raise awareness of the systemic issues faced by people with criminal records.

The issues faced by people with criminal records

Prevailing attitudes and language such as "offenders", "ex-offenders" and "prisoners", fail to acknowledge the substantial number (over 12 million people) and wide diversity of people in this country, from all walks of life, who have a criminal record. Most people are convicted on only one occasion, 90% do not receive a prison sentence and of those who do go to prison, 47% have sentences of less than 6 months and 71% have committed a non-violent offence.

Disclosure

The current criminal record system requires disclosure of cautions and convictions beyond the completion of any sentences – sometimes for the rest of someone's life. There is a popular emphasis on an individual's responsibility to rehabilitate themselves following a conviction but regardless of how much effort a person makes, there are many significant barriers to getting jobs and promotions, accessing education, training, housing, financial services, travel abroad, volunteering and in many other areas of everyday life. The situation is further complicated by issues of intersectionality and the complex relationship between disadvantage, discrimination and criminal records that entrenches social and economic inequality.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) says that a spent criminal record is **not** legitimate grounds for discrimination. However, it does not provide any way to enforce this and people with criminal records are left with no obvious way to uphold their rights. There is a patchwork of other law which tangentially may cover spent criminal records, as part of other employment rights and wrongful dismissal laws. However, this is difficult for people to understand, and many do not even know when the law might have been broken.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was established in 2012 to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and to prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups including children. Unfortunately, conversations about safeguarding often put too much reliance on criminal record checks as a way of identifying risk. Checks can be a useful tool, but understanding what information they provide and how it relates to risk is key to making sure people are not excluded unnecessarily. It is also important to remember that only where there is a clear need should employers be accessing additional criminal record information about spent convictions through standard or enhanced DBS checks. Evidence from our helpline shows that employers asking for or carrying out ineligible checks continues to be a real problem.

Even where formal checks are not undertaken, it is now widespread practice for employers to make an internet search during the recruitment process. This leads to the so-called “Google-effect” – where information about old convictions which should be treated as spent or filtered is still available online – meaning employers may end up seeing information that they are not entitled to consider.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) places a responsibility on employers to collect only *relevant* personal information (including criminal records) and to explain why it is needed. The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) requires organisations collecting criminal record data to have clear policies governing this data collection, but many organisations are not even aware of this requirement or that criminal record data is treated as a distinct group of personal data.

Disclosure in employment

It is widely held that a principal factor identified in stopping reoffending is having a job. Fair chance recruitment opening job opportunities for people with criminal records therefore benefits everyone in society, not just the people getting a job. Recent drives by government to encourage employment of people leaving prison can be helpful but it is important to remember that most people with a criminal record have not been to prison. Research published by Working Chance in 2022 showed that 30% of employers would automatically exclude a candidate who declared an unspent conviction. The positive news is that the same research showed employer attitudes towards people with criminal records are improving – with 45% now saying they would hypothetically recruit someone with a conviction, an increase from 25% in 2010¹.

We know that employers rejecting people is not the only problem, as there is a chilling effect experienced by people with a criminal record who often avoid applying for jobs due to a fear of rejection or shame about their past, if they are asked to disclose. Experience of discrimination can become internalised, leading to a lack of self-confidence and resulting in self-censorship in what training or work a person will apply for. Business in the Community (BITC) found that over half (52%) of people with a criminal record would not apply for a job

¹ [Progress_Prejudice_Shifts_in_UK_employer_attitudes_to_hiring_people_with_convictions.pdf](https://ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com/Progress_Prejudice_Shifts_in_UK_employer_attitudes_to_hiring_people_with_convictions.pdf)
(ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com)

where they needed to disclose their criminal records.²

Employment is not the only area where people with a criminal record face stigma and discrimination. Despite some recent positive improvements to the criminal records system, a criminal record can still have a pervasive impact in multiple ways:

- **Access to education** – In 2018 UCAS removed the ‘criminal convictions’ box for applicants to non-regulated courses at university. But most universities continue to collect this information and we regularly hear from people who find that old and minor criminal records cause problems when applying to university, particularly in accessing courses like social work and healthcare.
- **Housing** – Since 2011 social housing providers have had the right to apply blanket bans to applicants with unspent criminal convictions. Many providers ask on application and apply some form of exclusion for those who declare a conviction.
- **Insurance** – Insurance cover is often refused or subject to unjustified increased premiums. Insurance companies regularly consider convictions that have no relevance to the insurance sought. Insurers fail to follow industry good practice and are often misleading in the questions they ask or assumptions they make, suggesting that people with spent convictions need to disclose these.
- **Travel** – Visa requirements and confusing travel restrictions can deter or prevent travel.
- **Information on the internet** – Media reports online can lead to information about criminal offences remaining publicly accessible for many years, undermining the purpose of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA).
- **Becoming a trustee or senior manager of a charity** - The Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 prevents charities recruiting trustees and senior managers with certain criminal records. Amendments in 2018 extended the framework to cover senior staff and extended the trustee disqualification framework to cover people on the sex offenders register (even when the conviction is spent).

We also know that a criminal record can further entrench inequalities and discrimination experienced by certain groups in the criminal justice system including children and young people, women and minoritised groups.

Disproportionate Impact

A criminal record acquired as a child can be a life sentence. Even though the youth justice system recognises that children must be treated differently than adults due to their vulnerability and lack of maturity, the criminal record system only makes a few allowances (such as halving rehabilitation periods) to any cautions or convictions received before the age of 18 years. As well as the inherent unfairness of allowing incidents that occurred when a child to have long-term impacts on their life, because of their age, discrimination faced in respect of employment (for example) can continue 30 years after someone has completed their sentence.

Concern around the failure of the criminal justice system to fairly deal with other groups such as young adults, women or those with mental health problems all impact on someone’s criminal record and therefore various aspects of their life.

² Finding work after prison – a survey of prisoners' attitudes towards employment and the criminal record tick box, Business in the Community (BITC), p.4

An issue of particular concern is in respect of racially minoritised groups. Ethnicity can impact on the type of criminal record someone receives as people from racially minoritised communities are more likely to be stopped and searched, face more serious charges and more punitive sentences, if convicted³.

- Data since 2014 shows white people have had a consistently lower average custodial sentence length for indictable offences than all other ethnic groups⁴.
- Black teenage boys are more likely to be charged with murder than manslaughter and more likely to receive a higher or maximum sentence than white teenage boys⁵.
- One in four black teenage boys guilty of manslaughter were given maximum jail terms, while white children found guilty of the same crime were sentenced to no more than ten years, with the majority getting less than four⁶.

Our research shows that people feel the criminal records system disproportionately impacts certain racialised groups as well as exacerbating problems faced by people already treated more harshly at all stages in the criminal justice system. Ways to minimise the use of criminal records may benefit racialised groups and would result in a much fairer system for everyone.

Discriminatory and unfair attitudes mean that people with criminal records usually want to keep their past private. They are unlikely to challenge unfair discrimination or even illegal action by employers and others. Even where individuals are willing, there is virtually no legal recourse or penalties – so the situation is perpetuated. People with criminal records remain anchored in their past, unable to fulfil their potential, and the impact of having a criminal record remains largely unrecognised by government, others with power or the general public. Consequently, the depth and extent of challenges around criminal records are largely hidden and under-reported.

The result of this situation is that people face not only practical and financial problems but are emotionally anchored to past, unhappy experiences. It also means that a vast amount of human potential and talent is being wasted.

Our approach

Independent

We believe it is important that we hold government, agencies and others to account. We also believe it is important that people with criminal records trust us. That's why we're independent: Unlock neither seeks nor accepts government funding and this is crucial to our model of working. While we aim to work constructively with government and other partners wherever possible, we are also at liberty to take a critical stance on policies which unfairly restrict opportunities for people with criminal records.

We speak truth to power. As a result, the people for whom we exist, and our supporters and funders can be sure that our sole motivation is to improve the life chances of people with criminal records. Our power comes from our knowledge of what's happening to people with criminal records, publishing reports, persuading the unwilling, encouraging good practices and exposing those practices which are unacceptable. We're politically independent - but we are not neutral about our agenda of change to criminal records.

³ The data set out below is discussed in an Unlock Block: <https://unlock.org.uk/blog-cjs-racial-discrimination-black-lives-matter/>

⁴ Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2018, Ministry of Justice (2019). See also The Lammy Review (2017)

⁵ 'Exclusive' article by May Bulman, The Independent, 3 October 2018

⁶ *ibid*

Involve and include people with criminal records

We believe that personal experience is intrinsically valuable, so we recruit people with criminal records throughout the organisation (and particularly as staff and volunteers to deliver our frontline support). Peer experience offers a bridge of understanding, awareness and empathy to people who sometimes find it hard to talk about the issues they face. We also have a trustee board where a third of the members have a criminal record. We proactively involve and support people to contribute to our advocacy, campaigns and policy work, because people with criminal records know best about the problems that they face. We also acknowledge the value that people with criminal records bring to Unlock due to their knowledge, skills and experience, apart from their specific life experience of the justice system.

Ear to the ground, voice at the top

Every day we listen and engage with around 40 people who face difficulties because of their criminal record. We have a proven track record of identifying issues, finding solutions and putting them into practice. We influence policy and create systemic change, continually punching above our weight to achieve large-scale outcomes with employers, service providers, advice agencies and government. Too often, policies and systems divide and disempower people; and politicians and organisations hoard rather than share power. We create platforms and build confidence and capacity for individuals to take more power and to influence.

Think big. Act big. Stay small.

We are a small charity with big ambitions. We constantly adapt our work so that we better meet the needs of the people for whom we exist. To do this, we need to make tough choices; we can't do everything. Longer term, it is important that we can ensure that the organisation's core work continues, which means working efficiently and effectively.

Work in partnership

We collaborate and build strategic partnerships with like-minded organisations to maximise our impact. If we are to achieve real change, we also need to work with people and organisations that are different to Unlock, and to develop partnerships that influence the way in which they think and behave.

UNLOCK'S ACHIEVEMENTS OVER TWO DECADES

We are proud to have played a key part, over more than 21 years, in bringing about positive changes which have benefited people with criminal records:

- Our helpline and other information resources have helped tens of thousands of individuals and supported businesses, universities and other organisations to make their recruitment, employment or other decision-making systems fairer for people with criminal records.
- Following lobbying and campaigning from Unlock, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced reduced rehabilitation periods. For the first time since the introduction of the ROA in 1974, most convictions will be able to become spent at some point, even for longer prison sentences of over four years. Some people are excluded from these changes and convictions will not become spent for certain offence-types. However, despite changes to the law, the required changes to the criminal records disclosure system at the DBS were not completed until well over a year until after the act was made law, with the changes being implemented on 28 October 2023.
- A Supreme Court ruling in 2019, following Unlock's first legal intervention, led to the government introducing changes to the filtering rules in late 2020 which benefit around 45,000 people a year. But many convictions and cautions still show up on higher-level DBS checks for many years, sometimes forever.
- The Ban the Box campaign, which Unlock co-founded in 2013, now has over 150 employers that commit to not asking about criminal records at application stage. But Unlock research (2018) showed that three quarters of national employers continue to ask at this point⁷.
- The introduction of filtering rules in 2013 meant people with some single convictions and cautions no longer had them show up on standard or enhanced checks. Around 120,000 standard or enhanced checks a year no longer disclose criminal records because of filtering. But the rules were unnecessarily rigid and meant that many people still had old and minor criminal records disclosed.
- Changes to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, passed in 2012 and introduced in 2014, reduced the disclosure period for most jobs for hundreds of thousands of people, and meant those sentences between 30 months and four years could become spent. But it kept a sizeable proportion of people excluded because of the length or type of their sentence and it failed to tackle the underlying issues with the legislation in today's society.

Despite making progress there remains much to do to achieve our mission of a fair and inclusive society where people with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination.

⁷ [Summary-A-question-of-fairness.pdf \(unlock.org.uk\)](#)

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT 2022-23

Organisational development

Strategy and planning

In April 2021 we launched our strategic plan, **Tackling Injustice, Changing Lives**. An annual organisational workplan allows us to track progress towards our key priorities, ensuring implementation is in line with our strategy. The board receives a quarterly update report against the activities, opportunities, challenges and outcomes in both the workplan and Unlock's strategic priorities.

Our three overarching priorities

1. **People should have knowledge, skills, confidence and support to overcome the disadvantages related to their criminal record.** We will reach more people by helping them to self-serve digitally, and we will strengthen our capacity to support people more. Together, this will enable people with criminal records to be aware of their rights, know where to turn for advice, and be able to challenge the stigma and discrimination they are facing.
2. **People with criminal records should be free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination as a result of government, employers and others having policies, practices and attitudes that support their fair treatment.** We will be a powerful voice in pushing for change to legislation, policies, and practices, using strategic litigation to bring about change, and increasing the research and evidence base to support us to achieve change at a policy and systemic level.
3. **We will maintain good governance and develop Unlock's sustainability and resilience.** We will translate our priorities into fully funded and resourced delivery, develop unrestricted funding streams including support from donors and philanthropists, and by growing earned income, continue to measure ourselves against the Charity Governance Code and ensure that we maintain a focus on increasing diversity and inclusion, with the aim of being representative of all sections of society

Board, employees and volunteers

Following a review of Unlock's structure, four new people joined the Unlock team during 2022/23; one new team member joined the advice team and three people joined the policy team, replacing one policy officer who had left. Volunteers continued to play a vital role in the delivery of the charity's activities.

Memberships and working groups

We continue to work positively to build relationships and partnerships across government, private sector, statutory agencies, and the voluntary sector (through body membership, board membership, participatory working groups, and formal agreements for collaborative working). Over the past year, significant relationships included membership of the Helplines Partnership, Clinks, Criminal Justice Alliance, Free Representation Unit; NCVO. Unlock is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and the Fundraising Regulator.

Across our policy and campaign activities, we work with other organisations including Alliance for Youth Justice, Clinks, National Association for Youth Justice, the Criminal Justice Alliance; Information Commissioner's Office, Working Chance, Prison Reform Trust, Ministry of Justice, Home Office, Disclosure and Barring Service, Transform Justice, Business in the Community (BITC), New Futures Network and Employers' Forum for Reducing Re-offending (EFFRR).

Advice, information and support

Unlock provides information, advice and support for people with criminal records, their families and friends and the professionals who work with them. These are delivered directly through our helpline, volunteering scheme and training for professionals working to support people with criminal records within their own organisations, and indirectly through our online resources.

The Helpline

Unlock's helpline provides confidential, accurate, reliable, and non-judgmental information, advice, and support for people with criminal records. People can talk to an advisor on the phone and get support and advice via WhatsApp, email, and online resources. The helpline is delivered by trained staff and volunteers with criminal records. Their personal experience allows them to offer an empathetic response to people seeking our help.

"I contacted you for disclosure advice before applying for my personal licence. The licence was granted this morning. Thanks for the advice, it's a fantastic service you provide. You really helped to lift a weight off my mind."

	2021-22	2022-23
Direct support		
Helpline contacts	9,019	8,730
Case work (completed)	12	5
Self-help support		
Visits to information and advice web pages	[993,281] ¹	1,889,899
Forum members	4,268	4,411
Disclosure calculator uses	43,198	37,912 ²
Volunteering		
Volunteers supported	4	3
Time given by volunteers	1,734 hrs	1,049 hrs
Training for practitioners		
Training events delivered	23	21
Number of people trained	289	224

¹ This figure represents user sessions at the Information Hub, which no longer exists but is provided for comparison.

² This represents use from the end of May 2022, when the new disclosure calculator launched

Whilst the helpline received fewer contacts in 2022-23 compared with the previous year, many of the contacts were more complex with callers facing multiple issues or barriers preventing them from moving on with their lives. This is likely to be partly in response to our objective of encouraging and making it easier for people to digitally self-serve by using our website and useful tools. As more people are able to find the answer to straightforward questions via our website, direct contacts to our helpline are more likely to be about more complex issues.

It is also worth noting that we had fewer volunteers in 2022-23 but even so, contacts compared to volunteer hours has increased from 5 contacts per hour to 8 contacts per hour.

Most contacts were seeking information and/or advice on disclosing a criminal record or trying to establish what would appear on criminal record checks. In particular, there were queries relating to standard and enhanced DBS certificates, where the criteria for filtering cautions/convictions can be complex and where individuals will often have to disclose details of their criminal record before they have had sight of their DBS certificate.

Helpline Impact

Helpline users are empowered with facts that help them understand and improve their individual circumstances – getting jobs, education opportunities and training, accessing housing, improving their financial situation, travelling abroad and much more. They then feel better able to cope with the challenges of living with a criminal record, less isolated because they have access to a community of other people who share their desire to move on in life and are better able to engage with wider society. Strengthened emotional foundations lead to better family relationships, improved life outcomes, and reduced motivation to reoffend which, in turn, has a positive effect on wider society.

“I have avoided applying for so many jobs because of the shame of my conviction. I now know that my conviction has been filtered and I can put it behind me and move forward. Thank you for putting my mind at rest.”

Feedback helps us monitor the quality of the support we provide, track outcomes, and identify recurring and arising issues. It helps build an evidence base and advocate for changes to policy, practice, and legislation. People calling the helpline tell us they have positive outcomes relating to jobs and education, insurance, and housing, gaining confidence, improved sense of wellbeing and better understanding their rights and responsibilities.

“Really grateful to Unlock. If it wasn't for them, I would have had no chance with any university application.”

“Just come off the phone to Simon on the helpline. The conversation was overwhelming. He made me laugh and cry and made me see that I'm not a bad person. A massive burden has been lifted – what a smashing guy.”

“I just spoke to a helpline advisor. They were calm and extremely helpful. Gave me the time I needed to explore my enquiry fully and made sure I understood the information they provided. Your customer service approach to people is first class.”

“Your department [sic] consistently outperforms any Government organisation I have come across in providing excellent (and intelligent) public service.”

‘You have really helped my family over the past 8 or 9 years. I have three children who are happy, healthy, and mentally unscarred, and that's down to Unlock.’

The following examples show some of the ways one-to-one support can be positive for Unlock callers:

Salah had been convicted of stalking and harassment following the breakdown of a previous relationship. He had been invited to attend an interview for an IT apprenticeship but was concerned that due to the nature of his offence, the women he would be working with, would object to his employment.

We explained that the only people who would know about his conviction would be his line manager and/or HR manager. As part of the recruitment process, a risk assessment may be carried out to ensure all the team were working in a safe and secure environment.

Salah had worked with his probation officer to better understand his offending behaviour and was confident he would never reoffend. We explained that this was something Salah should include in any disclosure conversation with his employer. A week later Salah told us that he'd been offered the IT apprenticeship.

Sam initially contacted us when he wanted help applying to university to study for a paramedic course.

His application was successful and as part of the admissions process, the university applied for an enhanced DBS check. This resulted in the DBS writing to Sam informing him that they were considering adding him to the adults and children's barred lists due to his conviction from 2015. Sam was extremely concerned that if he were barred, he would never be able to become a paramedic or work in any type of regulated activity.

We were able to explain to Sam how the DBS barring process worked and what to include in his representation.

Sam shared his draft representation with us for feedback. His letter was extremely detailed, and Sam was also able to include 5 references both professional and character.

Several weeks later Sam confirmed that the DBS were not going to add him to a barred list and that he could concentrate on his paramedic studies without any distraction.

Volunteering at Unlock

Unlock's volunteer scheme provides opportunities for people with criminal records to support others, build back confidence and self-esteem and gain valuable workplace skills and experience. Based at our Maidstone office, volunteers train as frontline advisors, working alongside staff to provide a unique, peer-delivered information, advice, and support service. This allows us to respond to many more people than would otherwise be possible. Volunteering is open to those living in the community as well as those on day release from prison. Remote volunteers offer support as content writers and researchers.

Volunteers are encouraged to take an active part in Unlock's activities and are invited to other training opportunities. Future volunteers will continue to undertake our disclosure training (endorsed by the Institute of Employability Professionals).

In 2022/23 two volunteers achieved Level 2 NVQs in Information, Advice and Guidance. This well recognised qualification lends itself well to on-the-job training and the specialist skills gained are sought after in a growing number of industries.

The recruitment of new volunteers to helpline advisor roles continued to be a challenge due to all three local Kent prisons (HMP East Sutton Park, Standford Hill and Rochester) focusing on getting residents into paid employment. Interest from people in the community also fell, possibly due to shortages in the labour market making it easier for individuals to find paid work.

In 2023/24 we will be setting up a new advice hub in London, with new volunteers to be recruited to this hub. This should allow us to provide more people from marginalised communities the opportunity to volunteer with us and gain new skills and experience.

A volunteer's experience

Since childhood I have struggled with my mental health. My family found this hard to deal with and probably didn't get me the help or support I needed. I don't blame them; things were very different at that time.

Becoming a father was one of my greatest achievements and I worked hard to support my son both financially and emotionally. However, around 2012 my mental health started to deteriorate and in 2015 I received a conviction which led to a 5-year prison sentence.

On release I struggled to find paid work but determined to keep myself fully occupied I applied to volunteer at Unlock as a helpline advisor. My confidence was at an all-time low, and I didn't know what to expect from the role.

The team instantly made me feel welcome and after completing my training I was able to start responding to emails and answering the telephones. Many calls are quite easy to deal with, people needing disclosure advice or wanting to know what's going to appear on their DBS certificate but sometimes, I find myself speaking to somebody who is going through a mental health crisis just like I was. During my training I imagined that I'd find it difficult to deal with these types of calls but strangely I've found that by helping others, I'm actually helping myself.

Individual case work

On occasion, our helpline team will go beyond normal helpline support to take up a case on behalf of an individual. Cases are taken on to achieve a positive outcome for the person, or where the intervention supports our current policy work and could potentially increase our body of evidence and/or benefit many people.

The following are examples of successful challenges:

- SB and DBS – Following a potential ineligible check for a finance officer role, Unlock requested that the DBS carry out a test of regulated activity. Once the DBS had confirmed that the role did involve regulated activity, Unlock worked with SB to draft representation as to why he should not be included on the barred list.
- DJ and DBS – Unlock assisted DJ to make an application to the Upper Tribunal to appeal the DBS decision to add him to the children's barred list because of a conviction in 1985.

- AB and the Security Industry Authority. Unlock supported AB through the appeal process. The Security Industry Authority issued him a licence in June 2022.
- AM and Disclosure and Barring Service. Unlock supported AM with a request to be removed from the adult and children's barred lists after a previous application had been refused. AM was removed from both barred lists in May 2022.
- LB and John Lewis Insurance. Following non-disclosure of a partner's conviction John Lewis had refused to settle a claim and were minded to bring a charge of fraud against LB. No further action was taken by John Lewis after Unlock advised that the question on the insurance application form was misleading and the non-disclosure was an error and not fraudulent.

Support for people in prison

Our helpline regularly receives letters and calls from people in prison on a range of issues and particularly about resettlement. Unlock's helpline number is on the prison pre-approved list meaning a person in prison can call us for free and without prior permission.

Throughout the year we have worked with a group of men from HMP Oakwood (a category C prison in Staffordshire) to prepare them for work whilst on ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence).

In September 2022 we recorded a podcast on disclosing a criminal record for Prison Radio's 'Life after prison' programme. We have continued to work with them to provide information and advice on a range of other topics.

Supporting people digitally

With limited helpline capacity and a large potential beneficiary group, our websites provide a wide range of information and guidance on tackling issues such as employment, insurance, travel, education, housing, relationships, finance, filtering, disclosure – in fact just about everything in life that is affected by having a criminal record. Online resources allow people to find the information they need, at a time and in a way that suits them.

In 2022-23, there were 1,889,899 visits to our information and advice pages. There were over 61,400 downloads of our PDF resources, with the most popular download being our guide to filtering.

Redeveloping the Unlock disclosure calculator

Unlock's disclosure calculator is a free, instant, and confidential way for people to find out if or when their record will become spent and no longer disclosed to employers and other organisations.

We knew the original disclosure calculator had a dated look and feel, and some people found it difficult to use. In May 2022 we launched the newly redeveloped calculator, which sits within our main website. The new calculator is much simpler to use, is optimised for mobile as well as desktop use, and is built in a way that allows us to make changes quickly and easily in response to feedback or changes to legislation. We also have access to anonymised analytics, which will support our evidence base for policy change.

From its launch in May 2022 up to the end of March 2023, 37,912 people used the new calculator.

“Very simple and effective – well done!”

“This is awesome and easy”

“I just wanted to say how useful I found the calculator!”

- Feedback from calculator users

theForum

The forum continues to be an active community where people with a criminal record can share their experiences. Throughout 2022/23, 1,247 new posts were added to the forum across a range of subjects.

Trialling zoom surgeries

In September 2022, Unlock started a pilot project of face-to-face, online advice surgeries (Zoom surgeries) with a total of 5 surgeries being held. Despite all appointments being pre-booked as soon as they were released, the attendance rate on the day was only 50%.

Feedback from users was positive, particularly the ability to book an appointment in advance. However, surgeries of this type are resource intensive and could only continue as and when more helpline advisors were recruited.

Recruit

Unlock’s Recruit website provides advice, guidance, and templates for employers to use to develop fair recruitment policies and practice.

In the past year, the site was used by 26,000 different users.

Employers also contacted us over the past year for further information and advice, after looking at Recruit. In some cases, employer queries led to tailored, detailed advice and support to revise policies and practices. Several employers reported finding the policy builder especially helpful, and a key sector partner let us know that it was the Recruit site which had enabled them to source insurance for their charity. We have been tidying and updating the Recruit site to increase engagement with the resources available there.

Monitoring website usage and feedback

Our websites are continuously monitored allowing us to track usage and make improvements. Using Google Analytics, we collect data and analyse metrics, and we use various methods to capture and analyse user feedback.

Every page on our website includes a ‘*was it easy to find what you were looking for?*’ question, with the option to tick yes or no and leave written feedback. This helps us to make sure our content is working well, and the site is well-organised. In 2022-23 we asked our website agency (Clear Honest Design) to make improvements to the way feedback is displayed in the back end, making it easier for us to identify and act upon any trends.

Online support in relation to our policy work

People accessing our online spaces are encouraged to become contributors to all our online channels, sharing individual stories and providing peer support for others in similar circumstances. This creates a powerful sense of community, fostering support and empathy as well as useful information. The experiences of people using Unlock's online channels inform and influence our policy work. This allows us to identify recurring issues and take action to advocate for systemic change of policy or law to improve circumstances for many people.

Training: supporting organisations and practitioners

Unlock ran 21 training workshops/webinars during the year with a total of 224 attendees. In-house training sessions were delivered to organisations such as Black Country Healthcare, Newcastle Youth Justice Service, Social Care Wales, Ingeus UK and the London School of Economics.

We regularly receive contact from practitioners who do not feel confident in giving advice to their clients. Mistakes can prove costly, with people missing out on jobs and other opportunities because of receiving inaccurate advice. Training covers a variety of issues on and around disclosure and participants include individuals, statutory bodies, charities, and businesses.

"We work with people who have a criminal record, both as clients and volunteers and wanted to better understand our responsibilities. The session gave us all the information we required; I'd definitely recommend it."

"The presenter was very clear and explained things really well. The course was very well organised and the level of engagement was good."

"Some people I support in my job are ex-offenders and I wanted to be in a position where I can offer the correct level of advice. This course will help me to do that."

The income generated from training supports our wider work.

Policy and advocacy

Unlock's "ear to the ground, voice at the top" approach means we listen to people with criminal records to learn about the issues they face. Then we identify where we can advocate for change at systemic, structural, and legal levels to resolve them.

Politically and economically, this year has seen a challenging environment to bring about change. The two main political parties continue to lead with narratives around taking more punitive approaches, including being tougher on crime, increased sentences and encouraging more prohibitive/restrictive controls for anti-social behaviour (even where it is not criminal). This makes it a particularly challenging environment to be talking about progressive policies that focus on rehabilitation rather than punishment. In addition, there have been a series of horrific cases, particularly involving police officers, that have renewed conversations about safeguarding, with a tendency for a risk averse approach to be taken. This means the focus of our policy work has had to include arguing against regressive change as well as looking for opportunities for progression.

The Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Act (April 2022) was a major piece of legislation which reduces the length of time some people will have to disclose their criminal record. For many of those with a custodial sentence of more than four years, there is for the first time a chance that their convictions will be spent. This means they will no longer have to disclose their criminal record. However, these changes were not implemented until 28 October 2023.

Further reform of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 - Unlock has long campaigned for fundamental changes to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA), which is the principal legislation governing the disclosure of criminal records to employers, educational institutions, insurers, and housing providers. The current law means that:

- Rehabilitation periods are too long and result in a form of secondary punishment where a person faces continued discrimination and stigmatisation.
- A criminal record still results in life-long impacts for too many people, even with the positive changes for some convictions to become spent sooner
- Childhood offences are not dealt with appropriately, taking into account the focus of the youth justice system on the welfare of the child
- There is no legal protection for spent convictions: rehabilitated people are powerless to prevent employers, housing providers and others using spent convictions to exclude them.

Unlock continues to advocate for a root and branch review of the ROA, and the development of fresh legislation that is fit for purpose. Given the importance of understanding the experiences of those with criminal records (and others), we believe the review should be an open policy-making process as recommended by the Cabinet Office. This means engaging with a broad range of experts and people with experience. As the 50th anniversary of the ROA is approaching, we believe this is the perfect time to review and reform the legislation. We are calling for:

- Every sentence to have the potential to become spent during a person's lifetime.
- Everyone who has a criminal record should be able to make their case that they have moved on, with the potential to have their record declared spent or filtered by impartial adjudicators.
- Only more serious offences and those that present a clear safeguarding risk can be allowed to remain on standard and enhanced DBS checks for life.
- Amendment of anomalies in rehabilitation periods, especially for children and young adults.

Policy and campaigning activities

- **Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.** In August 2022 we provided a response to the government's consultation on whether to remove the so-called "exclusionary rule" whereby anyone with an unspent criminal conviction is unable to access compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA). We have subsequently published a short briefing on this topic. A recommendation to alter this rule was included in the final report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.
- **Engagement with relevant ministerial teams.** With the changes in government personnel over the last year, we have been proactive in writing to new ministers, including the Prime Minister, upon their appointments. We published a Policy Manifesto, which was shared with relevant ministers and about which we received positive feedback.

- **Provided a response to the Joint Committee on Human Rights Bill of Rights inquiry.** This outlined our position in relation to government proposals that would have made it more challenging for people with criminal records to seek judicial reviews, a route that has been crucial in challenging unfair rules relating to criminal records.
- **Engaged with the Home Office concerning additions to list roles exempted from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and, therefore, eligible for elevated DBS checks.** This resulted in an agreement that any new roles added would have to be accompanied by detailed guidance on how criminal record checks should be used, including the importance of nuanced decision-making which takes account of the specifics of each case.
- **Engaged with parliamentarians who were commenting on the criminal record system or relevant issues.** We monitored Hansard, and contacted any MP or peer we believed would find additional information useful – this led to some positive interactions and an increased understanding of the criminal record system.
- **Engaged with other charities to lobby on the importance of introducing a distinct criminal record system for childhood offences**
This included raising awareness about the impact that cautions and convictions can have on children and young people by adding references to key publications and discussing issues with key stakeholders
- **Advocated for the distinct needs of young adults in respect of their criminal record**
This included responding to the government consultation on their drug white paper and provided input into a key report on early guilty pleas for young adults

Specific projects

1. **#FairChecks campaign** We have been working with our partner Transform Justice on the FairChecks campaign, which looks to build parliamentary support for fundamental reform of the criminal record system. Following the re-launch in February 2022, we focus on three strategic policy asks:
 - No automatic disclosure of cautions
 - Wipe the slate clean for childhood offences
 - Stop forcing people to reveal short prison sentences forever

As of 31 March 2023, there were 5,697 subscribers to the FairChecks campaign and over 200 MPs were contacted by subscribers over the year.

We have also widened the campaign to include businesses who support FairChecks aims. Alongside the Responsible Business Initiative for Justice, we have spoken at several events to raise awareness about the issue. Over 20 businesses signed a statement of support for our call for a fundamental review and reform of the criminal record system.

2. Criminal records disclosure; call for regime change

The Barrow Cadbury Trust funded a strand of work aiming to reduce the number of people negatively affected by the criminal records disclosure system – particularly those who acquired a criminal record as children or young adults. This strand is at the heart of our policy work and documented throughout this report. We continue to call for reform to the criminal records disclosure system to give children and young adults a fair chance to build positive futures. We believe that:

- There should be a distinct, child-specific process for dealing with criminal records received before the age of 18
- Disclosure periods should correspond with age at time of the offence not conviction
- Maturity should be reflected in the disclosure system

3. Fair access to employment

Our work to tackle the underlying systemic and practical barriers faced by people with criminal records continues to be funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

The law in this area is complex and difficult to navigate, with a lack of official guidance from governments and regulators and few HR specialists having sufficient knowledge or expertise. Through our work with employers, we work toward the following outcomes:

- Employers include people with criminal records as part of diversity and inclusion initiatives
- Government has innovative policies to increase recruitment of people with criminal records
- Unlock is the go-to source of guidance and support for employers across multiple sectors
- Job applicants and employees turn to Unlock to challenge employer bad practice

Over the year, we worked with employers in healthcare, charity, construction, and other sectors on developing a fair approach to asking and assessing criminal records information. This work is tailored to the needs of the specific employer including advice on specific situations, reviewing of policies, providing information sessions, presentations, and training for employees.

We worked with numerous employers including:

- Black Equity Organisation
- Reed
- Department of Work and Pensions
- NHS Business Services Authority
- Connection Crew
- KPMG
- Spark Inside
- Oxley NHS Trust

In addition to working directly with employers, we also carried out the following activities:

- Produced monthly updates for Xpert HR website
- Completed follow-up research to 2018 paper 'A Question of Fairness', mystery shopping employers
- Supported key partners to develop their resources, share best practice and report on sector challenges (e.g. Working Chance, Good Jobs project, MOJ (Ministry of Justice), New Futures Network)
- Presented to employers about #FairChecks and at a roundtable hosted by the Saracens Foundation re disclosure of criminal records, ban the box and Fair Chance recruitment.

We also responded to two consultations relevant to inclusive recruitment:

- Institute for Employment Studies commission into employment support
- Professional Standards Authority consultation on elevated criminal record checks

We worked closely with a new partner on the development of the Fair Chance Business Alliance, which is producing an employer-led charter for employers to promote fair and inclusive recruitment. This charter will be based on Unlock's Fair Chance principles.

4. Unlocking students with criminal records

This project is funded by the Bruno Schroder Trust.

Despite education being widely recognised as a key factor in successful rehabilitation, current admission policies present serious psychological and practical challenges to accessing higher education. Although there is no evidence that enrolling students with convictions makes campuses more dangerous or that they are more likely to commit crimes on campus, many higher education institutions continue to ask about convictions as part of their admissions policies.

University policies can also deter people from applying. With complex and differing policies and procedures they often fail to follow good practice.

Our universities strand of work aims to increase the number of higher education institutions with fair and inclusive policies and practices from the point that prospective students apply to study and throughout their university stay, so that more people with criminal records can access and benefit from higher education. We do this by:

- Building a comprehensive understanding and database of higher education institutions' policies relating to students with criminal records.
- Ensuring higher education institutions have appropriate support policies and plans for students with criminal records and the wider student body.
- Encouraging the consideration of people with criminal records as a distinct group that should benefit from targeted work to increase inclusion in higher education

Activities and achievements this year include:

- Reviewed one year of Helpline records relating to higher education, to produce a briefing report on the themes identified
- Conducted full review of universities database of all UK Universities' policies and publicly available information for applicants
- Built our Fair Study Website for higher education providers to promote and provide guidance on fair approaches for applicants and students with criminal records
- Engaged with numerous universities to highlight challenges relating to criminal records in higher education. This includes ongoing, tailored consultancy and advice as well as general awareness-raising.
- Worked closely with sector partners (e.g. UCAS, Universities UK) to support resource development and influence sector approaches to applicants and students with criminal records

Reports, submissions, and briefings

Throughout the year we published reports and briefings and responded to government consultations. In addition to those referenced above, we published:

- Response to the review into the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme
- Unlock policy manifesto – *Unlocking Change*
- Response to government consultation called 'New consequences for drug possession'
- Evidence submitted to the Joint Committee on Human Rights parliamentary scrutiny of the proposed Bill of Rights
- Two briefings on why we need reform of the criminal record system and why employers should implement our fair chance principles for recruitment

Ensuring Unlock is effective, efficient and professional in its work and operations

Invest in our people – Changes in the staff team allowed us to review Unlock’s capacity to deliver on our strategic priorities. A new Director of Policy and Advocacy was recruited and started work in August 2022. Two new policy officers also started work in July 2022 and January 2023 respectively so even though one policy officer moved on in December 2022, the team grew. A new Helpline Adviser also started in June 2022.

We reviewed the existing database being used for all helpline queries, and a new provider was identified which would allow us to use one CRM system for all our work including fundraising, policy work and helpline queries. The move to Beacon was therefore started in Q4 following training for all staff.

Increase our visibility – this included growing our media presence, where it was useful for delivering this strategy. We built on our successful social media presence, developing our strategy further. We also strengthened and aligned our brand to our values and key messages.

Press and media

We continue to build our press and media engagement work, to grow awareness of our work and services as well as support our campaign and policy objectives. This year we continued to include the voices of people with criminal records in our media work and embed our agreed principles of autonomy and informed consent; respect and dignity; anonymity and remuneration. We also continue to develop productive and ongoing relationships with journalists, thereby increasing our pool of engaged media contacts to whom we can pitch proactively. Examples of successful media engagement include:

- Quotes from Unlock in two pieces by the Mirror on the injustice of the ‘exclusionary rule’ which prevents victims of serious crime with unspent convictions from receiving compensation
- An opinion piece in the Charity Times about the over-use of enhanced DBS checks in the charity sector
- Multiple live appearances on BBC Radio Kent
- A live interview with our Chief Executive on Sky News
- Comments featured in The Guardian, Civil Society and inews

Social media

We use our social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn) to communicate with our audiences in diverse ways. Twitter is a key channel for reaching media, policy, and charity sector audiences, whereas our smaller but highly engaged Facebook audience is primarily people with criminal records who want the latest updates and advice from our team. In the past year LinkedIn has proved a successful channel for us, allowing us to reach professionals in HR and recruitment with our guidance for employers, as well as providing a platform for us to discuss policy issues in more depth than Twitter allows. In 2022-23 we continued to see good engagement across our channels, although the acquisition of Twitter by Elon Musk in November 2022 caused significant uncertainty and impacted engagement rates for us and many other organisations. We are continuing to monitor how our audience engages across different platforms, and encouraging our followers to join us in the spaces we own, such as our mailing list.

News & updates mailing lists

Unlock has an open subscription mailing list with over 6,700 subscribers. We send out a range of news and updates about our latest information and advice content, training for frontline practitioners, opportunities for people with criminal records, our policy work, media and vacancies, and fundraising.

In 2022-23 we worked on improving the segmentation of our list to deliver more targeted, relevant emails to our subscribers. We will build on this in the coming year by utilising Beacon, our new CRM system. In 2022-23 we sent out a total of 37 email campaigns across all segments including news and updates, training promotion and opportunities for people with criminal records.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) group (formed in 2021/2) continued to lead Unlock's EDI work. Comprised of the Chief Executive, two trustees and one member of staff, the group agreed to engage independent and specialist support to help identify areas of strength and potential improvement in our external services and internal policies. After inviting proposals from several organisations, Diverse Matters were commissioned to deliver the audit. As well as a review of all internal policies and external websites and services, Diverse Matters carried out interviews with staff and trustees. Their report identified areas of strength on which we can build, as well as areas for development. The findings of this report, along with input from staff and trustees, will form the basis of the organisation's EDI strategy to be developed fully in 2023/24.

FUTURE PLANS

Our top priority plans for the year ahead are:

- Increase the number of people accessing Unlock's helpline services annually by 10% by;
 - promoting the helpline to organisations representing/working with groups
Unlock has traditionally not attracted
 - promoting the helpline to prisons
 - continue piloting webchat and
 - piloting a Unlock volunteering hub in London.
- Create a new digital tool for Unlock's website which allows people to see what level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check a role is eligible for
- Develop plans to take advantage of the 50th anniversary of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act in 2024 to advance Unlock's goal of a root and branch review of the criminal records system.
- Push for a distinct criminal records system for children and young people, building the evidence base and making alliances with other organisations and decision makers.
- Develop a new project focusing on young adults, starting with setting up a young adult panel to advise on the work.
- Push for better practice and policy change with employers via prison employment advisory boards, the employer-led Fair Chance Business Alliance, Responsible Business Initiative for Justice, and tighter guidance from Information Commissioners Office (ICO)/DBS.
- To improve monitoring, evaluation and learning data collection & data analysis across the organisation so decisions can be made to assess effectiveness and impact of Unlock's work and to inform future activities.
- To improve Unlock's policies, practises, understanding, and culture relating to Equality, Equity Diversity & Inclusion using the 2022 Diverse Matters audit as a baseline.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The statement of Financial Activities is shown on page 31. The deficit for the year was £33,396 and net assets amounted to £438,559.

Reserves policy

Unlock is dependent on grants to sustain its activities. The charity's reserves policy is to maintain enough unrestricted reserves to enable normal operating activities to continue over a period of up to nine months should a shortfall in income occur, and to take account of potential risks and contingencies that may arise from time to time. Trustees have therefore agreed to hold reserves on the unrestricted general fund equivalent to six months to nine months expected operating expenditure for the year 2023-24, amounting to £313,533. This will allow the charity to continue working and to meet its commitments to staff and other obligations if future income could not be secured.

Any reserves on restricted funds are set aside to fund the specific project or programmes for which the funds were granted. It is common for income to be received in one year, yet programme expenditure straddle one or two years. Reserves for restricted funds therefore represent monies for programmes that are currently ongoing. Unrestricted funds amounted to £313,533 at the year-end (2022 £292,652). Restricted funds amounted to £125,026 at the year-end (2022: £179,303).

The Board of Trustees have agreed to designate a total of £80,000 of unrestricted funds for investment in infrastructure and organisational development, in line with the charity's strategic priorities over the next three years. These include cyber security and infrastructure improvements, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion improvements, research to further policy work and a training placement for a person with a criminal record.

Future funding

To preserve our ability to respond to user needs and advocate fully on their behalf, Unlock will remain independent of statutory funding to deliver services. Where possible, income is earned by delivering services to other organisations such as training, advertising, and speaker engagements. However, it is envisaged that the charity will continue to rely in the most part on charitable grants and donations.

Fundraising report

Donors to Unlock can be assured that we follow the regulatory standards for fundraising. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and are committed to the Fundraising Promise and adherence to the Code of Fundraising Practice. This report covers the requirements which charities must follow as set out in the Charities Act 2016. We do not employ agencies, external workers or suppliers to fundraise for us. Our website outlines our complaints policy and clearly explains how an individual can complain. We received no complaints in the 2022-23 financial year.

Principal funding sources

Our total income for the year was £380,724, which was received from the following sources:

	2022/23	2021/22
Grants from trusts and foundations	83%	84%
Donations	4%	5%
Earned income	12%	10%
Investment	<1%	< 1%
Other	<1%	< 1%

Our grateful thanks to the following grant giving funders for their generous support during the year:

1772 Charity, Barrow Cadbury Trust, Bruno Schroder Trust, Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust, Esmee Fairbairn, J Leon Philanthropy, J G Hogg Charitable Trust, Kent Community Foundation, National Lottery Community Fund, Noel Buxton Trust, Persula Foundation, Transform Justice.

Our thanks also to the many individual donors who kindly supported our work.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 20th December and signed on its behalf by:



.....

M K Rowe, Chair of Trustees

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Unlock National Association of Ex-Offenders Ltd ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales which is one of the listed bodies.

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

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

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



Nicholas Hume FCA
Calcutt Matthews WBZ Ltd
19 North Street
Ashford
TN24 8LF

Date:20th December 2023.....

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted		31.3.23	31.3.22
		Total		Restricted	Total
	Notes	funds	funds	funds	funds
		£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	178,373	199,418	377,791	390,978
Investment income	3	1,848	-	1,848	43
Other income		<u>1,085</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,085</u>	<u>1,500</u>
Total		<u>181,306</u>	<u>199,418</u>	<u>380,724</u>	<u>392,521</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
	4				
Support		20,301	42,391	62,692	73,597
Policy and Advocacy		46,316	115,076	161,392	123,896
Advice and Support		66,097	84,559	150,656	125,616
Governance		8,041	2,317	10,358	6,090
Fundraising		<u>19,673</u>	<u>9,349</u>	<u>29,022</u>	<u>29,660</u>
Total		<u>160,428</u>	<u>253,692</u>	<u>414,120</u>	<u>358,859</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		20,878	(54,274)	(33,396)	33,662
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>292,652</u>	<u>179,303</u>	<u>471,955</u>	<u>438,293</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>313,530</u>	<u>125,029</u>	<u>438,559</u>	<u>471,955</u>

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD
BALANCE SHEET
31 March 2023

		Unrestricted		31.3.23	31.3.22
		Total		Restricted	Total
	Notes	funds £	funds £	funds £	funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Intangible assets	8	3,910	16,970	20,880	27,840
Tangible assets	9	<u>3,212</u>	<u>3,919</u>	<u>7,131</u>	<u>1,286</u>
		7,122	20,889	28,011	29,126
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	10	3,315	-	3,315	2,954
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>307,536</u>	<u>104,139</u>	<u>411,675</u>	<u>443,275</u>
		310,851	104,139	414,990	446,229
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(4,440)	-	(4,442)	(3,400)
		<u>306,411</u>	<u>104,137</u>	<u>410,548</u>	<u>442,829</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		313,533	125,026	438,559	471,955
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		<u>313,533</u>	<u>125,026</u>	<u>438,559</u>	<u>471,955</u>
NET ASSETS					

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD
BALANCE SHEET - continued
31 March 2023

		Unrestricted		31.3.23	31.3.22
		Total		Restricted	Total
	Notes	funds	funds	funds	funds
	13	£	£	£	£
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds:					
General fund				313,533	292,652
Restricted funds:					
The 1772 Charity				1,600	2,000
Porticus UK				1,301	33,614
Barrow Cadbury Trust				1,127	-
The Noel Buxton Trust				3,000	2,750
Lawson Endowment for Kent				-	3,332
Garfield Weston Foundation				8,052	17,500
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust				-	250
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust				2,902	-
National Lottery Community Fund				5,368	6,291
Designated Fund				80,000	80,000
Allen and Overy				-	5,000
Bruno Schroder Trust				6,681	6,150
Charles Hayward Foundation				-	834
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity				3,200	4,000
Cole Charitable Trust				918	1,200
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust				6,519	16,382
The Big Give Christmas Challenge				<u>4,358</u>	<u>-</u>
				<u>125,026</u>	<u>179,303</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>438,559</u>	<u>471,955</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 20th December 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
M K Rowe - Trustee

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

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

Expenditure

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

Allocation and apportionment of costs

Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they all have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Support costs are allocated to charitable activities on the following bases:

Staff, communication and office costs - Staff time.
Premises costs and depreciation - Staff time

Tangible fixed assets

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

Fixtures and fittings - 25% on cost
Computer equipment - 25% on cost

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

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

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

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

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

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.3.23	31.3.22
	£	£
Donations	16,721	20,930
Grants	316,808	330,023
Earned income	<u>44,262</u>	<u>40,025</u>
	<u>377,791</u>	<u>390,978</u>

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	31.3.23	31.3.22
	£	£
Persula Foundation	6,000	-
Colyer-Fergusson Charitable Trust	15,000	28,000
The Noel Buxton Trust	3,000	3,000
Kent Community Foundation (The Overstone Grass Roots Fund)	10,000	-
Sir James Roll Charitable Trust	-	800
The 1772 Charitable Trust	1,000	2,000
Porticus UK	-	49,998
J Leon Philanthropy	10,000	10,000
Ten Percent Foundation	-	500
AB Charitable Trust	-	20,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust (St Sarkis)	30,000	-
Lawson Endowment for Kent	-	5,000
Charles Hayward Foundation	-	5,000
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	-	4,000
3Ts Charitable Fund	-	10,000
The Cole Charitable Trust	-	1,200
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	10,000
W F Southall Trust	-	3,000
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	-	1,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	-	5,000
Kent Community Foundation Core Costs	-	3,000
Transform Justice	5,750	6,000
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	20,000	10,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust	-	31,500
National Lottery	66,148	64,835
Allen and Overy	-	5,000
Bruno Schroder Trust	59,910	51,190
Esmee Fairbairn Cost of Living	<u>90,000</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>316,808</u>	<u>330,023</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.3.23	31.3.22
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>1,848</u>	<u>43</u>

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs £	Totals £
Support	58,586	4,106	62,692
Policy and Advocacy	161,392	-	161,392
Advice and Support	32,236	118,420	150,656
Governance	5,648	4,710	10,358
Fundraising	<u>-</u>	<u>29,022</u>	<u>29,022</u>
	<u>257,862</u>	<u>156,258</u>	<u>414,120</u>

5. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

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

	31.3.23	31.3.22
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	1,059	4,256
Other operating leases	12,195	12,195
Development costs amortisation	<u>6,960</u>	<u>6,960</u>

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees' expenses

	31.3.23	31.3.22
	£	£
Trustees' expenses	<u>550</u>	<u>405</u>

7. STAFF COSTS

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

	31.3.23	31.3.22
Staff	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

Staff numbers above represent the FTE of 9 employees.

8. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Development costs £
COST	
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	<u>34,800</u>
AMORTISATION	
At 1 April 2022	6,960
Charge for year	<u>6,960</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>13,920</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2023	<u>20,880</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>27,840</u>

These intangible assets were purchased by restricted grants.

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2022	19,128	20,231	39,359
Additions	<u>-</u>	<u>6,904</u>	<u>6,904</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>19,128</u>	<u>27,135</u>	<u>46,263</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2022	19,128	18,945	38,073
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>1,059</u>	<u>1,059</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>19,128</u>	<u>20,004</u>	<u>39,132</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>7,131</u>	<u>7,131</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>	<u>1,286</u>	<u>1,286</u>

10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.23 £	31.3.22 £
Trade debtors	1,800	2,954
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>1,515</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>3,315</u>	<u>2,954</u>

11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.23 £	31.3.22 £
Bank loans and overdrafts (see note 12)	2	1,000
Accruals and deferred income	1,800	-
Accrued expenses	<u>2,640</u>	<u>2,400</u>
	<u>4,442</u>	<u>3,400</u>

12. LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	31.3.23 £	31.3.22 £
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Bank overdrafts	<u>2</u>	<u>1,000</u>

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	292,652	20,881	313,533
Restricted funds			
The 1772 Charity	2,000	(400)	1,600
Porticus UK	33,614	(32,313)	1,301
Barrow Cadbury Trust	-	1,127	1,127
The Noel Buxton Trust	2,750	250	3,000
Lawson Endowment for Kent	3,332	(3,332)	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	17,500	(9,448)	8,052
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	250	(250)	-
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	-	2,902	2,902
National Lottery Community Fund	6,291	(923)	5,368
Designated Fund	80,000	-	80,000
Allen and Overy	5,000	(5,000)	-
Bruno Schroder Trust	6,150	531	6,681
Charles Hayward Foundation	834	(834)	-
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	4,000	(800)	3,200
Cole Charitable Trust	1,200	(282)	918
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	16,382	(9,863)	6,519
The Big Give Christmas Challenge	-	4,358	4,358
	<u>179,303</u>	<u>(54,277)</u>	<u>125,026</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>471,955</u>	<u>(33,396)</u>	<u>438,559</u>

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	181,306	(160,425)	20,881
Restricted funds			
The 1772 Charity	1,000	(1,400)	(400)
Porticus UK	-	(32,313)	(32,313)
Barrow Cadbury Trust	30,001	(28,874)	1,127
The Noel Buxton Trust	3,000	(2,750)	250
Lawson Endowment for Kent	-	(3,332)	(3,332)
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	(9,448)	(9,448)
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	-	(250)	(250)
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	20,000	(17,098)	2,902
National Lottery Community Fund	66,148	(67,071)	(923)
Allen and Overy	-	(5,000)	(5,000)
Bruno Schroder Trust	59,911	(59,380)	531
Charles Hayward Foundation	-	(834)	(834)
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	-	(800)	(800)
Cole Charitable Trust	-	(282)	(282)
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	15,000	(24,863)	(9,863)
The Big Give Christmas Challenge	4,358	-	4,358
	<u>199,418</u>	<u>(253,695)</u>	<u>(54,277)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>380,724</u>	<u>(414,120)</u>	<u>(33,396)</u>

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	330,293	17,359	(55,000)	292,652
Restricted funds				
Fairness Foundation	3,000	(3,000)	-	-
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	30,000	(30,000)	-	-
The 1772 Charity	-	2,000	-	2,000
Porticus UK	40,000	(6,386)	-	33,614
The Noel Buxton Trust	-	2,750	-	2,750
Lawson Endowment for Kent	-	3,332	-	3,332
Garfield Weston Foundation	7,500	10,000	-	17,500
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	1,500	(1,250)	-	250
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
National Lottery Community Fund	-	6,291	-	6,291
Designated Fund	25,000	-	55,000	80,000
Allen and Overy	-	5,000	-	5,000
Bruno Schroder Trust	-	6,150	-	6,150
Charles Hayward Foundation	-	834	-	834
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	-	4,000	-	4,000
Cole Charitable Trust	-	1,200	-	1,200
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	-	16,382	-	16,382
	<u>108,000</u>	<u>16,303</u>	<u>55,000</u>	<u>179,303</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>438,293</u>	<u>33,662</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>471,955</u>

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	119,796	(102,437)	17,359
Restricted funds			
Fairness Foundation	-	(3,000)	(3,000)
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	-	(30,000)	(30,000)
Kent Community Foundation	3,000	(3,000)	-
The 1772 Charity	2,000	-	2,000
Porticus UK	49,998	(56,384)	(6,386)
Barrow Cadbury Trust	31,500	(31,500)	-
The Noel Buxton Trust	3,001	(251)	2,750
Lawson Endowment for Kent	5,000	(1,668)	3,332
Garfield Weston Foundation	10,000	-	10,000
W F Southall Trust	3,000	(3,000)	-
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	-	(1,250)	(1,250)
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	1,000	(2,000)	(1,000)
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	5,000	(5,000)	-
National Lottery Community Fund	64,835	(58,544)	6,291
Allen and Overy	5,000	-	5,000
Bruno Schroder Trust	51,191	(45,041)	6,150
Charles Hayward Foundation	5,000	(4,166)	834
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	4,000	-	4,000
Cole Charitable Trust	1,200	-	1,200
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	<u>28,000</u>	<u>(11,618)</u>	<u>16,382</u>
	<u>272,725</u>	<u>(256,422)</u>	<u>16,303</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>392,521</u>	<u>(358,859)</u>	<u>33,662</u>

During the year, expenditure allocated to the CMWC, 1772 and CCT funds consisted of amortisation against fixed assets that are held within the restricted funds.

14. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2023.

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD
 DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
 for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	31.3.23 £	31.3.22 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	16,721	20,930
Grants	316,808	330,023
Earned income	<u>44,262</u>	<u>40,025</u>
	377,791	390,978
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	1,848	43
Other income		
Other income	<u>1,085</u>	<u>1,500</u>
Total incoming resources	380,724	392,521
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Wages	199,297	185,173
Social security	18,573	18,140
Pensions	11,020	11,776
Training	2,872	1,084
Travel	5,679	1,518
Volunteer costs	20,408	1,995
Sundries	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>
	257,862	219,701
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	88,841	83,195
Social security	4,524	4,418
Pensions	2,888	3,085
Recruitment	<u>800</u>	<u>10,788</u>
	97,053	101,486
Finance		
Other operating leases - rent	12,195	12,195
Insurance	1,368	1,334
Repairs & renewals	668	69
Carried forward	14,231	13,598

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD
 DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
 for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	31.3.23	31.3.22
	£	£
Finance		
Brought forward	14,231	13,598
Conference fees and room hire	<u>178</u>	<u>63</u>
	14,409	13,661
Information technology		
Software	17,384	1,824
Development costs	6,960	6,960
Computer equipment	<u>1,060</u>	<u>4,256</u>
	25,404	13,040
Human resources		
Subscriptions	10,482	4,509
Websites	1,800	476
Telephone	2,167	2,044
Postage and stationery	592	165
Bank charges	<u>455</u>	<u>331</u>
	15,496	7,525
Governance costs		
Trustees' expenses	550	405
Accountancy and legal fees	<u>3,346</u>	<u>3,041</u>
	<u>3,896</u>	<u>3,446</u>
Total resources expended	<u>414,120</u>	<u>358,859</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u><u>(33,396)</u></u>	<u><u>33,662</u></u>

Unlock, for people with criminal records

England & Wales - Charity number 1079046

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03791535 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1079046

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022
FOR
UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFEND
ERS LTD

Calcutt Matthews WBZ Ltd
Chartered Accountants
19 North Street
Ashford
Kent
TN24 8LF

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2022. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

As stated in our governing document, Unlock's charitable objects are:

"To advance education and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of people who have received a criminal record (including those who have suffered a legal restriction on their liberty at any penal establishment as a punishment imposed by a court of law, received a non-custodial sentence, fine or any other court or other recorded disposal, such as a police caution), in particular but not exclusively by the provision of information, advice, advocacy and training, and the undertaking of research and policy work, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the aforementioned persons."

Purpose

Unlock is a national independent advocacy charity that supports, speaks up and campaigns for people facing stigma, prejudice and discrimination because of their criminal record. We believe that everyone should be able to move on from their past and contribute fully to society. We provide information, give advice and take on cases to help people overcome the obstacles they are facing because of their criminal record. Many people feel like they are serving a second sentence of stigma and discrimination. To challenge this injustice we collect evidence, speak out and campaign for change so that policies, practices and attitudes allow people the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Vision

Our vision is of a fair and inclusive society where people with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination.

Mission

Our mission is to advocate for people with criminal records so they can move on positively in their lives. Specifically, we:

- Support people with criminal records to navigate their way through challenges.
- Campaign for changes to legislation, policies and practices of government, employers and others.
- Research, present evidence and raise awareness of the systemic issues faced by people with criminal records.

Our beneficiaries: millions of people in the UK have a criminal record

There are nearly 12 million people in the UK with a criminal record, the vast majority of whom have put their mistakes behind them and are living law-abiding lives. Yet for many, their criminal record anchors them to their past and gets in the way of them fully contributing to society.

It's not just those who have been to prison

The cost of reoffending is up to £18 billion a year and 75% of individuals leaving prison make a new claim to an out-of-work benefit within two years of release. We regularly hear from people who say, "The real sentence started after I was released from prison". However, over 90% of people with a criminal record have not been to prison. A third of men and one in nine women have a criminal record by age 53 and three-quarters of those convicted before the age of 53 had only been convicted once.

The injustice of a second sentence

People with criminal records can find themselves locked out of society, continually punished long after they have served their sentences. This injustice can be seen in the numbers of people still unemployed many years later; around a third of people claiming Job Seeker's Allowance have received a conviction or caution in the previous ten years. Unlock's work is founded on the principle that people who have already been punished by the criminal justice system should not face further punishment or exclusion from aspects of civil society.

A criminal record is crippling for employment

Fair access to employment benefits everyone in society. Recent drives by government to encourage employment of people leaving prison have some merit but ignore the fact that most people with a criminal record have not been to prison. According to Ministry of Justice research, the most important factor identified in stopping reoffending was having a job. However, 75% of employers discriminate against applicants based on a criminal record and Department of Work and Pensions/YouGov research shows that 50% of employers say they would not recruit 'offenders or ex-offenders'. Feeling shame or embarrassment about their earlier transgressions, people often avoid applying for jobs which require criminal record checks. There is clear evidence from the United States that reform of criminal record checking gets people off welfare and into work.

A criminal record can further entrench racial inequality

Ethnicity can impact on the type of criminal record someone receives. Data since 2009 shows white people have had a consistently lower average custodial sentence length for indictable offences than all other ethnic groups. Black teenage boys are more likely to be charged with murder than manslaughter and more likely to receive a higher or maximum sentence than white boys. One in four black teenage boys guilty of manslaughter were given maximum jail terms, while white children found guilty of the same crime were sentenced to no more than ten years, with the majority getting less than four. Our data shows that people feel the criminal records disclosure regime disproportionately impacts certain racialised groups. The disclosure system exacerbates problems faced by people already treated more harshly at all stages in the criminal justice system. Ways to minimise the use of criminal records may benefit racialised groups and would result in a much fairer system for everyone.

Children and young people

A criminal record acquired in youth can be a life sentence. Young people can change quickly, but their criminal records do not: young adults can find a criminal record holding them back at a key period in their working lives and well into adulthood. In 2021, 11,293 Standard/Enhanced disclosure certificates were issued containing details of offences (convictions and or cautions) committed before the applicant was 18 years old.

The prejudice is wide-ranging and has intensified

When the current system of criminal background checks was introduced in 2002, around 1.2 million checks were processed. There are now over six million checks a year, of which over four million are at a higher level, meaning that spent convictions can be disclosed. Since the launch of the Police National Computer in 1974, criminal records have evolved from being used merely for crime detection purposes, to becoming a means of categorising people as potentially 'unsuitable', 'risky' or even 'undeserving'.

Despite some recent positive improvements to the criminal records system, a criminal record can still have a pervasive impact:

- **Access to education** - In 2018 UCAS removed the 'criminal convictions' box for applicants to non-regulated courses at university. But most universities continue to collect this information and we regularly hear from people who find that old and minor criminal records cause problems when applying to university, particularly in accessing courses like social work and healthcare.
- **Housing** - Since 2011 social housing providers have had the right to apply blanket bans to applicants with unspent criminal convictions. Many providers ask on application and apply some form of exclusion for those who declare a conviction.
- **Insurance** - Insurance cover is often refused or subject to unjustified increased premiums. Insurance companies regularly take into account convictions that have no relevance to the insurance sought. Insurers fail to follow industry good practice and are often misleading in the questions they ask or assumptions they make, suggesting that people with spent convictions need to disclose these.
- **Travel** - Visa requirements and confusing travel restrictions can deter or prevent travel.
- **Information on the internet** - Media reports online can lead to information about criminal offences remaining publicly accessible for many years, undermining the purpose of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA).
- **Becoming a trustee or senior manager of a charity** - The Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 prevents charities recruiting trustees and senior managers with certain criminal records. Amendments in 2018 extended the framework to cover senior staff and extended the trustee disqualification framework to cover people on the sex offenders register (even when the conviction is spent).

It doesn't stop when a criminal record becomes spent

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 established an important legal principle that, after a specified period of time, most criminal records could become 'spent' (meaning that they could not lawfully be taken into account in most circumstances). However, over four decades since the legislation's introduction, its impact has been gradually eroded. Reducing the time periods after which criminal records become spent is priority for Unlock. The ever-increasing number of 'exceptions' limit the protections of the Act and the status of having a criminal record which is now 'spent' risks becoming meaningless if it means that people can continue to be discriminated against in a wide range of areas.

Many people are not allowed to be 'legally rehabilitated'

People who have served their sentence shouldn't keep being punished indefinitely. Yet, under our current system, anyone sentenced to more than four years in prison can never become 'legally rehabilitated'. Over 8,000 people a year receive a sentence that cannot become spent. That can mean a lifetime of discrimination in employment, higher insurance premiums and difficulties finding housing. Exclusions by sentence or offence type create injustice and embed the idea that some people are inherently incapable of rehabilitation. We do not believe that to be the case.

Building on positive change - there is much still to do

We are proud to have played a key part in bringing about positive changes benefiting people with criminal records:

- Changes to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, passed in 2012 and introduced in 2014, reduced the disclosure period for most jobs for hundreds of thousands of people, and also meant those sentences between 30 months and four years could become spent. But it kept a large proportion of people excluded because of the length or type of their sentence and it failed to tackle the underlying issues with the legislation in today's society.
- The Ban the Box campaign, which Unlock co-founded in 2013, now has over 150 employers that commit to not asking about criminal records at application stage. But Unlock research (2018) showed that three quarters of national employers continue to ask at this point.
- The introduction of filtering rules in 2013 meant people with some single convictions and cautions no longer had them show up on standard or enhanced checks. Around 120,000 standard or enhanced checks a year no longer disclose criminal records because of filtering. But the rules were unnecessarily rigid and meant that many people still had old and minor criminal records disclosed.
- A Supreme Court ruling in 2019, following Unlock's first legal intervention, led to the government introducing changes to the filtering rules in late 2020 which benefit around 45,000 people a year. But many convictions and cautions still show up on higher-level DBS checks for many years, sometimes forever.
- The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 brought positive changes to people with criminal records; the result of years of lobbying and campaigning from Unlock. It legislates for reduced rehabilitation periods and, for the first time since the introduction of the ROA in 1974, people convicted of some offences serving a prison sentence of more than four years will not have to disclose their conviction for life. Adults with a prison sentence of more than four years will only have to disclose for seven years after their sentence concludes. However, despite changes to the law, the required changes to the criminal records disclosure system at the DBS will not take place until December 2023, and many people are still excluded based on the type of offence.

Despite making progress there remains much to do to achieve our mission of a fair and inclusive society where people with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination.

Strategic aims and planned activities

Unlock's aims, objectives and activities are subject to annual review to look at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work over the previous twelve months. It measures the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those groups of people we are set up to help. The review also helps us to ensure our aims, objectives and activities remain focused on our stated purpose. This report covers the first year of our strategic plan 2021-22,

Tackling Injustice, Changing Lives which sets out three strategic priorities:

- People have knowledge, skills, confidence and support to overcome the disadvantages related to their criminal record
- People with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination as a result of government, employers and others having policies, practices and attitudes that support their fair treatment

- Unlock continues to be effective, efficient and professional in its work and operations, ensuring we have systems to achieve maximum impact

Our approach

Independent

We believe it is important that we hold government, agencies and others to account. We also believe it is important that people with criminal records trust us. That's why we're independent: Unlock neither seeks nor accepts government funding and this is crucial to our model of working. Whilst we aim to work constructively with government and other partners wherever possible, we are also at liberty to take a critical stance on policies which unfairly restrict opportunities for people with criminal records.

We speak truth to power. As a result, the people for whom we exist, and our supporters and funders can be sure that our sole motivation is to improve the life chances of people with criminal records. Our power comes from our knowledge of what's happening to people with criminal records, publishing reports, persuading the unwilling, encouraging good practices and exposing those practices which are unacceptable. We're politically independent - but we are not neutral about our agenda of change to criminal records.

Involve and include people with criminal records

We believe that personal experience is intrinsically valuable, so we recruit people with criminal records throughout the organisation (and particularly as staff and volunteers to deliver our frontline support). Peer experience offers a bridge of understanding, awareness and empathy to people who sometimes find it hard to talk about the issues they face. We also aim for a trustee board where half of the members have a criminal record. We proactively involve and support people to contribute to our advocacy, campaigns and policy work, because people with criminal records know best about the problems that they face.

Ear to the ground, voice at the top

We listen and engage every day with people who face difficulties as a result of their criminal record. We have a proven track record of identifying issues, finding solutions and putting them into practice. We influence policy and create systemic change, continually punching above our weight to achieve large-scale outcomes with employers, service providers, advice agencies and government. Too often, policies and systems divide and disempower people; and politicians and organisations hoard rather than share power. We will create platforms and build confidence and capacity for individuals to take more power and to influence.

Think big. Act big. Stay small

We are a small charity with big ambitions. We will constantly adapt our work so that we better meet the needs of the people for whom we exist. To do this, we need to make tough choices; we can't do everything. Longer term, it is important that we are able to ensure that the organisation's core work continues, which means working efficiently and effectively.

Work in partnership

We collaborate and build strategic partnerships with like-minded organisations to maximise our impact. If we are to achieve real change, we also need to work with people and organisations that are different to Unlock, and to develop partnerships that influence the way in which they think and behave.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategy and planning

In April 2021 we launched our strategic plan 2021-22, **Tackling Injustice, Changing Lives**. An annual organisational workplan allows us to track progress towards our key priorities, ensuring implementation is in line with our strategy. The Board of Trustees receive a quarterly update reporting against the activities, opportunities, challenges and outcomes in both the workplan and Unlock's strategic priorities.

Our three overarching priorities

1. People should have knowledge, skills, confidence and support to overcome the disadvantages related to their criminal record. We will reach more people by helping them to self-serve digitally, and we will strengthen our capacity to support people more. Together, this will enable people with criminal records to be aware of their rights, know where to turn for advice, and be able to challenge the stigma and discrimination they are facing.

2. People with criminal records should be free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination as a result of government, employers and others having policies, practices and attitudes that support their fair treatment. We will be a powerful voice in pushing for change to legislation, policies and practices, using strategic litigation to bring about change, and increasing the research and evidence base to support us to achieve change at a policy and systemic level.

3. We will maintain good governance and develop Unlock's sustainability and resilience. We will translate our priorities into fully funded and resourced delivery, develop unrestricted funding streams including support from donors and philanthropists, and by growing earned income, continue to measure ourselves against the Charity Governance Code and ensure that we maintain a focus on increasing diversity and inclusion, with the aim of being representative of all sections of society

Board, employees and volunteers

Angela Cairns joined Unlock as Chief executive in May 2021 and we said goodbye to three long-standing members of the Unlock team, including Deputy chief executive, Julie Harmsworth who leaves us after 21 years of at Unlock. Changes in the staff team allowed for a review of Unlock's structure and 2022/23 will see a revised organisational structure implemented. Volunteers continued to play a vital role in the delivery of the charity's activities.

Memberships and working groups

We continue to work positively to build relationships and partnerships across government, private sector, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector (through body membership, board membership, participatory working groups, and formal agreements for collaborative working). Over the past year, significant relationships included membership of the Helplines Partnership, Clinks, Criminal Justice Alliance, Institute of Employability Professionals; Probation Institute Learning Provider Endorsement Scheme; Free Representation Unit; Clinks; NCVO. Unlock is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and the Fundraising Regulator.

Across our policy and campaign activities, we work other organisations including Alliance for Youth Justice, Clinks, National Association for Youth Justice, the Criminal Justice Alliance; Information Commissioner's Office, Working Chance, Prison Reform Trust Ministry of Justice, Home Office, Disclosure and Barring Service, Transform Justice, Business in the Community (BITC), New Futures Network and Employers' Forum for Reducing Re-offending (EFFRR).

Impact

By working to meet the needs of our beneficiaries and by advocating for systemic change, Unlock continues to have a positive impact on the lives of people with criminal records, their families and friends, and on building a fairer and more inclusive society. Analysis of feedback across our activities shows the people we support are better able to successfully negotiate the ongoing, changing and increasingly complex challenges that can derail the most positive of intentions. As a result, they have improved resettlement chances, suffer less social exclusion, and are empowered to move on positively with their lives and achieve their potential. Outcomes and impact of Unlock's work in the past year are detailed throughout this report.

"Thank you for your advice. Only I and people in a similar position can truly understand what a difference you make to people's lives."

Covid-19 continued to be a restraining factor, with further working from home restrictions and new variants impacting staff and volunteer availability. However, Unlock continued to deliver both frontline support and advice services and policy and advocacy agenda as planned.

Advice, information and support

Unlock provides information, advice and support for people with criminal records, their families and friends and the professionals who work with them. These are delivered directly through our helpline, volunteering scheme and training for professionals working to support people with criminal records within their own organisations, and indirectly through our online resources.

The Helpline

Unlock's helpline provides confidential, accurate, reliable and non-judgmental information, advice and support for people with criminal records. People can talk to an advisor on the phone and get support and advice via WhatsApp, email and online resources. The Helpline is delivered by trained staff and volunteers with criminal records. Their personal experience allows them to offer an empathetic response to people seeking our help.

"A huge thank you for your kindness and understanding. It really does make a huge difference to talk to someone who does not judge".

	2020-21	2021-22
Direct support		
Helpline contacts	8,049	9,019
Case work (completed)	9	12
Self-help support		
Information Hub user sessions	1,145,680	993,281*
Forum members	4,029	4,268
Disclosure calculator uses	49,531	43,198
Volunteering		
Volunteers supported	4	5
Time given by volunteers	1,636	1,734
Training for practitioners		
Training events delivered	14	23
Number of people trained	240	289

* Our new website launched in December 2021 and content from the infohub was moved to the new website. This accounts for the drop in user sessions.

We continued to see an increase in the number of people contacting Unlock's helpline. The helpline received a record total of 9,019 contacts during the year, a 12% increase on figures for 2020/21. With many people facing challenges related to employment and volunteering, we provided information and guidance to help them better understand their options and make informed decisions. The team received a significant number of enquiries from individuals who were job hunting because of the pandemic and other factors affecting the labour market. Often callers had had secure jobs for many years, never previously needing a criminal record check or to disclose their criminal record to an employer.

"The information I received took a heavy stone off my chest. Before speaking to the helpline I hadn't slept for a couple of days but now I have complete clarity. Thank you so much".

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Helpline users are empowered with facts that help them understand and improve their individual circumstances - getting jobs, education opportunities and training, accessing housing, improving their financial situation, travelling abroad and much more. They then feel better able to cope with the challenges of living with a criminal record, less isolated because they have access to a community of other people who share their desire to move on in life and are better able to engage with wider society. Strengthened emotional foundations lead to better family relationships, improved life outcomes, and reduced motivation to reoffend which, in turn, has a positive effect on wider society.

Feedback helps us monitor the quality of the support we provide, track outcomes and identify recurring and arising issues. It helps build an evidence base and advocate for changes to policy, practice and legislation. People calling the helpline tell us they have positive outcomes relating to jobs and education, insurance and housing, gaining confidence, improved sense of wellbeing and better understanding their rights and responsibilities.

"Really grateful to Unlock. If it wasn't for them I would have had no chance with any university application".

"Thank you so much for your detailed and informed advice. You were brilliant on the phone and I think what you do and how you help people is amazing."

"Just come off the phone to Simon on the helpline. The conversation was overwhelming. He made me laugh and cry and made me see that I'm not a bad person. A massive burden has been lifted - what a smashing guy".

"I just spoke to a helpline advisor. They were calm and extremely helpful. Gave me the time I needed to explore my enquiry fully and made sure I understood the information they provided. Your customer service approach to people is first class".

The following examples show some of the ways one-to-one support can be positive for Unlock callers.

Mary - When Mary contacted the helpline, she couldn't remember the details of her 20-year-old conviction. She was considering applying for a youth worker position but almost decided not to pursue it when the Unlock advisor mentioned that she'd need an enhanced DBS check. We suggested Mary apply for a copy of her police record and when she later shared the contents with us, we were able to advise her that her convictions had all been filtered and wouldn't appear on any level of DBS certificate. Mary told us

"If it hadn't been for Unlock explaining the changes to the filtering rules I wouldn't have applied for the job. I now know that I can apply for any role I want without having to disclose and I feel so much more positive and confident about the future".

James was working as a self-employed physiotherapist when he was convicted of a driving offence and received a short prison sentence. On release from prison the Health and Care Professions Council had not revoked his registration and so he could continue to practise. However, he had been released on tag and his curfew times and the need to use public transport meant that his business was being severely affected. He'd tried speaking with his probation officer but had been told to make earlier appointments and be home by 8pm. We advised James to submit a written request to probation for a change of curfew times setting out the reason for the change and any evidence of the need for late appointments. A month later probation changed the curfew times to 11pm to 11am.

"Thank you so much. You really helped bring me down from a place of genuine despair yesterday. You may not always know how big a role you can play with a simple answer. It can be genuinely life saving."

Volunteering at Unlock

Unlock's volunteer scheme provides opportunities for people with criminal records to support others, build back confidence and self-esteem and gain valuable workplace skills and experience. Based at our Maidstone office, volunteers train as frontline advisors, working alongside staff to provide a unique, wholly peer-delivered information, advice and support service. This allows us to respond to many more people than would otherwise be possible. Volunteering is open to those living in the community and others on day release from prison. Remote volunteers offer support as content writers and researchers.

Volunteers are encouraged to take an active part in Unlock's activities and are invited to other training opportunities. Future volunteers will continue to undertake our disclosure training (endorsed by the Institute of Employability Professionals). This year, we supported a regular volunteer to achieve an NVQ2 in Information, Advice and Guidance. They subsequently moved on into full-time paid work.

Ongoing Covid-19 restrictions continued to impact volunteering, with fewer volunteers recruited compared to pre-pandemic. We have had no people volunteering while on release on temporary licence (ROTL) from prisons. This is due to prison regime restrictions and a focus on people accessing ROTL for paid work. Despite challenges recruiting volunteers and increased demand for advice services, the advice team exceeded our annual target. In 2022/23 we will review our volunteering activities with the aim of providing more people with the opportunity to take part.

A volunteer's experience

"I applied to volunteer as a helpline advisor for Unlock four months after I received my conviction.

Prior to my conviction I'd been working in the financial sector but was dismissed following my arrest. Whilst I was working I'd always wanted to do some type of voluntary work but working ten-hour days whilst having to undertake continuing professional development meant I had very little time.

My conviction, Covid and the economic challenges in the country changed all that. I knew from personal experience just how confusing and frightening a conviction can be and I'd used Unlock's services myself whilst I was going through the process. I'd found the helpline advisors to be highly informative and a real source of inspiration and I wanted to help others in the way I'd been helped.

I remember my first day in the office. My anxiety was at an all-time high; what would people think of me, was I capable of giving advice? I needn't have worried. The team immediately put me at ease and made me feel welcome and as far as giving advice was concerned, Unlock has a great reputation for providing high quality information, advice and support and therefore the training they provided was thorough and rigorous.

I've spoken to many people during my time on the helpline and I hope that I've been able to help some of them. I was made to feel valued and this ultimately enabled me to start focusing on the next steps in my life. Volunteering with Unlock has been a real pleasure and I'd recommend it to anybody."

Individual case work

On occasion, our helpline team will go beyond normal helpline support to take up a case on behalf of an individual. Cases are taken on to achieve a positive outcome for the person, or where the intervention supports our current policy work and could potentially increase our body of evidence and/or benefit many people.

This year we supported 20 individuals, with 12 cases completed and eight ongoing. The following examples of case work show the range and complexity of issues people face. We successfully challenged:

- A local council who refused to renew an applicant's taxi licence after they refused to provide information relating to a filtered conviction. After our intervention, the council accepted their understanding of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order was incorrect including the updates to the filtering criteria which came into effect in November 2020.
- A large retailer who dismissed an employee after becoming aware of their spent conviction. Working with ACAS, we were able to negotiate a financial settlement for the client prior to the case going to an employment tribunal.
- A local council using 'Disqualification by Association' disclosure forms and asking all employees to provide details of the unspent convictions of people they lived with. The legal requirement to provide this information was scrapped in September 2018.
- A college and a housing provider whose application forms and admissions process included ineligible and misleading questions.

Support for people in prison

Our helpline regularly receives letters and calls from people in prison on a range of issues and particularly about resettlement. Unlock's helpline number is on the prison pre-approved list meaning a person in prison can call us for free and without prior permission. With reduced access to many prison resettlement teams due to Covid-19, we saw an increase in calls from people in prison seeking information. We continued to provide a quarterly column for the prison newspaper, InsideTime, reaching around 60,000 prisoners per edition.

"I rang the Unlock helpline when I couldn't get through to the Samaritans. I felt so comfortable talking to the advisor. My mind was simply in a better place. I truly believe it changed my course of action for the better. I'm released next week with some positive plans. I feel it's possible to succeed despite a criminal record".

Supporting people digitally

With limited helpline capacity and a large potential beneficiary group, our websites provide a wide range of information and guidance on tackling issues such as employment, insurance, travel, education, housing, relationships, finance, filtering, disclosure - in fact just about everything in life that is affected by having a criminal record. Online resources allow people to find the information they need, at a time and in a way that suits them.

Redeveloping the Unlock websites

This year, building on the user research carried out in 2020-21, we completed the redevelopment of the Unlock website. We incorporated content from theInformationHub and theRecord into the newly redeveloped Unlock.org.uk site, reducing the number of separate websites for users to navigate between.

The main focus for the redevelopment was improved information architecture, which we thoroughly user-tested. The

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Information and Advice section is heavily signposted and includes its own dedicated search as well as subject area segmentation, to help users find the information they need quickly. The personal stories which previously sat on theRecord have a new home in the Community section of the site, which allows us to integrate the voices of people with criminal records much more easily into all our website content.

The new site, built in WordPress includes new flexible content modules and a simplified back-end to make it easy for staff to use. This means any future development work will be easy to carry out. The new visual style and flexible modules will allow us to create much more dynamic content and campaigns going forward. User feedback has been positive:

"I really like the layout. It is easy to read and the graphics are pleasing to the eye. Content is clear and easy to follow. Language is positive but at the same time challenging discrimination. Promoting equality for those with criminal records."

"A very bright and informative style. This is easy to navigate and to get the information you require a lot faster than before"

"The overall site is far more structured, logical and easy to navigate - and it absolutely makes sense to have all the information in one place. I have to say your timing in sending me this invitation was spot on - I need to do a ton of research into my nightmare situation and I'm going to find it far, far easier to do it on this new site!"

theRecord

theRecord was an online magazine that provided a regular stream of readers' personal stories and experiences, news and opportunities. This year we published 12 articles from our readers and shared information from other organisations, including paid and volunteering opportunities. As part of the redevelopment of our website, we have moved all articles from theRecord into the 'Community' section of the new site. The Unlock community provides a space for people with convictions to share their stories and experiences of living as a law-abiding person, giving hope and inspiration for the future and sharing examples of what is possible.

Our disclosure calculator

Unlock's disclosure calculator is a free, instant, and confidential way for people to find out if or when their record will become spent and no longer disclosed to employers and other organisations. Used nearly 50,000 times this year by individuals, statutory agencies, service providers and private companies, the tool can process multiple convictions, non-standard sentence/disposals and a mixture of different sentences.

Analysis this year showed that 56% of users found that all their convictions were spent, with 40% revealing a combination of spent and unspent convictions. While this is good news for many, 4% of users discovered their conviction(s) will remain unspent for the rest of their lives.

Following the redevelopment of the websites, work on a newly redeveloped version of the calculator began in Q4, to launch in Q1 22-23. Informed by user research carried out this year, the main goals for the redevelopment are:

- Update the look and feel to make the tool more user-friendly, optimised for different devices and in keeping with the new website
- Bring the calculator into the main site, reducing the number of websites we hold
- Create a simplified user journey that feels less overwhelming
- Incorporate filtering into the results, so users can see whether their convictions will show on standard and enhanced DBS checks
- Build the calculator in such a way that allows us to make tweaks and improvements easily, for example adding supplementary guide content or changing the functionality if/when legislation around criminal records changes

theForum

With more than 4,200 members, theForum is a national peer network that provides opportunities for people to support each other as they move on from their past. Unlock's role is as facilitator, allowing members their own space to share experiences and talk about how they feel. There is little opportunity for this in the offline world, where many

people feel isolated and too ashamed or embarrassed to share their convictions. The strength of the forum can be seen in the way members support each other emotionally - often beyond what a helpline can do. Popular threads this year include: 'Post Brexit - impact on travelling to Europe'; 'Problem with applying to Google to have links removed'.

Trialling zoom surgeries

This year, we began piloting face-to-face appointments through Zoom offering an alternative way to contact the helpline. For some clients, being able to communicate with us in this way is invaluable. The use of online platforms also means that face-to-face appointments are not limited to people living in Kent.

"I contacted the helpline for some advice regarding a complex barring problem. Being able to see the advisor felt a lot more personal and allowed me to share a copy of the appeal document I wanted to send to the DBS".

Recruit

Unlock's Recruit website provides advice, guidance, and templates for employers to use to develop fair recruitment policies and practice. In the past year, the site was used 37,079 times by 31,000 different users, of which 30,862 were new this year (90%), who between them accumulated 67,621 page views. Employers also contacted us over the past year for further information and advice, after looking at Recruit. In some cases, employer queries led to tailored, detailed advice and support to revise policies and practices.

Monitoring website usage and feedback

Our websites are continuously monitored allowing us to track usage and make improvements. Using Google Analytics, we collect data and analyse metrics, and we use various methods to capture and analyse user feedback. This includes Disqus, which allows people to comment, start or respond to a discussion on a webpage. Contributions made through Disqus are reviewed before being made live and, if appropriate, a member of staff will follow-up. There were 486 comments and 372 votes received this year. We also use Wufoo, a general feature enabling people to give feedback about using the helpline or websites and have six-monthly pop-up surveys. We have also embedded user feedback into every page on the new website, with users able to answer 'was this page helpful?' with a simple yes/no click, or provide more detailed feedback.

Online support in relation to our policy work

People accessing our online spaces are encouraged to become contributors to all our online channels, sharing individual stories and providing peer support for others in similar circumstances. This creates a powerful sense of community, fostering support and empathy as well as useful information. The experiences of people using Unlock's online channels inform and influence our policy work. This allows us to identify recurring issues and take action to advocate for systemic change of policy or law to improve circumstances for many people.

Supporting organisations and practitioners: criminal record disclosure training

Practitioners and organisations working with people who have a criminal record often receive little training on understanding and supporting people with the long-term effects of their convictions. We regularly receive contact from practitioners who do not feel confident in giving advice to their clients. Mistakes can prove costly, with people missing out on jobs and other opportunities because of receiving inaccurate advice.

"Structured around the real practitioner needs for supporting clients"

Unlock shares our specialist knowledge and best practice through disclosure training workshops and webinars, giving people and organisations the knowledge, skills and confidence to support their clients with criminal records. Training covers a variety of issues on and around disclosure and participants include individuals, statutory bodies, charities and businesses. In 2021/22 we began gaining continual professional development accreditation for our training starting with our 'Understanding the ROA and rules on disclosing criminal records' webinar.

"Varied delivery with a mix of activities and really helpful handouts and excellent delivery by the trainer."

In 2021/22 we saw an increase in people accessing our workshops and webinars. We delivered 28 training sessions to 326 attendees. We began to take bookings for face-to-face training for the first time since the beginning of the

pandemic. We will continue to deliver online training as part of our offer to individuals and organisations. The income generated from training supports our wider work.

100% of course attendees who completed feedback forms rated the session Good or Excellent overall. As in previous years, attendees continue to report a significant increase in their knowledge of the disclosure of criminal records from 'four' before the training rising to 'eight' afterwards.

"The evident knowledge and experience presented in a very accessible way."

Policy and advocacy

Objective 2 - Government, employers and others having policies, practices and attitudes that support the fair treatment of people with criminal records

Unlock's "ear to the ground, voice at the top" approach means we listen to people with criminal records to learn about the issues they face. Then we identify where we can advocate for change at systemic, structural and legal levels to resolve them.

Further reform of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 - Unlock has long campaigned for fundamental changes to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, which is the principal legislation governing the disclosure of criminal records to employers, educational institutions, insurers, and housing providers. The current law means that:

- Rehabilitation periods are too long and result in a form of secondary punishment where a person faces continued discrimination and stigmatisation.
- Rehabilitation periods are out of kilter and do not take account of new, less serious forms of disposal such as community orders and speeding fines, which give rise to longer disclosure periods than those applied to short prison sentences.
- Some convictions can never become spent: more than 8,000 people every year receive sentences that mean they can never be legally rehabilitated.
- There is no legal protection for spent convictions: rehabilitated people are powerless to prevent employers, housing providers and others using spent convictions to exclude them.

Unlock continues to advocate for a root and branch review of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and the development of fresh legislation that is fit for purpose. Given the importance of understanding the experiences of those with criminal records (and others), we believe the review should be an open policy-making process as recommended by the Cabinet Office. This means engaging with a broad range of experts and people with experience. We are calling for:

- Every sentence to have the potential to become spent during a person's lifetime.
- Everyone who has a criminal record should be able to make their case that they have moved on, with the potential to have their record declared spent or filtered by impartial adjudicators.
- Only more serious offences and those that present a clear safeguarding risk can be allowed to remain on standard and enhanced DBS checks for life.
- Amendment of anomalies in rehabilitation periods, especially for children and young adults.
- Reduction of rehabilitation periods, using clear evidence to demonstrate the need to disclose.

Policy, campaigning and legislative change

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts bill introduced positive changes for many people with criminal records. As it journeyed through parliament and into law we continued to push for amendments, engaging with crossbench peers in the House of Lords and giving evidence to the Bill committee alongside NACRO and Redemption Roasters. We approached 30 peers, briefing seven in detail, resulting in an amendment being tabled for the Lords committee. After campaigning to broaden the 'Turing Pardons' scheme for gay and bisexual men who were prosecuted because of their sexuality we were pleased to see some changes applied through an amendment to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. This included the inclusion of military personnel and military offences.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme - we renewed calls for public consultation on the exclusionary rule which prevents people with unspent criminal records from receiving compensation for the impacts of serious crime,

including physical violence and sexual abuse. Following a judicial review finding that the Ministry of Justice failed to consult appropriately on the ruling, Unlock prepared for the consultation and kept the issue alive through articles, media and repeated letters to parliamentarians.

Northern Ireland, a legal challenge to the law on disclosure of criminal records - In Northern Ireland, any conviction resulting in a prison sentence of over two and a half years must be disclosed to employers, insurance companies and others. There is no means for a person in this situation to apply for their conviction to become spent. It remains regardless of the length of time since the sentence was served and personal circumstances. Unlock, NIACRO and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission supported the case of an anonymous applicant challenging the disproportionality of the law. The case had a successful outcome with the judge ruling that individual case reviews are reasonable.

#FairChecks campaign - In February 2022 we worked with partners Transform Justice to relaunch the FairChecks campaign. Ahead of the relaunch, we provided strategic input and feedback on the development of the new FairChecks website, as well as devising three new, simplified policy asks. The new asks aim to clarify the FairChecks message for audiences and focus the activities of the campaign going forward. Over the relaunch period we secured several pieces of positive coverage, including an interview with Unlock's Chief executive on Woman's Hour, alongside a FairChecks supporter with a criminal record. Following the relaunch and at the end of Q4 21-22, we've more than doubled the size of the supporter mailing list which now stands at over 2,300. Following the successful implementation of paid targeted social media ads and engagement through the mailing list, at least one FairChecks supporter has met with their MP to discuss the issues.

Criminal records disclosure; call for regime change

The Barrow Cadbury Trust funds a strand of work aiming to reduce the number of people negatively affected by the criminal records disclosure system - particularly those who acquired a criminal record as children or young adults. This strand is at the heart of our policy work and documented throughout this report. We continue to call for reform to the criminal records disclosure system to give children and young adults a fair chance to build positive futures. We believe that:

- There should be a distinct, child-specific process for dealing with criminal records received before the age of 18
- Disclosure periods should correspond with age at time of the offence not conviction
- Maturity should be reflected in the disclosure system

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The filtering regime changes resulting from the Supreme Court ruling (described above) has created anomalies, which we are pressuring the DBS and Home Office to rectify as quickly as possible. For example, self-disclosure rules do not match those used to produce enhanced criminal record certificates, meaning that some people are required to self-disclose more offences than would be included on an enhanced check certificate.

Additionally, implementation of the new rules left some people unable to receive certificates via the DBS Update Service (an online subscription that allows you to keep your standard or enhanced DBS certificate up to date and allows employers to check a certificate online). Instead, expensive and slow manual certificates are issued. This can create additional prejudice and discrimination as employers and others make assumptions as to why a different type of certificate is being issued.

The Home Office and the DBS say they are committed to rectifying these anomalies and we have been assured that these issues are being actively pursued. However, legislative change may be required to address some of these unintended but negative consequences of layering legislation on top of legislation. Unlock continues to pressure the Home Office and the DBS to ensure that these are forthcoming.

We continue to push for change to the system which makes it transparent, efficient and gives people a fair chance to move on from their past. This includes the following:

- The rules should be streamlined, explained using simple and straightforward language and accessible to all
- Anyone convicted to get clear information and guidance about what and when they are required to disclose

- Everyone must have the right to see their own certificate at any time, free of charge
- Everyone should be able to ask what would be disclosed for different level checks at a certain date

Fair access to employment - In June 2021, we concluded the second phase of our programme, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, to tackle the underlying systemic and practical barriers to employment faced by people with criminal records. However, our work to address these issues has continued. The law in this area is complex and difficult to navigate, with a lack of official guidance from governments and regulators and few HR specialists having sufficient knowledge or expertise. Through our work with employers, we work toward the following outcomes:

- Employers include people with criminal records as part of diversity and inclusion initiatives
- Government has innovative policies to increase recruitment of people with criminal records
- Unlock is the go-to source of guidance and support for employers across multiple sectors
- Job applicants and employees turn to Unlock to challenge employer bad practice

"Very grateful to Unlock for helping us with our refreshed DBS risk assessment process."

Supporting employers to understand disclosure, where it fits and doesn't fit with recruitment, equality, diversity and inclusion has never been more important. With companies keen to fill employment gaps and the Secretary of State for Justice highlighting that people leaving prison need jobs, Unlock has taken the opportunity to remind employers that there is a far wider pool of people locked out of employment opportunities.

"Our safer recruitment process balances the rights of potential employees and volunteers against the risks to the people who use our services"

As well as supporting employers to update recruitment and inclusion policies and practices, we have been involved in a wider range of activities including:

- Worked with employers in healthcare, charity, and education sectors on developing a fair approach to asking and assessing criminal records information.
- Delivering training for employers
- Produced monthly updates for Xpert HR website
- Work with Job Centre work coaches and sharing expertise with the Department of Work and Pensions.
- Published updated guidance for charities recruiting trustees and senior managers
- Spoke on a panel at Clinks' annual conference about working with women in the criminal justice system

Unlocking students with criminal records - funded by the Bruno Schroder Trust

Despite education being widely recognised as a key factor in successful rehabilitation, current admission policies present serious psychological and practical challenges to accessing higher education. Although there is no evidence that enrolling students with convictions makes campuses more dangerous or that they are more likely to commit crimes on campus, many higher education institutions continue to ask about convictions as part of their admissions policies.

University policies can also deter people from applying. With complex and differing policies and procedures they often fail to follow good practice. Policies requiring the disclosure of convictions during the application process contribute towards the higher application attrition rate seen amongst those who ask questions about criminal convictions which cause many to drop out before the end of the application process.

Our universities strand of work aims to increase the number of higher education institutions with fair and inclusive policies and practices from the point that prospective students apply to study and throughout their university stay, so that more people with criminal records can access and benefit from higher education. We do this by:

- Building a comprehensive understanding and database of higher education institutions' policies relating to students with criminal records.
- Ensuring more students with criminal records can gain admission to university with half of all higher education institutions signed up to Unlock's 'fair chance pledge'.
- Ensuring higher education institutions have appropriate support policies and plans for students with criminal

- records and the wider student body.

Activities and achievements this year include:

- A major review of criminal records policies for all universities, with searchable database on our website
- An increased number of universities no longer ask about unspent convictions on application
- Examined the Office for Students guidance on access and participation and prepared for input for the next planning round
- Conference presentations to the European Society of Criminology and widening participation network event
- Successfully supported a student appealing a decision to refuse admission to a regulated postgraduate programme
- Sent briefing to John Edwards, the new Information Commissioner about university policies which are non-compliant with the GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018 and raised issues with the Information Commissioner's Office re the need for stronger enforcement of current laws.
- Continued to co-supervise a PhD student at Nottingham University as part of our collaboration with the growing community of academics interested in the effects of criminal records.
- Published a call for evidence from people who have applied to university in the last three years to build our evidence base for the need for change.

EU nationals' settlement - funded by Barrow Cadbury Trust - We published online resources for EU nationals with a criminal record seeking settled status in the UK as a result of Brexit. The information was disseminated via other service providers such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. We also continued to engage with NGOs working on European Union Settled Status issues and participated in roundtables with Commons Legal and the EU Citizens Rights Monitoring group.

Reports, submissions and briefings

Throughout the year we published reports and briefings and responded to government consultations including:

- Response to the prisons' strategy white paper
- Response to the 'delivering justice for victims' consultation
- Response to Information Commissioner's call for views on employment practices
- The Law Commission 14th programme of law reform consultation

Priority 3 Unlock continues to be effective, efficient and professional in its work and operations, ensuring we have systems to achieve maximum impact

Invest in our people - Changes in the staff team allowed us to review Unlock's capacity to deliver on our strategic priorities. The board of trustees agreed a small staff restructure, with a plan to introduce a new Director of policy and advocacy role in 2022/23. We reviewed digital, finance and administrative functions and moved our financial records onto the online accounting system QuickBooks. We also introduced Breathe HR to help manage a range of HR processes.

Increase our visibility - this includes growing our media presence, where it is useful for delivering this strategy. We will build on our successful social media presence, developing our strategy further. We will strengthen and align our brand to our values and key messages.

Press and media

We continue to build our press and media engagement work, to grow awareness of our work and services as well as support our campaign and policy objectives. This year we have developed our approach to include the voices of people with criminal records in our media work and continued to embed our agreed principles of autonomy and informed consent; respect and dignity; anonymity and remuneration. We have also developed productive and ongoing relationships with a number of key journalists, thereby increasing our pool of engaged media contacts to whom we can pitch proactively. Examples of successful media engagement include:

- Opinion piece from our Chief executive in Metro Online about victims with unspent convictions being denied criminal injuries compensation. This was the result of a proactive pitch from us.
- Multiple live radio interviews with Angela, including LBC, BBC Radio Kent and BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour
- Several pieces of coverage to promote the FairChecks relaunch, including the Big Issue and the Evening Standard

Social media

This year we implemented a digital marketing strategy with a focus on improving engagement as well as reach, testing new approaches across our channels and learning along the way. We have seen positive results:

- Twitter: We've focussed on improving engagement this year. The digital marketing strategy set a target of keeping engagement rates consistently above 2%, which we have comfortably met.
- LinkedIn: We now have over 1,300 followers on LinkedIn, and posts have been performing well with average monthly engagement rates regularly reaching 6-7%. In the coming year we will build on this by testing fundraising posts on LinkedIn.
- Facebook: Since implementing the digital marketing strategy, the performance of our Facebook posts has been much more consistent - due to implementing regular scheduling of posts and improving our content. In 21-22 we aimed for an average reach per post of 150, and we comfortably met this with an average of 175. Although this audience is small, they are now highly engaged; our average engagement rate across the year was 11.2%, beating our target of 10%. In the coming year we will seek to convert this engagement into action such as donations or taking part in policy campaigns.

News & updates mailing lists

Unlock has an open subscription mailing list. We send out a range of news and updates about our latest information and advice content, training for frontline practitioners, opportunities for people with criminal records, our policy work, media and vacancies, and fundraising.

This year, through implementing elements of the digital strategy, we have worked to improve our data segmentation and deliver more tailored email communications. We have also refreshed the design of our email templates and continue to carry out A/B testing of content and subject lines to maximise engagement

Public benefit

Unlock assists people with criminal records to live positive, crime-free lives. In planning the charity's activities this year, the trustees paid due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. Our activities and beneficiaries are described below and in the 'About Us' section of our website, www.unlock.org.uk.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The statement of Financial Activities is shown on page 28. The surplus for the year was £32,108 (2021: £69,245) and next assets amounted to £407,401 (2021: £438,293).

Reserves policy

Unlock is dependent on grants to sustain its activities. The charity's reserves policy is to maintain enough unrestricted reserves to enable normal operating activities to continue over a period of up to nine months should a shortfall in income occur, and to take account of potential risks and contingencies that may arise from time to time. Trustees have therefore agreed to hold reserves on the unrestricted general fund equivalent to six months to nine months expected operating expenditure for the year 2022-23, amounting to £321,596. This will allow the charity to continue working and to meet its commitments to staff and other obligations if future income could not be secured.

Any reserves on restricted funds are set aside to fund the specific project or programmes for which the funds were granted. It is common for income to be received in one year, yet programme expenditure straddle one or two years. Reserves for restricted funds therefore represent monies for programmes that are currently ongoing. Unrestricted funds amounted to £285,426 at the year-end (2021: £329,293). Restricted funds amounted to £184,975 at the year-end (2021: £109,000).

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

The Board of Trustees have agreed to designate a total of £80,000 of unrestricted funds for the following purposes. This designation aligns with the charity's strategic priorities over the next four years.

Area of work / activity	Amount	Proposed timescale	Summary
Cyber security and infrastructure improvements	£7,500	Q1 2022/23	One off costs, significantly reduces data risks and improved infrastructure should improve productivity.
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	£5,000	2022/23	Consultancy and training – specified organisational and workforce development costs which are not ongoing.
Research	£40,000	2022 to 2025	Having a pot of money to commission external research would support a research strategy and allow us to build our evidence base.
Training placement	£27,500	2022 – 2025	For costs of a 12-month training placement for a person with criminal records Includes equipment, training, recruitment.
Total	80,000		

Future funding

To preserve our ability to respond to user needs and advocate fully on their behalf, Unlock will remain independent of statutory funding to deliver services. Where possible, income is earned by delivering services to other organisations such as training, advertising, and speaker engagements. However, it is envisaged that the charity will continue to rely in the most part on charitable grants and donations.

Fundraising report

Donors to Unlock can be assured that we follow the regulatory standards for fundraising. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and are committed to the Fundraising Promise and adherence to the Code of Fundraising Practice. This report covers the requirements which charities must follow as set out in the Charities Act 2016. We do not employ agencies, external workers or suppliers to fundraise for us. Our website outlines our complaints policy and clearly explains how an individual can complain. We received no complaints in the 2021-2022 financial year.

Principal funding sources

Our total income for the year was £390,967, which was received from the following sources:

	2021/22	2020/21
Grants from trusts and foundations	84%	89%
Donations	5%	5%
Earned income	10%	6%
Investment	< 1%	< 1%
Other	< 1%	< 1%

Our grateful thanks to the following grant giving funders for their generous support during the year:

1772 Charity, A B Charitable Trust, Allen and Overy, Barrow Cadbury Trust, Charles Hayward Foundation, Bruno Schroder Trust, City and Metropolitan Welfare Fund, Cole Charitable Trust, Colyer Ferguson Charitable Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, J Leon Philanthropy, J G Hogg Charitable Trust, Kent Community Foundation, Lawson Endowment Fund for Kent, National Lottery Community Fund, Noel Buxton Trust, Porticus UK, Sir James Roll Charitable Trust, Ten Percent Foundation, The 3Ts Charitable Trust, Transform Justice, Southall Trust, The Whitehead Monckton Charitable Foundation.

Our thanks also to the many individual donors who kindly supported our work.

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1 people have knowledge, skills, confidence and support to overcome the disadvantages related to their criminal record

In 2022/23 we will:

- carry out a full content review of our online information, improving readability and search engine optimisation (SEO)
- Develop short videos to improve accessibility of content
- Launch a refreshed disclosure calculator on our website.

We will continue to assist individuals to challenge unfair employment decisions, revoke/amend court orders, referring to solicitors and other agencies when appropriate. We will explore additional ways we can provide access to advice and support that helps a wider range of people. This includes:

- Providing individual advocacy support to help people challenge stigma and discrimination via one-to-one online Zoom appointments.
- Review the opening hours of the helpline with a view to improving access
- Pilot online 'members events' with forum members.
- To expand our case work and individual advocacy support, helpline team members will be trained in identifying possible casework and advocacy cases.

Growing and sustaining the helpline - We aim to increase the number of office-based and remote volunteers across the organisation as peer-advisors, researchers and content creators. We will continue to pilot the offer to volunteers to gain an NVQ level 2 in Information and Advice. We will also recruit a paid Helpline Advisor to expand capacity in the team. We will assess the viability of accreditation of the helpline.

In all we do we seek the views and suggestions of people with criminal records, including via our bi-annual helpline survey and user testing of new digital tools such as the revised disclosure calculator.

Training - Unlock training for practitioners, employers and universities allows us to share information and support organisations to make informed decisions about their policies and practices regarding people with criminal records. We arm people with the facts and support them to question their biases. To develop our training offer we will:

- Gain CPD accreditation for our 'Advising with conviction' training.
- Develop and pilot a webinar for Criminal Justice System charities to better understand eligibility for DBS checks.
- Explore options of e-training/learning for organisations and individuals.

Objective 2 - Government, employers and others having policies, practices and attitudes that support the fair treatment of people with criminal records

We will advocate and campaign, building on our areas of strength, going deeper into the policy and systemic issues that significantly affect people focusing on:

- Pushing for a root-and-branch review of the criminal records disclosure system.
- Working with parliamentary figures to ensure constant presence of criminal record issues on government agenda with a focus on building cross-party support for a root and branch review / specific areas of interest, framed by a policy manifesto, a series of evidence-based policy reports about unjust lifelong impacts of criminal records, exclusion from the criminal injuries compensation scheme and the case for the sealing of children's records when they turn 18.
- Push for early implementation of changes in spending periods detailed in the Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill
- Develop, with Transform Justice, our joint #FairChecks campaign as a vehicle for building wider support.
- Respond and engage with the Disclosure and Barring Scheme review team to ensure the voices of people with criminal records are included in the review, advocate for positive changes and be a safeguard against changes to the system that will negatively affect people with criminal records.
- Publicly campaign and challenge the use of ineligible and unnecessary checks at all stages of recruitment.
- Campaign for a change to the discriminatory Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme exclusionary rule
- Continue deeper and broader work to influence employer policies and embed fair recruitment practices

- Challenge and support employers to include people with criminal records as part of diversity and inclusion initiatives which are evident in their recruitment materials.

Fair access and participation in higher education - Continuing our work to encourage inclusive access and participation policies and practices in universities, we will:

- Develop new webpages as a tool for working with universities on inclusive policies
- Engage and influence more universities to adopt positive practices for applicants and students with criminal records
- Maintain a database of policies and practices across all higher education institutions and make this accessible to prospective applicants
- Identify higher education institutions that collect unspent convictions data and review legal avenues for a GDPR complaint through the courts

To be effective in using the law and working with others to bring about legislative, policy and social change through strategic litigation - We will develop our legal strategy with a plan for how we will deliver it, including a toolkit to quickly identify and prepare cases.

Research, impact and evaluation

We will develop a research strategy and implementation plan that contributes to the evidence base and supports our work to achieve change at a policy and systemic level. This will put the issues, experiences and perspectives of people with criminal records at the heart of our research.

We will review and revise our means of collecting, analysing and sharing statistics and stories which demonstrate both the impact of a criminal record and the impact of positive change. The voices of people with criminal records will remain at the front and centre of all we do.

Objective 3 - Unlock is effective, efficient and professional in its work and operations, ensuring we have systems to achieve maximum impact - To maintain good governance, build sustainability and resilience we will:

- Continue to diversify our income streams to build future sustainability. This will include digital fundraising appeals such as the Big Give Christmas Challenge, making it easy for supporters to make donations via our web platforms. We aim to increase earned income from delivery of paid-for training workshops with a 15% year on year increase target.
- Continue to measure ourselves against the Charity Governance Code to guide an active and effective Board
- Maintain a focus on increasing diversity and inclusion, with the aim of being representative of all sections of society
- Engage external support to undertake a diversity and inclusion audit of Unlock's policies, culture and practices, provide identified training and an action plan for 2023/24 in place.

Investing in our people

- Implement our new structure, recruiting a Director of policy and advocacy, Policy officer (projects) and Helpline advisor.
- Remuneration committee to consider annual leave entitlement and payment of travel to the office by home-based employees
- Review HR policies where scheduled; identify any gaps and develop and implement policies
- Encourage and support staff training and development as identified and agreed with line managers, including safeguarding training for staff and volunteers and training and support to use new digital tools.

Supporting actions

- Review and revision of impact and evaluation framework for all Unlock's workstreams.
- Update cyber security and 365 platform used by Unlock's IT users.
- Select and embed a new cross-organisation Contact Relationship Management system.
- Regularly evaluate performance of the website using appropriate metrics, taking action to maximise visibility and engagement
- Increase the diversity of voices in media work, developing a list of individuals who would be comfortable and confident in speaking to the media

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

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

Following an extensive review of Unlock's memorandum and articles of association, the board of trustees unanimously passed a new set of articles of association by special resolution in June 2020. The new articles of association provide for greater clarity and practical ease of administration, including setting trustee tenure periods and the appointment of a vice chair. There were no changes to the objects, rules on paying a trustee or what happens if the charity is wound up. The articles of association were submitted to and accepted by the Charity Commission, with the Commission's records being updated accordingly in July 2020. Companies House was also notified.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

The board carries out an annual review to decide whether there is a need to recruit new trustees. If during the year a trustee leaves, the board will decide whether to recruit at that time. New trustees are openly recruited through advertisement across appropriate forums. No new trustees were appointed this year.

Organisational structure

Unlock is a charitable company governed by a board of trustees with day-to-day operations delegated to the Chief executive.

Remuneration Policy

The trustee board sets staff's salaries. In 2021/22 a remuneration committee was set up to annual review staff salaries and related terms and conditions. Any changes approved by the board.

Related parties

No related parties exist other than the funders identified below.

Risk management

The trustee board has carried out a review of the major risks facing the charity. A risk register is in place which prioritises these risks and identifies mitigating factors, systems, and controls in relation to each. Trustees follow a comprehensive monitoring and review process to capture new risks that may arise and ensure that systems are in place to manage these.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governance

Trustees attend scheduled board meetings four times a year; in 2021-22 trustee attendance rate was 91%. Additional board meetings were held to discuss staffing and structure changes and a trustee awayday. Individual trustees lead on specific areas of governance, including safeguarding, risk management, whistleblowing, finance, GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), digital development, human resources, governance code and fundraising. They are encouraged to attend training events and seminars to develop their roles and increase their contribution to the charity's governance. Trustees also undertake ad-hoc tasks as and when required and task-specific working groups are formed as needed and meet separately. In working towards fulfilling Unlock's vision and achieving high standards of governance and leadership, the trustee board applies the Charity Governance Code. Overseen by the Charity Commission, the Code sets out principles and recommended practice to help us achieve the highest standards of governance and leadership. The board assesses its performance against the Code annually.

Unlock operates within an equal opportunities framework that is inclusive of people with criminal convictions and seeks to attract trustees with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. Approximately a third of our trustees and staff have a criminal record. A working group was set up to oversee and drive forward Unlock's equality, diversity and inclusion agenda in line with our strategic priorities.

Interests

The trustee board maintains a register of members' interests as a measure of good practice and to manage any conflicts that arise. The register is updated and reviewed annually.

Safeguarding

Unlock has a robust safeguarding policy and other related policies including whistleblowing with named lead trustees for both. In this reporting period, no safeguarding incidents have been identified as relevant for reporting to the Charity Commission via a serious incident report and no whistleblowing concerns were raised.

Management

Management and development of the charity are delegated to the Chief executive who reports directly to the chair of trustees. A framework of financial delegation is set out in a policy and procedures manual. Systems for line management, appraisal, staff development and supervision are in place, together with grievance and complaints procedures.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Working name	Unlock – for people with criminal records
Registered Company number	03791535 (England and Wales)
Registered Charity number	1079046
Registered office -	Maidstone Community Support Centre 39-48 Marsham Street Maidstone Kent ME14 1HH

Trustees	Mark Rowe, Chair Michael Pattinson, Vice-chair Nigel Parsons, Treasurer resigned 19 th January 2022 Salima Budhani Mark Day Faye Goldman Leigh Hardy Steven Lorber Mandeep Mahil Emma Wilson Hamish MacLellan
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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

President	General The Lord David Ramsbotham GCB CBE
Vice-President	Judge John Samuels QC
Patrons	Kate Adie OBE DL Dr Silvia Casale Dr Deborah Cheney Prof Andrew Coyle CMG Dexter Dias QC The Rt Hon the Lord Garnier QC Prof Nick Hardwick Matt Hyde FRSA Baroness Helena Kennedy QC Flo Krause LLB Prof Shadd Maruna Jill Stevens
Bankers	NatWest (Larkfield), 718 London Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6AN
Independent Examiner	Calcutt Matthews WBZ Ltd Chartered Accountants 19 North Street Ashford Kent TN24 8LF

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 9 November 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
M K Rowe - Trustee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Unlock National Association of Ex-Offenders Ltd ('the Company')
I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a registered member of Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales which is one of the listed bodies.

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

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

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



Rosanna Turner ACA DChA
Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales
Calcutt Matthews WBZ Ltd
Chartered Accountants
19 North Street
Ashford
Kent
TN24 8LF

Date:17.11.2022.....

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.22 Total funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	110,699	278,725	389,424	377,994
Investment income	3	43	-	43	157
Other income		<u>1,500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>-</u>
Total		<u>112,242</u>	<u>278,725</u>	<u>390,967</u>	<u>378,151</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Support	4	4,851	68,746	73,597	161,006
Policy and Advocacy		25,824	98,072	123,896	147,900
Advice and Support		37,082	88,534	125,616	-
Governance		3,888	2,202	6,090	-
Fundraising		<u>29,464</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>29,660</u>	<u>-</u>
Total		<u>101,109</u>	<u>257,750</u>	<u>358,859</u>	<u>308,906</u>
NET INCOME		11,133	20,975	32,108	69,245
Transfers between funds	13	<u>(55,000)</u>	<u>55,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		(43,867)	75,975	32,108	69,245
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>329,293</u>	<u>109,000</u>	<u>438,293</u>	<u>369,048</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>285,426</u>	<u>184,975</u>	<u>470,401</u>	<u>438,293</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD

BALANCE SHEET
31 March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.22 Total funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Intangible assets	9	27,840	-	27,840	-
Tangible assets	10	<u>268</u>	<u>1,018</u>	<u>1,286</u>	<u>3,924</u>
		28,108	1,018	29,126	3,924
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	11	1,400	-	1,400	1,564
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>258,323</u>	<u>183,952</u>	<u>442,275</u>	<u>435,028</u>
		259,723	183,952	443,675	436,592
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(2,400)	-	(2,400)	(2,223)
		<u>257,323</u>	<u>183,952</u>	<u>441,275</u>	<u>434,369</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		285,431	184,970	470,401	438,293
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		<u>285,431</u>	<u>184,970</u>	<u>470,401</u>	<u>438,293</u>
NET ASSETS					

The notes form part of these financial statements

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD

BALANCE SHEET - continued

31 March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.22 Total funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £
FUNDS	13				
Unrestricted funds:					
General fund				285,431	329,293
Restricted funds:					
Fairness Foundation				-	3,000
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation				-	30,000
The 1772 Charity				2,000	-
Porticus UK				33,614	40,000
The Noel Buxton Trust				2,750	-
Lawson Endowment for Kent				3,332	-
Garfield Weston Foundation				17,500	7,500
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust				1,000	1,000
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust				250	1,500
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust				1,000	1,000
National Lottery Community Fund				6,291	-
Designated Fund				80,000	25,000
Allen and Overy				5,000	-
Bruno Schroder Trust				9,257	-
Charles Hayward Foundation				834	-
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity				4,000	-
Cole Charitable Trust				1,200	-
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust				15,442	-
Transform Justice				1,500	-
				<u>184,970</u>	<u>109,000</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>470,401</u>	<u>438,293</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The notes form part of these financial statements

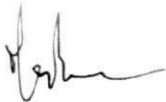
BALANCE SHEET - continued
31 March 2022

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 09 November 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
M K Rowe - Trustee

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

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

Expenditure

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

Allocation and apportionment of costs

Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they all have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Support costs are allocated to charitable activities on the following bases:

Staff, communication and office costs	- Staff time.
Premises costs and depreciation	- Staff time

Tangible fixed assets

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

Fixtures and fittings	- 25% on cost
Computer equipment	- 25% on cost

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

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

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

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued**Hire purchase and leasing commitments**

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

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.3.22	31.3.21
	£	£
Donations	20,930	19,332
Grants	330,023	336,545
Earned income	<u>38,471</u>	<u>22,117</u>
	<u>389,424</u>	<u>377,994</u>

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	31.3.22	31.3.21
	£	£
Persula Foundation	-	3,000
Colyer-Fergusson Charitable Trust	28,000	-
The Noel Buxton Trust	3,000	-
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation Access to Employment	-	84,590
Sir James Roll Charitable Trust	800	1,000
The 1772 Charitable Trust	2,000	-
Porticus UK	49,998	59,998
J Leon Philanthropy	10,000	10,000
Ten Percent Foundation	500	-
AB Charitable Trust	20,000	-
Lawson Endowment for Kent	5,000	-
Charles Hayward Foundation	5,000	-
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	4,000	-
3Ts Charitable Fund	10,000	10,000
The Cole Charitable Trust	1,200	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	10,000	10,000
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	-	1,250
W F Southall Trust	3,000	-
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	-	3,000
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	1,000	1,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	5,000	10,200
Kent Community Foundation Core Costs	3,000	7,800
Transform Justice	6,000	-
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	10,000	10,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust	31,500	31,500
National Lottery	64,835	46,462
National Lottery COVID-19 Grant	-	5,330
Esmee Fairburn COVID19	-	41,415
Allen and Overy	5,000	-
Bruno Schroder Trust	51,190	-
	<u>330,023</u>	<u>336,545</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.3.22	31.3.21
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>43</u>	<u>157</u>

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 5) £	Totals £
Support	9,847	63,750	73,597
Policy and Advocacy	111,225	12,671	123,896
Advice and Support	75,644	49,972	125,616
Governance	2,373	3,717	6,090
Fundraising	<u>20,612</u>	<u>9,048</u>	<u>29,660</u>
	<u>219,701</u>	<u>139,158</u>	<u>358,859</u>

5. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Finance £	Information technology £
Support	51,105	5,892	3,535
Policy and Advocacy	9,985	-	2,186
Advice and Support	30,278	7,769	7,177
Governance	1,402	-	-
Fundraising	<u>8,716</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>142</u>
	<u>101,486</u>	<u>13,661</u>	<u>13,040</u>

	Human resources £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Support	2,264	954	63,750
Policy and Advocacy	323	177	12,671
Advice and Support	4,748	-	49,972
Governance	-	2,315	3,717
Fundraising	<u>190</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,048</u>
	<u>7,525</u>	<u>3,446</u>	<u>139,158</u>

6. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

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

	31.3.22	31.3.21
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	4,256	2,002
Other operating leases	12,195	11,613
Development costs amortisation	<u>6,960</u>	<u>-</u>

7. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Trustees' expenses

	31.3.22	31.3.21
	£	£
Trustees' expenses	<u>405</u>	<u>162</u>

8. STAFF COSTS

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

	31.3.22	31.3.21
Staff	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

Staff numbers above represent the FTE of 9 employees.

9. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Development costs £
COST	
Additions	<u>34,800</u>
AMORTISATION	
Charge for year	<u>6,960</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2022	<u>27,840</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>-</u>

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2021	19,128	21,413	40,541
Additions	-	1,618	1,618
Disposals	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,800)</u>	<u>(2,800)</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>19,128</u>	<u>20,231</u>	<u>39,359</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2021	19,128	17,489	36,617
Charge for year	-	4,256	4,256
Eliminated on disposal	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,800)</u>	<u>(2,800)</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>19,128</u>	<u>18,945</u>	<u>38,073</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>	<u>1,286</u>	<u>1,286</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>-</u>	<u>3,924</u>	<u>3,924</u>
11. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR			
		31.3.22	31.3.21
		£	£
Trade debtors		<u>1,400</u>	<u>1,564</u>
12. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR			
		31.3.22	31.3.21
		£	£
Accrued expenses		<u>2,400</u>	<u>2,223</u>

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	329,293	11,138	(55,000)	285,431
Restricted funds				
Fairness Foundation	3,000	(3,000)	-	-
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	30,000	(30,000)	-	-
The 1772 Charity	-	2,000	-	2,000
Porticus UK	40,000	(6,386)	-	33,614
The Noel Buxton Trust	-	2,750	-	2,750
Lawson Endowment for Kent	-	3,332	-	3,332
Garfield Weston Foundation	7,500	10,000	-	17,500
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	1,000	-	-	1,000
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	1,500	(1,250)	-	250
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	1,000	-	-	1,000
National Lottery Community Fund	-	6,291	-	6,291
Designated Fund	25,000	-	55,000	80,000
Allen and Overy	-	5,000	-	5,000
Bruno Schroder Trust	-	9,257	-	9,257
Charles Hayward Foundation	-	834	-	834
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	-	4,000	-	4,000
Cole Charitable Trust	-	1,200	-	1,200
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	-	15,442	-	15,442
Transform Justice	-	1,500	-	1,500
	<u>109,000</u>	<u>20,970</u>	<u>55,000</u>	<u>184,970</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>438,293</u>	<u>32,108</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>470,401</u>

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	112,242	(101,104)	11,138
Restricted funds			
Fairness Foundation	-	(3,000)	(3,000)
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	-	(30,000)	(30,000)
Kent Community Foundation	3,000	(3,000)	-
The 1772 Charity	2,000	-	2,000
Porticus UK	49,998	(56,384)	(6,386)
Barrow Cadbury Trust	31,500	(31,500)	-
The Noel Buxton Trust	3,001	(251)	2,750
Lawson Endowment for Kent	5,000	(1,668)	3,332
Garfield Weston Foundation	10,000	-	10,000
W F Southall Trust	3,000	(3,000)	-
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	-	(1,250)	(1,250)
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	1,000	(1,000)	-
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	5,000	(5,000)	-
National Lottery Community Fund	64,835	(58,544)	6,291
Allen and Overy	5,000	-	5,000
Bruno Schroder Trust	51,191	(41,934)	9,257
Charles Hayward Foundation	5,000	(4,166)	834
City & Metropolitan Welfare Charity	4,000	-	4,000
Cole Charitable Trust	1,200	-	1,200
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	28,000	(12,558)	15,442
Transform Justice	6,000	(4,500)	1,500
	<u>278,725</u>	<u>(257,755)</u>	<u>20,970</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>390,967</u>	<u>(358,859)</u>	<u>32,108</u>

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.20 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.21 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	253,453	100,840	(25,000)	329,293
Restricted funds				
Fairness Foundation	1,500	1,500	-	3,000
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	27,610	2,390	-	30,000
Kent Community Foundation	4,800	(4,800)	-	-
The 1772 Charity	167	(167)	-	-
Porticus UK	40,000	-	-	40,000
Fidelity UK	18	(18)	-	-
Drapers Charitable Fund	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
The Noel Buxton Trust	1,250	(1,250)	-	-
Highway One Trust	7,500	(7,500)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	7,500	-	7,500
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	250	750	-	1,000
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	1,500	-	-	1,500
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	-	1,000	-	1,000
The Baring Foundation	21,000	(21,000)	-	-
Designated Fund	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>
	<u>115,595</u>	<u>(31,595)</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>109,000</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>369,048</u></u>	<u><u>69,245</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>438,293</u></u>

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	104,022	(3,182)	100,840
Restricted funds			
Fairness Foundation	3,000	(1,500)	1,500
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	84,590	(82,200)	2,390
Kent Community Foundation	7,800	(12,600)	(4,800)
The 1772 Charity	-	(167)	(167)
Porticus UK	59,998	(59,998)	-
Fidelity UK	-	(18)	(18)
Drapers Charitable Fund	-	(10,000)	(10,000)
The Noel Buxton Trust	-	(1,250)	(1,250)
Highway One Trust	1	(7,501)	(7,500)
Garfield Weston Foundation	10,000	(2,500)	7,500
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	1,250	(500)	750
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	3,000	(3,000)	-
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	1,000	-	1,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	10,200	(10,200)	-
Barrow Cadbury Trust (Criminal Records)	31,500	(31,500)	-
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	9,999	(9,999)	-
The Baring Foundation	-	(21,000)	(21,000)
National Lottery Community Fund	<u>51,791</u>	<u>(51,791)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>274,129</u>	<u>(305,724)</u>	<u>(31,595)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>378,151</u>	<u>(308,906)</u>	<u>69,245</u>

Transfers between funds

A Designated Fund was set up from General Funds to ring fence funds for a redesign project of the UNLOCK website.

14. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2022.

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	31.3.22 £	31.3.21 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	20,930	19,332
Grants	330,023	336,545
Earned income	<u>38,471</u>	<u>22,117</u>
	389,424	377,994
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	43	157
Other income		
Other income	<u>1,500</u>	<u>-</u>
Total incoming resources	390,967	378,151
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Wages	185,173	156,982
Social security	18,140	14,452
Pensions	11,776	9,897
Training	1,084	345
Travel	1,518	1,557
Publications	-	1,775
Volunteer costs	1,995	-
Sundries	<u>15</u>	<u>-</u>
	219,701	185,008
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	83,195	70,529
Social security	4,418	3,520
Pensions	3,085	2,593
Recruitment	<u>10,788</u>	<u>20,165</u>
	101,486	96,807
Finance		
Other operating leases - rent	12,195	11,613
Insurance	1,334	1,320
Carried forward	13,529	12,933

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LTD

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	31.3.22	31.3.21
	£	£
Finance		
Brought forward	13,529	12,933
Repairs & renewals	69	404
Conference fees and room hire	<u>63</u>	<u>200</u>
	13,661	13,537
Information technology		
Software	1,824	373
Development costs	6,960	-
Computer equipment	<u>4,256</u>	<u>2,002</u>
	13,040	2,375
Human resources		
Subscriptions	4,509	2,478
Websites	476	1,106
Telephone	2,044	2,927
Postage and stationery	165	941
Bank charges	<u>331</u>	<u>323</u>
	7,525	7,775
Governance costs		
Trustees' expenses	405	162
Accountancy and legal fees	<u>3,041</u>	<u>3,242</u>
	<u>3,446</u>	<u>3,404</u>
Total resources expended	<u>358,859</u>	<u>308,906</u>
Net income	<u><u>32,108</u></u>	<u><u>69,245</u></u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Unlock, for people with criminal records

England & Wales - Charity number 1079046

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03791535 (England and Wales)

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1079046

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021
FOR
UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LIMITED

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Notes to the Financial Statements	33 to 41
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	42 to 43

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006) present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Unlock National Association of Ex-offenders Limited

Working name	Unlock – for people with criminal records
Registered Company number	03791535 (England and Wales)
Registered Charity number	1079046
Registered office & operational address	Maidstone Community Support Centre 39-48 Marsham Street Maidstone Kent ME14 1HH

Trustees	Mark Rowe, Chair Michael Pattinson, Vice-chair Nigel Parsons, Treasurer Salima Budhani Mark Day Faye Goldman Leigh Hardy Steven Lorber Mandeep Mahil Emma Wilson Hamish MacLellan, appointed 18 May 2020
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Senior Management	Angela Cairns, CEO, appointed 17 May 2021 Julie Harmsworth, Deputy CEO
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President	General The Lord David Ramsbotham GCB CBE
Vice-President	Judge John Samuels QC

Patrons	Kate Adie OBE DL Dr Silvia Casale Dr Deborah Cheney Prof Andrew Coyle CMG Dexter Dias QC The Rt Hon the Lord Garnier QC Prof Nick Hardwick Matt Hyde FRSA Baroness Helena Kennedy QC Flo Krause LLB Prof Shadd Maruna Jill Stevens
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Bankers	NatWest (Larkfield), 718 London Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6AN
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Independent Examiner	Calcutt Matthews, 19 North Street, Ashford, Kent TN24 8LF
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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

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

Following an extensive review of Unlock's memorandum and articles of association, the board of trustees unanimously passed a new set of articles of association by special resolution in June 2020. The new articles of association provide for greater clarity and practical ease of administration, including setting trustee tenure periods and the appointment of a vice chair. There were no changes to the objects, rules on paying a trustee or what happens if the charity is wound up. The articles of association were submitted to and accepted by the Charity Commission, with the Commission's records being updated accordingly in July 2020. Companies House was also notified.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The board carries out an annual review to decide whether there is a need to recruit new trustees. If during the year a trustee leaves, the board will decide whether to recruit at that time. New trustees are openly recruited through advertisement across appropriate forums. One new trustee was appointed this year.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees have an induction session at Unlock's office or virtually to meet other trustees, staff, and volunteers to gain a better understanding of Unlock's work, priorities, and how it operates. They are given the charity's key documents and assigned to read guidance issued by the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Organisational structure

Unlock is a charitable company governed by a board of trustees with day-to-day operations delegated to the CEO.

Related parties

No related parties exist other than the funders identified below.

Risk management

The trustee board has carried out a review of the major risks facing the charity. A risk register is in place which prioritises these risks and identifies mitigating factors, systems, and controls in relation to each. Trustees follow a comprehensive monitoring and review process to capture new risks that may arise and ensure that systems are in place to manage these.

Governance

Trustees attend scheduled board meetings four times a year; in 2020-21 trustee attendance rate was 93%. Individual trustees lead on specific areas of governance, including: safeguarding, risk management, whistleblowing, finance, GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), digital development, human resources, governance code and fundraising. They are encouraged to attend training events and seminars to develop their roles and increase their contribution to the charity's governance. Trustees also undertake ad-hoc tasks as and when required and task-specific working groups are formed as needed and meet separately.

In working towards fulfilling Unlock's vision and achieving high standards of governance and leadership, the trustee board applies the Charity Governance Code. Overseen by the Charity Commission, the Code sets out principles and recommended practice to help us achieve the highest standards of governance and leadership. The board assesses its performance against the Code annually.

Unlock operates within an equal opportunities framework that is inclusive of people with criminal convictions and seeks to attract trustees with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. Approximately half of our trustees and staff have a criminal record. Further work on equality, diversity and inclusion is taking place across the course of Unlock's forward strategy.

Interests

The trustee board maintains a register of members' interests as a measure of good practice and to manage any conflicts

that arise. The register is updated and reviewed annually.

Safeguarding

Unlock has a robust safeguarding policy and other related policies including whistleblowing with named lead trustees for both. In this reporting period, no safeguarding incidents have been identified as relevant for reporting to the Charity Commission via a serious incident report and no whistleblowing concerns were raised.

Management

Management and development of the charity are delegated to the CEO who reports directly to the chair of trustees. A framework of financial delegation is set out in a policy and procedures manual. Systems for line management, appraisal, staff development and supervision are in place, together with grievance and complaints procedures.

Remuneration policy

The trustee board sets the CEO's salary. Staff salaries are aligned to the NJC pay scale and are reviewed annually with any changes approved by the board. Salaries are banded relative to levels of responsibilities.

Public Benefit

Unlock assists people with criminal records to live positive, crime-free lives. In planning the charity's activities this year, the trustees paid due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. Our activities and beneficiaries are described below and in the 'About Us' section of our website, www.unlock.org.uk.

OBJECTIVES

As stated in our governing document, Unlock's charitable objectives are:

"To advance education and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of people who have received a criminal record (including those who have suffered a legal restriction on their liberty at any penal establishment as a punishment imposed by a court of law, received a non-custodial sentence, fine or any other court or other recorded disposal, such as a police caution), in particular but not exclusively by the provision of information, advice, advocacy and training, and the undertaking of research and policy work, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the aforementioned persons."

Purpose

Unlock is a national independent advocacy charity that supports, speaks up and campaigns for people facing stigma, prejudice and discrimination because of their criminal record. We believe that everyone should be able to move on from their past and contribute fully to society. We provide information, give advice and take on cases to help people overcome the obstacles they are facing because of their criminal record. Many people feel like they are serving a second sentence of stigma and discrimination. To challenge this injustice we collect evidence, speak out and campaign for change so that policies, practices and attitudes allow people the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Vision

Our vision is of a fair and inclusive society where people with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination.

Mission

Our mission is to advocate for people with criminal records so they can move on positively in their lives. Specifically, we:

- Support people with criminal records to navigate their way through challenges.
- Campaign for changes to legislation, policies and practices of government, employers and others.
- Research, present evidence and raise awareness of the systemic issues faced by people with criminal records.

OUR BENEFICIARIES

A criminal record affects a large number of people

There are nearly 12 million people in the UK with a criminal record, the vast majority of whom have put their mistakes behind them and are living law-abiding lives. Yet for many, their criminal record anchors them to their past and gets in the way of them fully contributing to society.

It's not just those who have been to prison

The total cost of reoffending is up to £18 billion a year and 75% of individuals leaving prison make a new claim to an out-of-work benefit within two years of release. We regularly hear from people who say, *"The real sentence started after I was released from prison"*. However, over 90% of people with a criminal record have not been to prison. A third of men and one in nine women have a criminal record by age 53. Ministry of Justice (MoJ) research found that three-quarters of those convicted before the age of 53 had only been convicted once.

The injustice of a second sentence

People with criminal records can find themselves locked out of society and continually punished for things for which they have served their sentences. This injustice can be seen in the numbers of people still unemployed many years later. Around a third of people claiming Job Seeker's Allowance have received a conviction or caution in the previous ten years. Unlock's work is founded on the principle that people who have already been punished by the criminal justice system should not face further punishment or exclusion from aspects of civil society.

A criminal record is crippling for employment

Fair access to employment benefits everyone in society. According to MoJ research, the most important factor identified in stopping reoffending was having a job. However, 75% of employers discriminate against applicants on the basis of a criminal record and DWP/YouGov research shows that 50% of employers say they would not recruit 'offenders or ex-offenders'. Feeling shame or embarrassment about their earlier transgressions, people will often avoid applying for jobs which require criminal record checks. There is clear evidence from the United States that reform of criminal record checking gets people off welfare and into work.

A criminal record acquired in youth can be a life sentence. A young person can change quickly, but their criminal record does not: young adults, in particular, can find a criminal record holding them back at a key period in their working lives and well into adulthood. In the last five years, over a million criminal records were disclosed on standard or enhanced DBS checks; even though the offences were from over 30 years ago and the records were received by people when under the age of 25.

A criminal record can further entrench racial inequality

Ethnicity can impact on the type of criminal record someone receives. Data since 2009 shows white people have had a consistently lower average custodial sentence length for indictable offences than all other ethnic groups. Black teenage boys are more likely to be charged with murder than manslaughter and more likely to receive a higher or maximum sentence than white boys. One in four black teenage boys guilty of manslaughter were given maximum jail terms, while white children found guilty of the same crime were sentenced to no more than 10 years, with the majority getting less than four. Our research shows that people feel the criminal records disclosure regime disproportionately impacts certain racialised groups. The disclosure regime exacerbates problems faced by people already treated more harshly at all stages in the criminal justice system. Ways to minimise or delay the use of criminal records may benefit racialised groups in particular, but would result in a much fairer system for everyone.

The prejudice is wide-ranging and has intensified

When the current system of criminal background checks was introduced in 2002, around 1.2 million checks were processed. There are now over six million checks a year, of which over four million are at a higher level, meaning that spent convictions can be disclosed. Since the launch of the Police National Computer in 1974, criminal records have evolved from being used merely for crime detection purposes, to becoming a means of categorising people as potentially 'unsuitable', 'risky' or even 'undeserving'.

Despite some recent positive improvements to the criminal records system, a criminal record can still have a pervasive impact:

- **Insurance** – Insurance cover is often refused or subject to unjustified increased premiums. Insurance

companies regularly take into account convictions that have no relevance to the insurance sought. Insurers fail to follow industry good practice and are often misleading in the questions or assumptions they have, suggesting that people with spent convictions need to disclose these.

- **Housing** – Since 2011 social housing providers have had the right to apply blanket bans to applicants with criminal convictions. Many providers ask on application and apply some form of exclusion for those who declare a conviction.
- **Access to education** – In 2018 UCAS removed the ‘criminal convictions’ box for applicants to non-regulated courses at university. But most universities continue to collect this information and we regularly hear from people who find that old and minor criminal records cause problems when applying to university, particularly in accessing courses like social work and healthcare.
- **Travel** – Visa requirements and confusing travel restrictions can deter or prevent travel.
- **Information on the internet** – Media reports online can lead to information about criminal offences remaining publicly accessible for many years, undermining the purpose of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA).
- **Becoming a trustee or senior manager of a charity** – The Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 prevents charities from recruiting trustees and senior managers with certain criminal records. Amendments in 2018 extended the framework to cover senior staff and also extended the trustee disqualification framework to cover people on the sex offenders register (even when the conviction is spent).

It doesn't stop when a criminal record becomes spent

The ROA established an important legal principle that, after a specified period of time, most criminal records could become ‘spent’ (meaning that they could not lawfully be taken into account in most circumstances). However, over four decades since the legislation’s introduction, its impact has been gradually eroded. Reducing the time periods after which criminal records become spent has been a priority for Unlock. The ever-increasing numbers of ‘exemptions’ limit the protections of the Act and the status of having a criminal record which is now ‘spent’ risks becoming meaningless if it means that people can continue to be discriminated against in a wide range of areas.

Many people are not allowed to be ‘legally rehabilitated’

People who have served their sentence shouldn't keep being punished indefinitely. Yet, under our current system, anyone sentenced to more than four years in prison can never become ‘legally rehabilitated’. Over 8,000 people a year receive a sentence that cannot become spent. That can mean a lifetime of discrimination in employment, higher insurance premiums and difficulties finding housing. Exclusions by sentence or offence type create injustice and embed the idea that some people are inherently incapable of rehabilitation. We do not believe that to be the case.

There have been some positive developments, but there is much more to do

We are proud to have played a key part in recent years in bringing about positive changes that have benefited people with criminal records:

- Changes to the ROA, passed in 2012 and introduced in 2014, reduced the disclosure period for most jobs for hundreds of thousands of people, and also meant those sentences between 30 months and four years could become spent. But it kept a large proportion of people excluded because of the length or type of their sentence and also failed to tackle the underlying issues with the legislation in today's society.
- The Ban the Box campaign, which Unlock co-founded in 2013, now has over 140 employers that commit to not asking about criminal records at application stage. But research we did in 2018 showed that three quarters of national employers continue to ask at this point.
- The introduction of filtering rules in 2013 meant people with some single convictions and cautions no longer had them show up on standard or enhanced checks. Around 120,000 standard or enhanced checks a year no longer disclose criminal records as a result of filtering. But the rules were unnecessarily rigid and meant that many people still had old and minor criminal records disclosed.
- A Supreme Court ruling in 2019, following the first legal intervention in Unlock's history, led to the government introducing changes to the filtering rules in late 2020 which will benefit around 45,000 people a year. But many convictions and cautions still show up on higher-level DBS checks for many years, sometimes forever.

There is much more to do to achieve our mission of a fair and inclusive society where people with criminal records are free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination.

Strategic aims and planned activities

Unlock's aims, objectives and activities are subject to annual review to look at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work over the previous twelve months. It measures the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those groups of people we are set up to help. The review also helps us to ensure our aims, objectives and activities remain focused on our stated purpose. This report covers the final year of our strategic plan 2016-20, which set out two key objectives as follows:

1) To support people moving on positively in their lives. To achieve this, we:

- Provided direct support to individuals through our helpline and case work;
- Provided online support through our information hub, disclosure calculator tool, e-magazine, forum, and news/update subscriber service;
- Operated a volunteering scheme to train people with convictions as helpline peer-advisors;
- Ran training courses on criminal record disclosure for statutory, contracted, and voluntary service providers and practitioners who themselves support people with convictions.

2) A fairer and more inclusive society. To achieve this, we:

- Challenged employment discrimination by working with employers to improve their policies and practices, and worked with government departments and agencies to challenge the way they operate;
- Influenced government, employers and others through evidenced research, consultations, strategic litigation, media work and campaigns.

OUR APPROACH

Independent

We believe it is important that we hold government, agencies and others to account. We also believe it is important that people with criminal records trust us. That's why we're independent: Unlock neither seeks nor accepts government funding and this is crucial to our model of working. Whilst we aim to work constructively with government and other partners wherever possible, we are also at liberty to take a critical stance on policies which unfairly restrict opportunities for people with criminal records.

We speak truth to power. As a result, the people for whom we exist (our supporters, and our funders) can be sure that our sole motivation is to improve the life chances of people with criminal records. Our power comes from our knowledge of what's happening to people with criminal records, publishing reports, persuading the unwilling, encouraging good practices and exposing those practices which are unacceptable. We're politically independent - but we are not neutral about our agenda of change to criminal records.

Involve and include people with criminal records

We believe that personal experience is intrinsically valuable, so we recruit people with criminal records throughout the organisation (and particularly as staff and volunteers to deliver our frontline support). Peer experience offers a bridge of understanding, awareness and empathy to people who sometimes find it hard to talk about the issues they face. We also aim for a trustee board where half of the members have a criminal record. We proactively involve and support people to contribute to our advocacy, campaigns and policy work, because people with criminal records are in a unique position to know best about the problems that they face.

Ear to the ground, voice at the top

We listen and engage every day with people who face difficulties as a result of their criminal record. We have a proven track record of identifying issues, finding solutions and putting them into practice. We influence policy and create systemic change, continually punching above our weight to achieve large-scale outcomes with employers, service providers, advice agencies and government. Too often, policies and systems divide and disempower people; and politicians and organisations hoard rather than share power. We will create platforms and build confidence and capacity for individuals to take more power and to influence.

Think big. Act big. Stay small

We are a small charity with big ambitions. We will constantly adapt our work so that we better meet the needs of the people for whom we exist. To do this, we need to make tough choices; we can't do everything. Longer term, it is important that we are able to ensure that the organisation's core work continues, which means working efficiently and effectively.

Work in partnership

We collaborate and build strategic partnerships with like-minded organisations to maximise our impact. If we are to achieve real change, we also need to work with people and organisations that are different to Unlock, and to develop partnerships that influence the way in which they think and behave.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategy and Planning

In March 2021, Unlock reached the end of its strategic plan 2016-20. During the year, we undertook significant work to write and publish a new five-year strategy. Led by trustees and senior management, the strategic review process involved consultation with all staff, volunteers, service users and supporters. The resulting **Tackling Injustice, Changing Lives: Strategic Plan, 2021-2026** was implemented in April 2021.

At the same time as publishing our new strategic plan, we also celebrated **Unlock's 21st birthday** as a registered charity. Unable to celebrate with a physical event, we were nevertheless touched by messages of congratulations and support, including a note from **Unlock co-founder, Stephen Fry**, who said: *"... I am very proud that UNLOCK, a charity that I was happy to play a part in founding, has now reached its 21st birthday. We can look back on years of helping those with criminal records and making a real difference, but more importantly, we can look forward to new strategies and initiatives which will do even more to help."*

Board and Staffing

One new trustee was appointed this year (Hamish MacLellan took up his post in May 2021). A new vice-chair role was created with existing trustee Mike Pattinson being duly elected to the post.

Following a rigorous recruitment process, the board appointed Angela Cairns as Unlock's CEO in May 2021, with Julie Harmsworth moving from co-director to deputy CEO. Former co-director, Christopher Stacey left the charity at the end of January 2021.

Two new staff posts were also created this year: a digital and communications manager responsible for co-ordinating Unlock's digital presence including developing our websites, and a policy officer who will focus on our work to reform the criminal records regime and influence policy makers and key stakeholders to improve relevant laws and government policy. Both staff took up their posts in September 2020.

Volunteers

Volunteers continued to play a vital role in the delivery of the charity's activities. Our volunteering scheme is described below in 'Activities'.

Memberships and working groups

We continue to work positively to build relationships and partnerships across government, private sector, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector (through body membership, board membership, participatory working groups, and formal agreements for collaborative working). Over the past year, significant relationships included membership of the Helplines Partnership; Clinks; Institute of Employability Professionals; Probation Institute Learning Provider Endorsement Scheme; Free Representation Unit; Clinks; NCVO; Small Charities Coalition; FSI (Foundation for Social Improvement) and Charity Comms.

A key part of our policy and campaign work is to work with other organisations including: Alliance for Youth Justice; Clinks; National Association for Youth Justice; Founding member of the 'Wipe the Slate Clean' campaign; Member of

the Criminal Justice Alliance; Information Commissioner's Office; Ministry of Justice; Home Office; Disclosure and Barring Service; Transform Justice: developing the #FairChecks movement; Business in the Community (BITC); New Futures Network and Employers' Forum for Reducing Re-offending (EFFRR).

Unlock is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and the Fundraising Regulator.

Communications

Press and media

We continue to build our press and media engagement work, to grow awareness of our work and services as well as support our campaign and policy objectives. This year we have developed our approach to include the voices of people with criminal records in our media work and continued to embed our agreed principles of autonomy and informed consent; respect and dignity; anonymity and remuneration. We have also developed productive and ongoing relationships with a number of key journalists, thereby increasing our pool of engaged media contacts to whom we can pitch proactively. Examples of media engagement include:

- Edwina Grosvenor's podcast: Criminal records and stigma
- Personnel Today: MoJ sentencing white paper – reform of the ROA
- Law Society Gazette: MoJ sentencing white paper – reform of the ROA
- BBC Radio Kent: MoJ sentencing white paper – reform of the ROA
- The Justice Gap: MoJ sentencing white paper – reform of the ROA
- Inside Time: MoJ sentencing white paper – reform of the ROA
- The Herald (Scotland): Burglar alarm tester job advert
- Telegraph: Burglar alarm tester job advert
- Telegraph: Filtering changes date announced
- Personnel Today: Filtering changes date announced
- The Times: Filtering changes date announced
- Inside Time: Filtering changes date announced
- UK Human Rights Blog: Filtering changes taken effect
- People Management magazine: Ucheck report re employers' attitudes
- Independent: Women report IWD

Social media

This year (with the arrival of our digital and communications manager) we took steps to improve our social media strategy, including implementing more regular tracking and analysis across all channels as follows:

- Twitter: we have over 12,000 Twitter followers (up from 10,000 12 months ago) and have developed our content to include media such as images, GIFs and short videos - in order to improve engagement.
- Facebook: we had 653 followers at the end of the year and posted 51 times. Our most popular post was a video explaining the hard-fought for filtering changes which came into effect in November 2020.
- LinkedIn: we have significantly developed our LinkedIn presence, resulting in our followers almost doubling to 1,014 by the end of the year.

We aim to build on this in the next financial year through the development and implementation of a digital marketing strategy.

Publications

Throughout the year we published a number of reports and briefings and responded to government consultations. Examples include:

- 'Angels or witches': The impact of criminal records on women (March 2021)
- 'Do I need to disclose my convictions?' – Unlock and Nottinghamshire Youth Justice Service's resource for young people and professionals (December 2020)
- 'The cycle repeats itself' – Unlock's response to the MoJ sentencing white paper (December 2020)
- 'Settled status: what you need to know if you are an EU citizen and have a criminal record' (Online information) and a one-page summary (October 2020)

- Criminal Injuries Compensation Review 2020 – Unlock submission (October 2020)
- Criminal records: a comparison between England and Israel (Dana Segev, September 2020)
- Thinking differently: Employers’ views on hiring people convicted of sexual offences (with Prison Reform Trust, September 2020)
- College of Policing consultation – Code of Practice for the Law Enforcement Data Service (LEDS) (September 2020)
- Checked out? Ineligible criminal record checks and how to prevent them (July 2020)
- Briefing: Reforming the criminal records disclosure regime (July 2020)
- The rationale behind the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Dr Andrew Henley, July 2020)
- Which cautions and convictions would be removed from a standard or enhanced DBS? Brief guide based on plans announced in July 2020 (July 2020)
- Impact on Covid-19 on people with criminal records: Briefing to the Justice Select Committee (June 2020)
- Financial incentives to encourage the employment of people with convictions (June 2020)
- Our support in numbers 2019/20 (June 2020)

News & updates mailing lists

Unlock has an open subscription mailing list where people can choose to receive one or more periodic updates and publications. Especially helpful for individuals with convictions, practitioners, and employers, they include:

- News/updates from the information hub for people with convictions (sent monthly)
- Quarterly newsletter – a summary of all updates, sent to everyone on our public mailing list
- Unlock News – latest news and updates about Unlock, our policy work, news & media, and vacancies (sent on an ad hoc basis)
- News/updates relating to recruiting people with convictions specifically for employers and recruiters (sent on an ad hoc basis)
- News/updates including training opportunities for front-line practitioners (sent on an ad hoc basis)
- Supporter newsletter sent quarterly to funders and donors
- Press releases are sent to our media list and subscribers.

IMPACT

By working to meet the needs of our beneficiaries and by advocating for systemic change, Unlock continues to have a positive impact on the lives of people with criminal records, their families and friends, and on building a fairer and more inclusive society. Analysis of beneficiary feedback across all of our activities shows the people we support are better able to successfully negotiate the ongoing, changing and increasingly complex challenges that can derail the most positive of intentions. As a result, they have improved resettlement chances, suffer less social exclusion, and are empowered to move on positively with their lives and achieve their potential.

A particular highlight for the charity in November 2020 was winning the prestigious ‘**Outstanding National Organisation’ award at the Criminal Justice Alliance Awards**. In presenting the award, the judges said, “*Unlock is doing fantastic work for the rehabilitation of offenders. Their work is clearly changing lives. It enables people to move on with their lives and reintegrate into society. The legal changes they have influenced will help so many people gain employment and will ultimately help to prevent reoffending...They have campaigned for many years for a fairer system of criminal record disclosure, aiming to give people a better chance to change their lives. Their careful and determined actions through legal and political avenues are now paying dividends. They have laid a path that is leading to a fairer deal for people with past criminal convictions*”.

ACTIVITIES

OUR FIRST AIM: HELPING PEOPLE TO MOVE ON POSITIVELY IN THEIR LIVES

Unlock provides information, advice and support for people with criminal records, their families and friends and the professionals who work with them. These are delivered directly through our helpline, volunteer scheme and training courses for professionals working to support people with criminal records within their own organisations, and indirectly through our online resources.

Despite the challenges we faced when our office temporarily closed and resulting loss of volunteer support, the number of people using our services saw an increase on the previous year (see table below).

	2019-20	2020-21
Direct support		
Helpline	7,803	8,049
Case work (completed)	11	9
Self-help support		
Information Hub user sessions	1,132,371	1,145,680
Forum members	3,764	4,029
theRecord subscribers	3,584	3,777
theRecord website user sessions	110,805	114,090
Disclosure Calculator uses	45,751	49,531
Volunteer scheme		
Volunteers supported (across the year at different times)	5 community-based 5 serving prisoners	4 community-based 0 serving prisoners
Hours worked	4,286	1,636
Non-office based	5	5
Support for practitioners: Training		
Training events delivered	17	14
Number of people trained	220	240

Supporting people directly

thehelpline

Unlock's helpline provides confidential, accurate, reliable and non-judgmental information, advice, and support for people with criminal records. It is entirely peer-delivered by trained staff and volunteers whose personal experience allows them to offer an empathic response to people seeking our help.

Helpline users are empowered with factual knowledge that helps them to understand how to improve their own individual circumstances – getting jobs, education opportunities and training, accessing housing, improving their financial situation, travelling abroad and much more. They then feel better able to cope with the challenges of living with a criminal record, less isolated because they have access to a community of other people who share their desire to move on in life, have improved self-confidence, and are better able to engage with wider society. These strengthened emotional foundations lead to better family relationships, improved life outcomes, and reduced motivation to re-offend which, in turn, has a positive effect on wider society.

Helpline performance

Whilst a physical office is essential for Unlock's helpline to operate fully, and in particular to support our volunteer scheme, we were able to put measures in place which enabled continued delivery of our services even when government restrictions meant that our office had to close. This enabled us to create a more flexible and effective

approach that can be integrated into helpline development and mitigate against unforeseen circumstances that may arise in the future.

In March 2020, helpline staff and some of our volunteers moved to home-based working until we were able to reopen the office in July 2020 following government guidance for safe working practice. We then faced significant challenges recruiting and working with volunteers when travel remained difficult or unsafe. Again, responding to further government restrictions, our office closed in January 2021 with the team moving to remote working until restrictions were again lifted (in summer 2021).

Alongside these challenges, we saw an increase in the number of people contacting Unlock's helpline. With many people facing challenges related to employment and volunteering, we provided them with information and guidance to better understand their options and make informed decisions. The impact of a criminal record being an additional problem to getting employment during the pandemic was corroborated by helpline staff who saw a significant number of enquiries from individuals who were now job hunting – these individuals having had secure jobs for many years, they had never previously needed a formal criminal record check or been asked to disclose their criminal record to an employer.

By replacing a fixed landline telephone system with an internet-based one, staff and volunteers were able to work remotely during office closures and observe social distancing when it re-opened. In this way we were able to continue to keep our helpline running whilst ensuring the safety of staff and volunteers. Although we had fewer volunteers, no staff were furloughed or absent with Covid-19. The new system also allowed us to introduce Relay UK to the range of helpline contact channels, helping deaf people and those with hearing loss or speech impairment to communicate using an app on their smartphone or tablet.

Building on last year's pilot, a live webchat service remained available to people using our online Information Hub. With fewer helpline advisors available however, operating hours were limited. Nevertheless, webchat remains a popular option for those seeking a personal response and we aim to expand availability during the coming year.

How we monitor

Helpline users are routinely asked to provide feedback through web links or by using a feedback form. This helps us to monitor the support we provide, track outcomes and identify recurring and arising issues that may be advanced internally to be addressed at policy and practice level. Ten percent of people using the helpline are followed up to find out how they applied our advice and support and the difference it made. Results showed that 23% of calls result in a positive hard outcome (such as a job or education offer, insurance cover or housing) and 30% in a positive soft outcome (such as confidence, actions, knowledge and understanding their rights and responsibilities).

Twice each year we also ask all callers to complete a survey during a two-week period. The impact of Covid-19 on our resources this year meant that we were unable to carry out the second survey this year, but analysis of the most recent survey showed that:

- 95% of people reported that they had found what they were looking for when contacting Unlock;
- 73% felt that our service was better for them because Unlock is independent of government;
- 93% felt our advisors themselves have 'been there' and respond in an empathic way because they have their own first-hand experience of obstacles facing a person with a criminal record;
- 57% of people said they didn't know where else they would have turned had they not come to Unlock.

User feedback:

- *"I've had a response back from the DBS today in regards to the formal representation that I submitted to them a few weeks back. They have sent a 'no further action letter' and stated I'm able to work in regulated activity if I wish to do so. Can I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your help and support over the last few months; it hasn't been easy but your advice has kept me going. Thank you unreservedly. And to your organisation for all the hard work and support you give to people it really does help."*
- *"Thanks very much for your help. I have been at the brink of suicide over these matters throughout the years. I really do appreciate everything you have done for normally decent people who are treated like pariahs!"*
- *"I'm now up and running my own company. That would be a cause for celebration in itself, but I also have clients. It's been just over a year since I lost my job and the past 12 months have been tough, but with the support and help from people like you and others, I got through this and the future does not seem as daunting."*

- *“I’ve just heard from the DBS panel and glad to say it was good news and I can continue with my training and volunteering. I’ve been blown away by how helpful Unlock has been and doubt whether I could have made some of the positive steps I’ve taken without your input.”*
- *“Your amazing campaign to ban the box has been worthwhile to me and my family and although there is still a long way to go. I pray that you will continue to help others like me. I am still in the process of trying to get rid of the caution. I am very hopeful but even so I cannot begin to explain and be grateful and amazed at the support you have provided to me over the years via email and telephone. I have never felt rushed or like my problem was trivial. Thank you Unlock very, very much. I will continue to support in order to help others too.”*
- *“I have been able to insure our home today. We had been insured with Premier for house and content they did not ask about anyone with a prison sentence but today on renewal they did and we were refused cover. You emailed me with a list of insurers and we have peace of mind.”*

Volunteer scheme

Unlock’s volunteer scheme provides opportunities for people with criminal records to train as helpline advisors. Based at our Maidstone office, volunteers are trained as front-line advisors, working alongside staff to provide a unique, wholly peer-delivered information, advice and support service enabling us to respond to many more people than would otherwise be possible. The scheme is open to those living in the community and others on day release from prison, enabling them to gain valuable workplace skills and experience as well as to build back confidence and self-esteem. Others living too far away to travel offer support as content writers and researchers.

All volunteers are encouraged to take an active part in Unlock’s activities and are invited to other training opportunities whenever appropriate. Future volunteers will continue to undertake our disclosure training (endorsed by the Institute of Employability Professionals) and trained in the use of Lamplight, our online monitoring system. Next year we shall also support one of our regular volunteers to study for an Information, Advice and Guidance NVQ2 level accreditation with a view to moving to NVQ3 on completion and the organisation opening the offer to others.

Covid-19 restrictions impacted significantly on the scheme this year with fewer volunteers being available during the periods when the office was closed. Three pre-existing volunteers were supported throughout the year and were able to work at various times as restrictions allowed. The restrictions meant that we were only able to recruit from the community as prisoners were no longer allowed outside of prison to work. As a result, volunteers responded to half the total number of enquiries that we would have anticipated otherwise. Nevertheless, using new telephone technology and prioritising of staff time and activities to respond to user needs, the helpline team responded extremely well to the demand and exceeded our annual target.

A recruitment drive and online training programme for new community-based volunteers and communications with HMPs East Sutton Park, Rochester and Standford Hill are underway, with the expectation that we would be able to return to an office environment in July 2021 as provided for in the government’s ‘roadmap’.

A volunteer’s experience:

“I had always known about Unlock as I had used their helpline in the past, so when I saw on their website that they were looking for volunteers, I sent off my application.

Having successfully completed the interview I started as soon as I could... Before being let loose full training was given in all aspects of subjects that come across the helpline and on how to answer enquires received. What I found important was that you were not just thrown in the deep end and made to swim; the training was at the pace of the person undertaking it. Once completed I started off answering emails and letters under supervision, then once I had accomplished this I moved onto the telephone.

Offering advice and guidance not only to people with criminal records but also external stakeholders, has made me realise how much support is required and how much at times the help is not there for individuals, and how many individuals face disadvantage and discrimination.

While assisting on the charity’s helpline I have also assisted in a number of research tasks, including looking at housing policies of councils within the UK and how they affect a person with a criminal conviction. This insight along with the skills and knowledge I have gained in offering advice and guidance has made me see how important advocating for change is, and the job that we do helps a sector of society that is greatly penalised by the communities they live within.

The skills and abilities I have gained have come to the forefront during the COVID-19 pandemic. The learning curve increased greatly in having to undertake remote working to ensure with other staff members that

the helpline has been fully active. This has included tracking criminal justice and Government websites for changes in legislation announced during the lockdown, for instance identifying changes to security vetting procedures and also the impact a person under ROTL has dealt with the implementation of the furlough scheme, and ensuring that this is correctly communicated.

My work on the helpline continues as we get ready to return back to the office, and reflecting back I am thankful for the opportunities I have been given in learning new skills and abilities. When volunteering you feel you have a purpose in life, when most other people turn their back on you. There is a great satisfaction when you realise that you have helped someone and you can hear in their voice or through the tears over the phone how much the advice and guidance you have given them has made such an impact on their life and helped in the problem that they have called you about."

Individual case work

On occasion, our helpline team will go beyond normal helpline support to take up a case on behalf of an individual when necessary. Such cases are taken on either to achieve a positive outcome for that person, or where the intervention supports our current policy work or a particular project which, if successful, would benefit a large number of people. Even if unsuccessful, a case can increase our body of evidence to inform further work.

This year we supported 21 individuals with eight cases being completed and 13 ongoing. The following examples of case work show the range and complexity of issues. We successfully challenged:

- The admissions process of a university that had refused to admit a student onto a nursing course because she had a criminal record, then refused to allow her an appeal. After our intervention they agreed to allow an appeal and at a Health and Conduct Committee meeting, the panel found in the applicant's favour and subsequently admitted her onto the course.
- A local council that was using 'Disqualification by Association' disclosure forms and were asking all their employees to provide details of unspent convictions of people they lived with. The legal requirement to provide this information had been scrapped in September 2018.
- A housing association which had refused to place an applicant on its housing list because of their criminal record, when in fact their conviction was spent, meaning that it was unlawful to take it into account.
- A university and a regulatory body whose application and admissions processes included ineligible and misleading questions.

Support for people in prison

Our helpline regularly receives letters and calls from prisoners on a range of issues and particularly about resettlement. Unlock's helpline number is on the prison pre-approved list with a PIN number that means a prisoner can call us without prior permission or cost. With reduced access to many prison resettlement teams due to Covid-19, we saw an increase in the number of calls from prisoners seeking information.

Reaching pro-actively into the wider prison estate, we worked with software developer, Socrates Software, to include relevant pages from Unlock's Information Hub site as part of a 'Release' app, available via a smart phone or tablet to people leaving prison from 45 sites. We have also continued to provide a quarterly column for the prison newspaper, InsideTime, reaching around 60,000 prisoners per edition.

Supporting people digitally

With limited helpline capacity and a large potential beneficiary group, we maintain a number of online resources so that people can find the information they need, at a time and in a way that suits them best. Accessible from Unlock's main website (www.unlock.org.uk), six options are available:

- a) *theInformationHub* (hub.unlock.org.uk)
- b) *theCalculator* (www.disclosurecalculator.org.uk)
- c) *theForum* (forum.unlock.org.uk)
- d) *theRecord* (www.the-record.org.uk)
- e) *Recruit!* (recruit.unlock.org.uk) – a resource for employers.

Each of the sites serves a different purpose (reported on below), and their use is routinely monitored. Using Google analytics, we record the numbers of people reached, and use various methods to capture and analyse user feedback through:

- Disqus: all articles and blogs on our websites have the facility for people to comment or start (or respond to) a discussion. Any contributions made through Disqus are reviewed before being made live and, if appropriate, a member of staff will follow-up. There were 486 comments and 372 votes received this year.
- Wufoo: this is a more general feature that enables people to give feedback about their experiences of using either the helpline or the websites (we receive an average of 10 every month).
- Six-monthly pop-up surveys.

Research was carried out this year to help shape the future development of the ways in which we help individuals. We asked survey participants to select from a list of options, those methods they would use to contact Unlock (they could select more than one). We learned that whilst 65% of people would use the helpline, 73% would use webchat and 71% online guides. We also worked with a digital agency called Difrent who carried out one-to-one user testing of our Information Hub. These fed into a new website design that will be more user-friendly and better meet different users' needs. The new website is scheduled to be launched in autumn 2021.

a) *theInformationHub*

The hub is a comprehensive source of information and guidance on tackling issues such as employment, insurance, travel, education, housing, relationships, finance, filtering, disclosure – in fact just about everything in life that is affected by having a criminal record. Designed and published for individuals, we are pleased to make our resources freely available to other organisations – statutory and non-profit – who routinely use them in their work. In this way we are able to benefit as many people as possible.

The hub is continually updated to reflect latest information and new guidance relating to changes in legislation and other important events affecting people with criminal records. Key revisions this year included:

- The impact of Covid-19 on employment and volunteering
- 'Settled status' information for EU citizens with a criminal record living in the UK and travelling to the EU (after 'Brexit' on 1 January 2021)
- Filtering of cautions and convictions from standard and enhanced DBS checks following changes to the disclosure rules introduced in November 2020
- Telling a partner, family member or friend about a criminal record
- What a person may need to know if convicted of a sexual offence.

b) *theCalculator*

Unlock's disclosure calculator is a free, instant, and confidential way for people to find out if and when their record is or will become spent and no longer needing to be disclosed under the ROA. Used nearly 50,000 times this year by individuals, statutory agencies, service providers and private companies, the tool is able to process multiple convictions, non-standard sentence/disposals and a mixture of different sentences.

Analysis this year showed that 56% of users found that all their convictions were spent, with 40% revealing a combination of spent and unspent convictions. Whilst good news for many, 4% of users discovered their conviction(s) will remain unspent for the rest of their lives.

User feedback:

- *"I am a lawyer and it would have taken me ages to get the information you have given me. God bless you for your good work. From what I heard on radio 4 today and the result of your online calculator, a great weight has been lifted from my shoulders!"*
- *"I used the calculator and was able to determine that my sentence has been spent. This will open many doors because I've always thought I had to answer yes to the felony question."*
- *"Oh gosh I've been so confused about spent and unspent; this has put my mind at rest and I can now look forward with clarity, I can't thank you enough. I put my details in on my one and only conviction, 8 weeks suspended in 2019 I was so confused about it, but just adding my details and my conviction dates helped me to*

understand. I can now sleep at night!"

c) theForum

With more than 4,000 members, *theForum* provides a unique, national peer networking opportunity for people to support each other as they move on from their past. Unlock's role is as facilitator, allowing members their own space to share experiences and talk about how they feel. There is little opportunity for this in the "real" world, where many people feel isolated and too ashamed or embarrassed to share their convictions.

The strength of the forum can often be seen in the way in which members support each other emotionally – often beyond what a helpline can do. Popular threads this year include: *'Friend thinking of disclosing my conviction to neighbours'*; *'Police access to my flat'*; *'Polygraph testing'* and *'Has the Schengen system changed?'*. We encourage forum members to use our other online resources and this year introduced a "What's new in the community" section, which brings together positives stories and information from other Unlock websites.

d) theRecord

theRecord is an online magazine that provides a regular stream of readers' personal stories and experiences as well as news and opportunities. This year we published 33 articles from our readers and shared information from other organisations, including paid and volunteering opportunities. One story was from Stella (not her real name), who, whilst training to be a counsellor, explored the reasons why she found it so difficult to ask for help when she needed it most in, 'The positive power of talking':

"I received a conviction for fraud approximately 20 years ago which resulted in a four-and-a-half-year prison sentence. Shocking as it was to go to prison, I believe that it was prison that helped me become a better person – less uptight, less anxious, a person that wasn't afraid to ask for help and ultimately somebody that was a lot happier in themselves.

To the outside world, my life prior to prison must have seemed perfect. Good job, great salary, lovely home, marvellous holidays abroad. But behind the scenes I was massively in debt, living beyond my means and defrauding the company I worked for. I was a mess.

Over the years I've had a lot of time to reflect on what went wrong and what I could have done differently. Without a doubt, I should have spoken to somebody about my problems and asked for help. So why didn't I? There's probably been loads of research on this but for me, it was fairly simple: I was too proud; I didn't want to come across as incompetent; I didn't want to be judged; And maybe, I just didn't really want to change. If I got help then I'd have lost the lifestyle and habits that I had.

I feel so ashamed writing that, it makes me sound unrepentant and that's probably how I was at the time. I didn't want to be told what I needed to hear; it was far easier to keep the status quo.

Twenty years on and I'm in a different place; training to be a counsellor and it's obvious to me now, that talking really does help. I know from the clients I see in my current work placements that many of us are feeling emotionally overwhelmed. The Pandemic has seen us lose friends and family and lock-down has seen the mental health of many deteriorate. Talking won't change what's happened to us but it can help to bring us some relief. When I started my counselling training, there were several times when I thought my criminal record might scupper my dreams. I couldn't see an answer to my problems and started to be consumed with negative thoughts. But for once, I took my own advice and asked for help – I rang the Unlock helpline.

The advisor I spoke to didn't immediately solve my problems but whenever I presented her with a negative statement, she'd come back at me with a couple of options – one of which seemed to be: "Do nothing and keep feeling sorry for yourself". These chats were a bit like re-programming a computer. Slowly all my old thoughts were erased replaced instead by more constructive ones.

As somebody with a conviction that will never be spent, I'm sure I'll have a few more wobbles along the way but you know what – I'll keep on talking."

e) Recruit

Developed as part of our Fair Access to Employment project, our Recruit website provides advice, guidance, and templates for employers to use to develop fair recruitment policies and practice. In the past year, the site was used 37,079 times by 31,000 different users, of which 30,862 were new this year (90%), who between them accumulated 67,621 page views. Featured employers include Marks & Spencer, Halfords, Virgin Trains, Ricoh, Cook, Greggs and Timpson. The Project is reported on below in 'Key Programmes of Work'.

Many employers contacted us over the past year to confirm information or ask advice, after looking at Recruit and, in some cases, this led to in-depth policy reviews and tailored, detailed advice. This not only showed the value of the site's open-access resources and enabled us to reach more employers, but also created a workload as we responded to the needs of employers who are proactive in improving their policies and practices.

Online support in relation to our policy work

Website users are encouraged to become contributors to all our online channels (especially *theForum* and *theRecord*), sharing individual stories and providing peer support for others in similar circumstances. This powerful sense of community provides 'soft' support and empathy as well as hard, useful facts. The experiences of our users directly influence our policy work allowing us to identify recurring issues and take action to advocate for systemic change of policy or law to improve circumstances for many people.

Supporting providers and practitioners: criminal record disclosure training

Our experience is that practitioners working with people who have convictions often receive little training on understanding and supporting people with the long-term effects of their convictions. We regularly receive contact from practitioners who do not feel confident in giving advice to their clients. Mistakes can prove costly, with people missing jobs and other opportunities because of being given inaccurate advice. Some have even gone on to get a further conviction.

Unlock is a small organisation with limited resources, but the depth and extent of our specialist knowledge in living with a conviction is unique. Consequently, we can offer a range of training courses to practitioners (individuals and organisations, including statutory bodies) to help ensure they provide accurate, reliable and up-to-date advice and support to their clients. Training courses are endorsed by the Probation Institute and the Institute of Employability Professionals and are mainly offered as one-day workshops. They are primarily aimed at organisations and individuals who work with and advise people with criminal records and cover a variety of issues on and around disclosure.

As well as supporting individuals, we also share knowledge and best practice with other organisations through disclosure training workshops, so that they are able to support their own clients in tackling the problems they face. At the same time, we generate earned income that supports our wider work. Past participants included CAB, Shelter, probation service, employers, Jobcentre Plus staff and many more.

Government restrictions impacted immediately on the delivery of our usual face-to-face training with the cancellation and postponement of booked sessions. To mitigate against the loss of earned income generated by training delivery, we received a National Lottery Covid-19 grant to re-develop the various courses for delivery online. Subsequent feedback and further development have meant we have been able to successfully continue this work with a legacy of a permanent resource for the future.

With face-to-face delivery being impossible, all of our one-day workshops during 2020/21 were delivered online using Zoom or Microsoft Teams. For those looking for a shorter, more condensed version of our one-day training, we developed a new 2-hour webinar on criminal record disclosure. Across the year we delivered 17 training sessions to 220 attendees.

97% of course attendees who completed feedback forms rated the session Good or Excellent overall. Before attending, on average they rated their knowledge of the disclosure of criminal records as four, which rose to eight after completion.

Feedback included

- *"Great course. Really enjoyed it and looking forward to sharing my knowledge with my wider team."*
- *"Presenter had an excellent knowledge and was able to give clear understanding to people like myself who can get a little overwhelmed with too much information due to my dyslexia".*
- *"All round a good training session, very well put together and plenty of interaction and involvement with plenty of time for questions."*

An essential resource for other organisations

Unlock has gained a powerful reputation as "the place to go" for other organisations to obtain accurate and reliable

information. We actively encourage them to use our materials as part of their work in supporting people with convictions. All our publicly available materials are downloadable, free of charge, as posters and leaflets, or can be integrated into the organisation's own materials.

New users this year included: the House of Commons Library; the National Police Library; Phoenix Futures; Thames Reach and Leicestershire Carers. We also assisted MAC UK to incorporate Unlock information within their leaflet for young people with a criminal record, and Kent County Council to produce their leaflet giving information about disclosing a criminal record.

Signposting to Unlock

Unlock is signposted to by an ever-growing number of employers, universities, statutory agencies, community rehabilitation companies, law firms, banks, voluntary sector organisations, insurance comparison websites, lawyers, and others. These include: Gov.uk Supporting prison leavers guide; Information Commissioners Office; NI Human Rights Commission; Money Advice Service; Jobcentre Plus; Association of British Insurers; Office for Students; House of Commons Library and many others.

OUR SECOND AIM: A FAIRER AND MORE INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

Unlock's 'ear to the ground, voice at the top' approach means that we listen to our beneficiaries to learn about the recurring issues they face, then we identify where we can advocate for change at systemic and structural levels to resolve them. We do this by:

- Gathering evidence and undertaking research;
- Responding to consultations and making submissions;
- Getting involved in strategic litigation on key issues;
- Encouraging better policies and practices in other organisations;
- Influencing attitudes across different forums;
- Running targeted programmes of work such as our Fair Access to Employment project;
- Supporting individuals to challenge bad practice by employers and organisations.

This year we supported a number of key research projects and panels including:

- Membership of the advisory panel for a research project at the University of Essex, assessing universities' approaches to social work applicants with criminal records;
- Advising a grant-funded Oxford post-doctoral project looking at employer bias against applicants who disclose criminal records;
- Continuing to co-supervise a PhD student at the University of Nottingham, funded by an ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council).

KEY PROGRAMMES OF WORK

1. *Fair Access to Employment*

In June 2021, we concluded the second phase of our programme, funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, to tackle the underlying systemic and practical barriers to employment faced by people with criminal records funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. Over the past three years we have supported and challenged more than 150 employers in education, health and social care, engineering, creative industries, charities, construction, sport and leisure, accounting, finance and law. Some employers came to our attention through people contacting our helpline; around two-thirds self-referred through word of mouth or seeing reference to our work on other sites – for example, our edited sections on Xpert HR, or references in sector guidance or industry publications. We're proud that so many employers – including many with in-house HR and legal support – sought us out and made their recruitment practices fairer as a result.

The law in this area is complex and difficult to navigate, with a lack of official guidance from governments and

regulators and few HR specialists having sufficient knowledge or expertise. Our goal is always to improve the employment prospects of people with criminal records so, to achieve this, we need to understand the challenges employers perceive in recruiting from this population and find constructive ways to engage with them. Working with a range of employers across different sectors has allowed us to deepen our understanding of the issues from an employer's perspective.

This understanding has helped us continually improve the online guidance and resources that we offer to employers – including sector-specific guidance for creative industries, charities, health and social care, alongside cross-sector guidance on data protection compliance, assessing criminal records, DBS eligibility and relevant news and updates. Recruit has seen a significant increase in users over the last three years. In the last 12 months alone, visits and users have doubled and page views tripled, suggesting users are looking at multiple pages, which we aim to increase further with targeted resources and sector collaborations.

In 2020 we published '*Checked out? Ineligible criminal record checks and how to prevent them*', a report that explained why ineligible checks happen, why they matter and what can be done to prevent them. The report made recommendations to government, the Disclosure and Barring Service and employers - it can be downloaded from the Recruit website.

In 2021 we delivered information sessions to almost 1,000 staff at the Department of Works & Pension, including prison work coaches and regional leads on 'offender employment'. Knowledge gained from delivering these enabled us to contribute to government initiatives, including Home Office and MoJ guidance, the New Futures Network, and Going Forward into Employment programmes.

We weren't always able to achieve everything we would have liked for reasons beyond our control. Ambitious plans to bring a legal challenge against an employer and/or the DBS hit difficulties with the elements required by law to bring a successful case. Often, the person or people affected were reluctant to be involved in a challenge: fearful of further publicity or repercussions and simply wanting to move on and find a job (a regular theme we encounter, even for lower-level complaints direct to the employer or to the Information Commissioner). The lack of any real penalty for an employer who unlawfully collects or unfairly uses criminal records information is also a deterrent for most people.

Nevertheless, we have been successful in challenging bad and unlawful policies – often before an applicant was affected. We are now seeking funding to build on this approach by formalising our evidence gathering and testing the effectiveness of direct – versus regulatory – engagement. We also want to work with sector leaders and regulators, for example in finance and food production, so that employers have high-level, reliable guidance on how to approach criminal records data.

2. Criminal records disclosure system change

Ruling on a case supported by Unlock in 2019, the UK Supreme Court held that two aspects of the criminal records disclosure scheme were disproportionate and in breach of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights:

- The blanket rules requiring automatic disclosure of all convictions where a person has more than one conviction;
- The requirement that some childhood cautions be disclosed indefinitely.
- Funded by the Baring Foundation, Unlock worked to sustain pressure on the government to implement the Court's ruling.

By way of response, we:

- Published an updated briefing on reforming the criminal records regime in July 2020 (following the government's announcement that changes would be announced in autumn 2020).
- Held a meeting with Robert Buckland (Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor) in April 2020.
- Worked with Transform Justice Together on the focused #FairChecks campaign and were referenced in exchanges between David Lammy and Robert Buckland and John Spellar and Boris Johnson (July 2020). We engaged in a stakeholder session and held conversations with and wrote to senior civil servants in co-ordination with other charities regarding rehabilitation periods (July 2020) – see page 23.

- Were featured in the Telegraph, People Management and Personnel Today.
- Engaged with DBS officials and continued to interact with government departments, including Home Office, DWP and Equalities Office regarding the changes.
- Met with the Chair of the Youth Justice Board, which published a statement by the CEO on criminal records reform and included in their 20/21 business plan the aim to ‘push for a reform of criminal records’.
- Produced new guidance for individuals on our website, resources for employers and webinars for practitioners to ensure that changes are understood by those who will benefit.
- Used our contacts and communication channels to make sure employers and others are implementing the changes.

Changes to the ‘filtering rules’ on standard or enhanced criminal record checks, issued by the Disclosure and Barring Service, were finally introduced by the government in November 2020. This means that childhood cautions will no longer be disclosed, and the rule that meant someone with more than one conviction had all their convictions disclosed, (regardless of offence or length of time) has been abolished. As a result, we estimate 45,000 people will no longer have youth reprimands, youth warnings, or youth cautions disclosed on higher level DBS checks, and where people have more than one conviction, all convictions will not automatically be disclosed.

However, these changes were not the wide-ranging overhaul of the whole system that we, and others, wanted, so we continue to campaign for more reform. We have:

- Challenged what we believe is a significant technical problem in the DBS’s new filtering guidance.
- Raised issues in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill 2021 (PCSC) which demonstrate the need for wider criminal records review and have secured support from David Lammy and Alex Cunningham.
- Provided support to the Northern Irish Human Rights Commission in a case challenging lifelong disclosure.
- Worked with partner organisations, especially to gather evidence on potential judicial challenges to the “pardon” system for historic gay offences.
- Completed and published a report on the additional challenges faced by women with criminal records.
- Continued to work with Transform Justice on the #FairChecks campaign.

3. Criminal records disclosure; call for regime change

Beginning in April 2020, the aim of this three-year project funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust, is for fewer people to be affected by the criminal records disclosure regime – particularly those who acquired a criminal record as children or young adults. Having continued to pressure the government to respond to the January 2019 Supreme Court ruling (see 2 above), the filtering changes introduced were not the wide-ranging overhaul of the whole disclosure system that we and others wanted to see. We continue to campaign for more reform and have:

- Identified what we believe is a significant technical problem at the DBS which leads to incorrect certificates being issued and are pursuing this “two questions” approach with the DBS and government departments.
- Briefed senior government opposition figures who spoke at the statutory instrument debate, calling attention to the need for wider reforms.
- Briefed officials and MPs about issues in the PCSC, which demonstrate the need for wider review (securing support from David Lammy and Alex Cunningham).
- Interacted with other government departments, including DWP and Equalities Office.

Our plans for April 2021 onwards are to continue our push for a broader review of criminal records. We will do this by following through on opportunities that we have identified, including to:

- Capitalise on the opportunities that PCSC offers and push for broadest possible change by using PCSC as a launch pad for future reforms, and to demonstrate the need for root and branch review. We will also consider judicial review of lifelong criminal record disclosure.
- Ensure filtering changes are genuinely implemented and resolve the “two questions” issue.
- Ensure that people with stigmatised criminal records are treated legally.
- Address the unique impact that criminal records have on women.
- Broaden the scope of criminal records to make them a “whole of society” issue and not solely one relating to the MoJ.

4. EU nationals' settlement – funded by Barrow Cadbury Trust

Funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust, we continued our work to help secure the rights of EU nationals with a criminal record who were eligible to apply for settled status in the UK, and make sure they are not unfairly excluded. In line with our project plan, we published a set of online resources for individuals and worked with other service providers to disseminate that information as widely as possible. For example, our resources are now being used by CAB South Lincolnshire's EU Settlement Scheme advice team, which include people with criminal records as a specific underserved group. We actively pursued as many opportunities as possible since our resources went live and received good feedback from other groups.

We continued to engage with NGOs working on EUSS issues and participated in roundtables with the House of Commons Legal and the EU Citizens Rights Monitoring group. The focus in those groups recently has been on how custodial sentences impact eligibility for settled status, which whilst not directly within Unlock's purview is an issue that our EU-national service users are also affected by, so we have maintained a voice in those discussions and added that issue to our advice. This work continues in 2021-22.

5. Fair access to university for students with criminal records – unrestricted funds

Having delivered a pilot project last year, we continued our work to support fair access to university at a reduced level whilst seeking to secure further funding.

People with criminal records are drawn from the same groups which UCAS and the government call "disadvantaged", that is, those least likely to progress to university. Evidence shows that some groups are disproportionately criminalised: racialised people, care leavers, people from low-income households and people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Along with mature students and first-in-family, these groups are under-represented at university. Despite education being widely recognised as a key factor in successful rehabilitation (thereby benefiting people with convictions, their families, communities, and the institution itself), poor admissions policies present serious psychological and practical challenges to access.

Outcomes achieved this year include:

- As part of our pilot project, we launched 'Fair Chance Pledge' where universities sign up to demonstrate their commitment to offering a fair chance for students with a criminal record. This year, the universities of Exeter and Glyndwr signed the pledge and we provided extensive advice on their policy and assessment framework. In total, 18 universities have now signed up to the pledge.
- We advised Chester, Durham, Kings College universities and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine on fair admissions. This included extensive advice on policy and practices and applying those to the different systems in place at each institution.
- Inspired by our work on fair admissions, the University of Maynooth's Unlocking Potential project looked at the use of criminal records at Irish universities. We also contributed to their Unlocking Potential podcast, due to be launched in autumn 2021.
- We challenged the decision to reject a postgraduate applicant by a particular university on the grounds that they hadn't followed their own commitment to the pledge and allowed a student to discuss their criminal record in person. As a result, they overturned the decision, convened a fresh panel and allowed the student to attend. The student subsequently received an unconditional offer.

Towards the end of the year, we secured a three-year grant from the Bruno Schroder Trust and we look forward to beginning the project in 2021-22 (details outlined on page 24).

OTHER KEY AREAS OF WORK

The areas of work that we are focused on can be found on our website unlock.org.uk. Some of the priority areas last year include:

Further reform of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Unlock has long campaigned for fundamental changes to the ROA, which is the principal legislation governing the disclosure of criminal records to employers, educational institutions, insurers, and housing providers. The current law means that:

- Rehabilitation periods are too long and result in a form of secondary punishment where a person faces continued discrimination and stigmatisation.
- Rehabilitation periods are out of kilter and do not take account of new, less serious forms of disposal such as community orders and speeding fines, which give rise to longer disclosure periods than those applied to short prison sentences.
- Some convictions can never become spent: more than 8,000 people every year receive sentences that mean they can never be legally rehabilitated.
- There is no legal protection for spent convictions: rehabilitated people are powerless to prevent employers, housing providers and others using spent convictions to exclude them.

As a result of these flaws, Unlock is advocating for a root and branch review of the ROA, and the development of fresh legislation that is fit for purpose. Given the importance of understanding the experiences of those with criminal records (and others), we believe the review should be an open policy-making process as recommended by the Cabinet Office. This means engaging with a broad range of experts and people with experience. Specifically, we are calling for:

- All convictions to be capable of becoming spent.
- Amendment of anomalies in rehabilitation periods, especially for children and young adults.
- Introduction of a tribunal process to review individual cases and determine if there is a need for a conviction to still be disclosed.
- Reduction of rehabilitation periods, using clear evidence to demonstrate the need to disclose.

Our work in 2020/21 has focused on influencing the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, published first as a white paper in Sept 2020 and moving through parliament in 2021.

Ahead of the white paper we were successful in our call on the government to propose shorter spending periods for many prison sentences as part of the Bill. However, we continue to challenge other elements of the Bill that in our view need amending and have engaged with government opposition parties to table a number of amendments. Four of these were brought forward by the Labour party's lead on the Bill (Alex Cunningham MP), including the new forms of Cautions being created, and making the list of 'un-spendable' offences easier to amend in future. We shall continue to engage with cross-bench peers to further our proposals in the House of Lords.

As well as work on the PCSC we engaged with the MoJ on a number of issues including: the disproportionate spending regime for motoring convictions (licence endorsement and points elements of a conviction mean that criminal element remains disclosable for longer than would otherwise be the case under the ROA); and amending the Employment Rights Act to protect people with criminal records from unfair dismissal. Working again with the MOJ and directly with the Lord Chancellor, we called for action to address delays in the criminal justice system causing children who commit crimes to be sentenced as adults. Whilst the government has not conceded the need to legislate on this, it has nevertheless committed to a adopting a remedial approach to speed up trials for those approaching their 18th birthday to ensure they are sentenced as children and as such receive the appropriate spending period.

Challenging the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to extend its 'filtering' process

The filtering regime changes resulting from the Supreme Court ruling (described above) has created a number of anomalies, which we are pressuring the DBS and Home Office to rectify as quickly as possible. These include:

- Self-disclosure rules do not match those used to produce enhanced criminal record certificates, meaning that some people are required to self-disclose more offences than would be included on an enhanced check certificate.
- Guidance from the DBS on the new filtering rules is poor, especially on the problem of certificates not matching self-disclosure.
- Rushed implementation of the new rules has left some people unable to receive certificates through the DBS

Update Service, and so require expensive and slow manual certificates to be issued.

Although Unlock has not been able to obtain a commitment to a specific timescale, we have been assured that these issues are being actively pursued, and we shall continue to pressure the Home Office and the DBS to ensure that these are forthcoming.

Aside from the issues outlined above, we have continued to pressure the government to produce a fairer and more proportionate filtering process that includes:

- A faster, online first enhanced certificate process that speeds checking and enables individuals to check their own certificate at will.
- A list of offences not eligible to be filtered to be transparent and continually accessible.
- Offences not eligible to be filtered to be reviewed and reduced in line with evidence.
- The creation of a distinct system for the disclosure of criminal records acquired in childhood and a more nuanced approach to those acquired in early adulthood.
- The introduction of a discretionary filtering process, with a review mechanism, which could be accessed by people whose criminal records are not covered by automatic filtering rules.

#FairChecks campaign

In January 2020 – one year after the Supreme Court judgement – we launched a new public campaign: #FairChecks in partnership with Transform Justice. Together, we are calling for the government to reform the disclosure of criminal records, so that minor and very old crimes do not appear on standard and enhanced criminal records checks. This would ensure that those who have turned their lives around are not forced to reveal their convictions long after they have served their sentence. Specifically, we are calling on the Home Office and the MoJ to launch a major review of the legislation on the disclosure of criminal records.

By the end of March 2020 the campaign had seen over 1,000 supporters who had written to MPs, with 446 MPs being contacted. The high point in 2021 was seeing a single e-mail result in over 100 letters and e-mails sent to MPs within a week of the initial sending. #FairChecks tackles all issues related to criminal records, but with the focus on grassroots, practical problems that impact supporters. In 2021 these have included motoring convictions, cautions, filtering and youth criminal records.

Stopping the ‘Google effect’ for people with spent convictions

Although the ROA is designed to enable people with convictions to move on with their lives once they have become ‘rehabilitated’, the reporting of their convictions online, and the lack of regulation in this area, means that many people find that they face judgement and discrimination long after their convictions legally become spent. Employers regularly use internet search engines to search for job applicants’ online profile and personal information. Although only a small percentage of cases receive media coverage, where they do, the effect can be long-lasting – the so-called ‘Google effect’.

Google (and other search engines) operate a system whereby individuals can request a removal of search results. However, this isn’t always accepted even when the conviction is spent. Furthermore, even if search results are removed, the actual content isn’t – this is reliant on the host organisation, and many news outlets (including the BBC) regularly refuse to edit reports that contain spent convictions.

The ROA itself doesn’t provide a remedy by which to take action against an employer who unlawfully takes account of a spent conviction, nor does it enable individuals to take action against newspapers and websites that continue to publish details of convictions after they become spent. Unlock has continued to refer individual cases to the Information Commissioner’s Office to challenge online disclosure, but we have been met with a reluctance to issue broader guidance on the balance of the right to privacy and the benefit of some information being in the public domain. We have experienced broadly the same lack of interest from government in addressing these concerns.

However, we are now raising this issue with the Law Commission as part of its consultation for the 14th Program of Law Reform (launched March 2021) on the theme of privacy in the online space. As this is an issue which clearly meets the Information Commission’s requirements of updating laws to meet modern needs, we hope that they will address the Google effect and recommend that the government addresses this when it reports.

Ensuring fair treatment by insurance companies

People with unspent convictions face difficulties in getting house, motor and other types of insurance. Most companies will not offer home insurance where an occupant of the house (not necessarily the policy holder) has an unspent conviction. Companies regularly take into account convictions that have no relevance to the insurance being sought and many fail to follow industry good-practice and are often misleading in the questions or assumptions included in application forms (suggesting that people need to disclose spent convictions, which under the law, they do not).

Over many years Unlock has built up a list of insurers who will provide cover to overcome this exclusion and also challenged insurers in their approach; and, in particular, their recognition of the law as it relates to insurance policy applicants. This year the Association of British Insurers published updated guidance for insurance providers, citing Unlock's research – whilst welcoming the guidance, we question its effectiveness in driving good practice based on the calls on the issue which our helpline has continued to receive.

A major driver of our work with motoring convictions is that a disproportionate criminal record regime was created in large part to simplify the work of car insurers. We believe that this function needs to be removed from the criminal record regime and have begun discussions with the Department for Transport to consider the long-term future of criminal record checks for car insurance.

FUTURE PLANS

Strategic Plan 2021-26 – *Tackling Injustice, Changing Lives*

Effective from April 2021, our new five-year strategic plan sets out two overarching aims, that:

- 1) **People should have knowledge, skills, confidence and support to overcome the disadvantages related to their criminal record.** We will reach more people by helping them to self-serve digitally, and we will strengthen our capacity to support people more. Together, this will enable people with criminal records to be aware of their rights, know where to turn for advice, and be able to challenge the stigma and discrimination they are facing.
- 2) **People with criminal records should be free from stigma, prejudice and discrimination as a result of government, employers and others having policies, practices and attitudes that support their fair treatment.** We will be a powerful voice in pushing for change to legislation, policies and practices, using strategic litigation to bring about change, and increasing the research and evidence base to support us to achieve change at a policy and systemic level.

In order to achieve these, we aim to be effective, efficient and professional in our work and operations, ensuring we have systems to achieve maximum impact. Developing sustainability, resilience and good governance is essential – so we will continue to:

- 1) **Invest in our people** – this includes the development of our board, staff and volunteers. We will make sure that the organisation has sufficient capacity to deliver this strategy. We will work effectively as a team to embed and demonstrate our values and our approach across the organisation.
- 2) **Increase our visibility** – this includes growing our media presence, where it is useful for delivering this strategy. We will build on our successful social media presence, developing our strategy further. We will strengthen and align our brand to our values and key messages.

Future plans for ongoing activities and projects have been referenced throughout this report. In addition, we are undertaking some particular projects, as follows:

- **Unlocking students with criminal records – funded by the Bruno Schroder Trust**
Despite education being widely recognised as a key factor in successful rehabilitation, current admission policies present serious psychological and practical challenges to accessing higher education. Although there is no evidence

that enrolling students with convictions makes campuses more dangerous or that they are more likely to commit crimes on campus, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) continue to ask about convictions as part of their admissions policies.

University policies can also be a significant deterrent from applying. With often complex and differing policies and procedures they often fail to follow good practice. Policies requiring the disclosure of convictions during the application process contribute towards the higher application attrition rate seen amongst those who ask questions about criminal convictions which cause many to drop out before the end of the application process.

Building on our learning from our pilot project in 2019, our new project aims to increase the number of HEIs that operate policies and practices that are fair and inclusive, from the point that prospective students apply to study and throughout their university stay, so that more people with criminal records are able to access and benefit from, higher education. We shall do this by:

- Building a comprehensive understanding of the policies relating to students with criminal records at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs);
 - Ensuring more students with criminal records can gain admission to university with half of all HEIs signed up to Unlock's 'fair chance pledge';
 - Ensuring HEIs have appropriate support policies and plans for students with criminal records and the wider student body.
- **Access to Employment project – phase 3**
With our current phase 2 project ending in June 2021, we are seeking further funds to continue this vital work through the next stage.

Building on the successes and learning gained through phases 1 and 2, we now aim to elevate the work to a strategic level. This includes reframing the fair recruitment of people with criminal records as the standard for all recruitment, underpinned by legal, practical and cultural frameworks to enable and enforce best practice. Developing these frameworks will require building on our existing evidence base and communicating the need to a wider audience, including employers and the public. It will also require further work to influence government policy on improving access to employment for people with criminal records. The project plan includes four key outcomes:

1. Employers include people with criminal records as part of diversity and inclusion initiatives;
 2. Government has innovative policies to increase recruitment of people with criminal records;
 3. Unlock is the go-to source of guidance and support for employers across multiple sectors;
 4. Job applicants and employees turn to Unlock to challenge employer bad practice.
- **Website development**
Working with a website development company, we shall build a new website to reflect the growing use of digital resources and to better meet the needs of our users and stakeholders especially those self-serving through our information hub. Scheduled to be launched in November 2021, the website will complement our helpline which will continue to support individuals seeking one-to-one advice and support.

COVID-19 – IMPACT

As required by national lockdown measures imposed by the government in response to the Covid-19 global pandemic, Unlock's office closed temporarily on 17 March 2020 and our contingency plan was put into effect. Unlock uses a cloud-based system to store its records and for day-to-day working and a Covid-19 grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation helped us quickly pivot to remote working. This provided the necessary technical and telecoms equipment needed, including a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone system that came on stream in July. Because of this we were able to sustain our public-facing helpline service, sustain our online resources and continue with our funded projects and policy work with no staff being furloughed as part of the government's dedicated scheme.

The most significant negative impact was on our volunteer scheme. Remote working meant many of our volunteers

could no longer answer calls and the scheme was, of course, not available to prisoners who would otherwise be released on temporary licence as helpline advisors. The helpline office re-opened in August with safe-working practices put into place. This allowed some volunteers to return to work as advisors once more and for the team to work more effectively. A total of four volunteers were able to work across the year, down from 14 the year before.

Delivery of face-to-face training planned for the year was negatively affected, with no physical sessions being possible resulting in a loss of earned income. However, we have adapted our approach and moved to an online delivery model that will mitigate against this loss and we are grateful to the National Lottery for their support in meeting some of the remaining income shortfall. With the majority of our grant income for 2021-22 now in place, we are on target to meet our income budget and remain in a strong and stable position going into 2022-23.

Board meetings continued as scheduled by video link.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The statement of Financial Activities is shown on page 28. The surplus for the year was £69,245 (2020: £92,412) and net assets amounted to £438,293 (2020: £369,048).

Reserves policy

Unlock is dependent on grants to sustain its activities. The charity's reserves policy is to maintain enough unrestricted reserves to enable normal operating activities to continue over a period of up to six months should a shortfall in income occur, and to take account of potential risks and contingencies that may arise from time to time. Trustees have therefore agreed to hold reserves on the unrestricted general fund equivalent to six months expected operating expenditure for the year 2021-22, amounting to £201,660. This will allow the charity to continue working and to meet its commitments to staff and other obligations if future income could not be secured.

Any reserves on restricted funds are set aside to fund the specific project or programmes for which the funds were granted. It is common for income to be received in one year, yet programme expenditure straddle one or two years. Reserves for restricted funds therefore represent monies for programmes that are currently ongoing. Unrestricted funds amounted to £329,293 at the year-end (2020: £253,453). Restricted funds amounted to £109,000 at the year-end (2020: £115,595).

Although work began to scope for a new website this year, £25,000 of budgeted expenditure was delayed and is therefore being set aside as designated funds in our accounts to be spent in the next financial year. A further £9,800 of unrestricted funds will also be spent on completing the new website during 2021-22.

Future funding

To preserve our ability to respond to user needs and advocate fully on their behalf, Unlock will remain independent of statutory funding to deliver services. Where possible, income is earned by delivering services to other organisations such as training, advertising, and speaker engagements. However, it is envisaged that the charity will continue to rely in the most part on charitable grants and donations.

Fundraising report

Donors to Unlock can be assured that we follow the regulatory standards for fundraising. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and are committed to the Fundraising Promise and adherence to the Code of Fundraising Practice. This report covers the requirements which charities must follow as set out in the Charities Act 2016.

We do not employ agencies or external workers or suppliers to fundraise for us. Our website outlines our complaints policy for the public and clearly explains how an individual can complain. We received no complaints in the 2020-21 financial year.

Principal funding sources

Our total income for the year was £378,151, which was received from the following sources:

- Grants 89%
- Donations 5%
- Earned 6%
- Investment 0.4%

Our grateful thanks to the following trusts and foundations for their generous support during the year:

1772 Charity; 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust; 3Ts Charitable Trust; A B Charitable Trust; Baring Foundation; Barrow Cadbury Trust; Drapers' Fund; Esmée Fairbairn Foundation; Fairness Foundation (formerly Persula Foundation); Garfield Weston Foundation; Highway One Trust; J G Hogg Charitable Trust; J Leon Philanthropy; Kent Community Foundation; National Lottery Community Fund; National Lottery Covid-19 Fund; Noel Buxton Trust; Porticus UK; Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust (Ann Rylands); and Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust.

Our thanks also to the many individual donors who kindly supported our work.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 13th October 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M K Rowe', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

M K Rowe, Chair of Trustees

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Unlock National Association of Ex-Offenders ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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


Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a registered member of Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales which is one of the listed bodies.

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

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

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



Rosanna Turner ACA DChA
Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales
Calcutt Matthews WBZ Ltd
Chartered Accountants
19 North Street
Ashford
Kent
TN24 8LF

Date:03.11.2021.....

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £	31.3.20 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	103,865	274,129	377,994	352,706
Investment income	3	<u>157</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>157</u>	<u>587</u>
Total		104,022	274,129	378,151	353,293
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	4				
Service to Clients		200	160,806	161,006	136,252
Policy and Practices		2,982	144,918	147,900	124,629
Total		<u>3,182</u>	<u>305,724</u>	<u>308,906</u>	<u>260,881</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		100,840	(31,595)	69,245	92,412
Transfers between funds	12	<u>(25,000)</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		75,840	(6,595)	69,245	92,412
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		253,453	115,595	369,048	276,636
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>329,293</u>	<u>109,000</u>	<u>438,293</u>	<u>369,048</u>

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET
31 March 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £	31.3.20 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	9	3,924	-	3,924	3,648
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	10	1,564	-	1,564	1,495
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>326,028</u>	<u>109,000</u>	<u>435,028</u>	<u>376,522</u>
		327,592	109,000	436,592	378,017
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(2,223)	-	(2,223)	(12,617)
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		<u>325,369</u>	<u>109,000</u>	<u>434,369</u>	<u>365,400</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		329,293	109,000	438,293	369,048
NET ASSETS					
		<u>329,293</u>	<u>109,000</u>	<u>438,293</u>	<u>369,048</u>

BALANCE SHEET - continued
31 March 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	31.3.21 Total funds	31.3.20 Total funds
	12	£	£	£	£
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds:					
General fund				329,293	253,453
Restricted funds:					
Fairness Foundation				3,000	1,500
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation				30,000	27,610
Kent Community Foundation				-	4,800
The 1772 Charity				-	167
Porticus UK				40,000	40,000
Fidelity UK				-	18
Drapers Charitable Fund				-	10,000
The Noel Buxton Trust				-	1,250
Highway One Trust				-	7,500
Garfield Weston Foundation				7,500	-
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust				1,000	250
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust				1,000	-
The Baring Foundation				-	21,000
Designated Fund				<u>25,000</u>	<u>-</u>
				<u>109,000</u>	<u>115,595</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u><u>438,293</u></u>	<u><u>369,048</u></u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

BALANCE SHEET - continued
31 March 2021

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

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 13th October 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M K Rowe', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

M K Rowe, Chair of Trustees

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

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

Expenditure

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

Allocation and apportionment of costs

Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they all have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Support costs are allocated to charitable activities on the following bases:

Staff, communication and office costs - Staff time

Premises costs and depreciation - Staff time

Tangible fixed assets

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

Fixtures and fittings - 25% on cost

Computer equipment - 25% on cost

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

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

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

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued**Hire purchase and leasing commitments**

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

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Donations	19,332	10,838
Grants	336,545	299,810
Earned income	<u>22,117</u>	<u>42,058</u>
	<u>377,994</u>	<u>352,706</u>

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Persula Foundation	3,000	2,000
The Noel Buxton Trust	-	2,500
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation Access to Employment	84,590	82,830
Sir James Roll Charitable Trust	1,000	-
The 1772 Charitable Trust	-	2,000
Porticus UK	59,998	60,000
J Leon Philanthropy	10,000	10,000
Drapers Charitable Fund	-	15,000
AB Charitable Trust	-	20,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust (St Sarkis)	-	11,250
Highway One Trust	-	10,000
3Ts Charitable Fund	10,000	10,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	10,000	-
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	1,250	750
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	3,000	3,000
UPP Foundation	-	9,830
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	10,200	-
Kent Community Foundation Core Costs	7,800	10,800
Prison Reform Trust	-	9,200
Transform Justice	-	2,650
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	10,000	10,000
The Baring Foundation	-	28,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust – Criminal records	31,500	-
National Lottery Community Fund	46,462	-
National Lottery COVID-19 Grant	5,330	-
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation COVID19	<u>41,415</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>336,545</u>	<u>299,810</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>157</u>	<u>587</u>

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 5) £	Totals £
Service to Clients	101,645	59,361	161,006
Policy and Practices	<u>83,363</u>	<u>64,537</u>	<u>147,900</u>
	<u>185,008</u>	<u>123,898</u>	<u>308,906</u>

5. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Finance £	Information technology £
Service to Clients	46,711	3,377	1,984
Policy and Practices	<u>50,096</u>	<u>10,160</u>	<u>391</u>
	<u>96,807</u>	<u>13,537</u>	<u>2,375</u>
	Human resources £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Service to Clients	6,263	1,026	59,361
Policy and Practices	<u>1,512</u>	<u>2,378</u>	<u>64,537</u>
	<u>7,775</u>	<u>3,404</u>	<u>123,898</u>

6. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

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

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	2,002	1,606
Other operating leases	<u>11,613</u>	<u>10,827</u>

7. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Trustees' expenses

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Trustees' expenses	<u>162</u>	<u>600</u>

8. STAFF COSTS

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

	31.3.21	31.3.20
Staff	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

Staff numbers above represent the FTE of 9 employees.

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2020	19,128	19,135	38,263
Additions	<u>-</u>	<u>2,278</u>	<u>2,278</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>19,128</u>	<u>21,413</u>	<u>40,541</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2020	19,128	15,487	34,615
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>2,002</u>	<u>2,002</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>19,128</u>	<u>17,489</u>	<u>36,617</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2021	<u>-</u>	<u>3,924</u>	<u>3,924</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>-</u>	<u>3,648</u>	<u>3,648</u>

10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Trade debtors	<u>1,564</u>	<u>1,495</u>

11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	-	10,500
Accrued expenses	<u>2,223</u>	<u>2,117</u>
	<u>2,223</u>	<u>12,617</u>

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.20	Net movement	Transfers between	At
	£	in funds	funds	31.3.21
		£	£	£
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	253,453	100,840	(25,000)	329,293
Restricted funds				
Fairness Foundation (formerly Persula)	1,500	1,500	-	3,000
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	27,610	2,390	-	30,000
Kent Community Foundation	4,800	(4,800)	-	-
The 1772 Charity	167	(167)	-	-
Porticus UK	40,000	-	-	40,000
Fidelity UK	18	(18)	-	-
Drapers' Charitable Fund	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
The Noel Buxton Trust	1,250	(1,250)	-	-
Highway One Trust	7,500	(7,500)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	7,500	-	7,500
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	250	750	-	1,000
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	1,500	-	-	1,500
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	-	1,000	-	1,000
The Baring Foundation	21,000	(21,000)	-	-
Designated Fund	-	-	<u>25,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>
	<u>115,595</u>	<u>(31,595)</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>109,000</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>369,048</u>	<u>69,245</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>438,293</u>

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	104,022	(3,182)	100,840
Restricted funds			
Fairness Foundation (formerly Persula)	3,000	(1,500)	1,500
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	84,590	(82,200)	2,390
Kent Community Foundation	7,800	(12,600)	(4,800)
The 1772 Charity	-	(167)	(167)
Porticus UK	59,998	(59,998)	-
Fidelity UK	-	(18)	(18)
Drapers Charitable Fund	-	(10,000)	(10,000)
The Noel Buxton Trust	-	(1,250)	(1,250)
Highway One Trust	1	(7,501)	(7,500)
Garfield Weston Foundation	10,000	(2,500)	7,500
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	1,250	(500)	750
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	3,000	(3,000)	-
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	1,000	-	1,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	10,200	(10,200)	-
Barrow Cadbury Trust (Criminal Records)	31,500	(31,500)	-
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	9,999	(9,999)	-
The Baring Foundation	-	(21,000)	(21,000)
National Lottery Community Fund	<u>51,791</u>	<u>(51,791)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>274,129</u>	<u>(305,724)</u>	<u>(31,595)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>378,151</u></u>	<u><u>(308,906)</u></u>	<u><u>69,245</u></u>

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued**Comparatives for movement in funds**

	At 1.4.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.20 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	216,628	36,825	253,453
Restricted funds			
Fairness Foundation (formerly Persula)	1,500	-	1,500
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	20,728	6,882	27,610
Kent Community Foundation	6,000	(1,200)	4,800
The 1772 Charity	350	(183)	167
Porticus UK	-	40,000	40,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust	1,625	(1,625)	-
Fidelity UK	1,249	(1,231)	18
Drapers Charitable Fund	-	10,000	10,000
The Noel Buxton Trust	1,250	-	1,250
Highway One Trust	-	7,500	7,500
Garfield Weston Foundation	6,250	(6,250)	-
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	188	62	250
W F Southall Trust	1,000	(1,000)	-
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	1,250	250	1,500
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	1,000	(1,000)	-
UPP Foundation	4,915	(4,915)	-
The Society Foundation	120	(120)	-
The Law Society Charity	3,750	(3,750)	-
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	8,833	(8,833)	-
The Baring Foundation	-	21,000	21,000
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>60,008</u>	<u>55,587</u>	<u>115,595</u>
	<u>276,636</u>	<u>92,412</u>	<u>369,048</u>

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	93,484	(56,659)	36,825
Restricted funds			
Fairness Foundation (formerly Persula)	2,000	(2,000)	-
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	82,830	(75,948)	6,882
Kent Community Foundation	10,799	(11,999)	(1,200)
The 1772 Charity	2,000	(2,183)	(183)
Porticus UK	60,000	(20,000)	40,000
Barrow Cadbury Trust	11,250	(12,875)	(1,625)
Fidelity UK	-	(1,231)	(1,231)
Drapers Charitable Fund	15,000	(5,000)	10,000
The Noel Buxton Trust	2,500	(2,500)	-
Highway One Trust	10,000	(2,500)	7,500
Garfield Weston	-	(6,250)	(6,250)
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust	750	(688)	62
W F Southall Trust	-	(1,000)	(1,000)
29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust	3,000	(2,750)	250
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	-	(1,000)	(1,000)
UPP Foundation	9,830	(14,745)	(4,915)
The Society Foundation	-	(120)	(120)
The Law Society Charity	-	(3,750)	(3,750)
Barrow Cadbury Trust – EU Nationals	-	(8,833)	(8,833)
Prison Reform Trust	9,200	(9,200)	-
Transform Justice	2,650	(2,650)	-
The J G Hogg Charitable Trust	10,000	(10,000)	-
The Baring Foundation	28,000	(7,000)	21,000
	<u>259,809</u>	<u>(204,222)</u>	<u>55,587</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>353,293</u>	<u>(260,881)</u>	<u>92,412</u>

Transfers between funds

A Designated Fund was set up from General Funds during the year to ring fence funds for a redesign project of the UNLOCK website.

13. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2021.

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

	31.3.21 £	31.3.20 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	19,332	10,838
Grants	336,545	299,810
Earned income	<u>22,117</u>	<u>42,058</u>
	377,994	352,706
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	<u>157</u>	<u>587</u>
Total incoming resources	378,151	353,293
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Wages	156,982	132,687
Social security	14,452	12,470
Pensions	9,897	8,160
Training	345	6,584
Travel	1,557	4,685
Publications	1,775	-
Subsistence	<u>-</u>	<u>3,039</u>
	185,008	167,625
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	70,529	60,796
Social security	3,520	3,037
Pensions	2,593	2,138
Recruitment	<u>20,165</u>	<u>-</u>
	96,807	65,971
Finance		
Other operating leases - rent	11,613	10,827
Insurance	1,320	956
Repairs & renewals	404	2,599
Conference fees and room hire	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>
	13,537	14,582

UNLOCK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EX-OFFENDERS LIMITED

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

	31.3.21 £	31.3.20 £
Finance		
Information technology		
Software	373	152
Computer equipment	<u>2,002</u>	<u>1,606</u>
	2,375	1,758
Human resources		
Subscriptions	2,478	2,411
Websites	1,106	659
Telephone	2,927	3,181
Postage and stationery	941	1,016
Bank charges	<u>323</u>	<u>287</u>
	7,775	7,554
Governance costs		
Trustees' expenses	162	600
Accountancy and legal fees	<u>3,242</u>	<u>2,791</u>
	<u>3,404</u>	<u>3,391</u>
Total resources expended	<u>308,906</u>	<u>260,881</u>
Net income	<u>69,245</u>	<u>92,412</u>