

Company no. 2433492
Charity no. 1088588

Law Centres Federation

Report and Unaudited Financial Statements

31 March 2023

Law Centres Federation

Reference and Administrative Details for the year ended 31 March 2023

Company number 2433492
Charity number 1088588
Registered office and operational address
1 Lady Hale Gate
Gray's Inn
London
WC1X 8BS

Executive Officers

The following served on the executive Committee throughout the year:

From 1 April 2022 to 2 December 2022:

Chair: Helen Rogers
Vice Chair: Patrick Marples
Vice Chair: Ursula O'Hare
Treasurer: Sean Canning
Secretary: Victoria Fewkes

Committee Members: Helen Bagley
Sophie Brown (co-opted 11 April 2022)
Sara Chandler
Claudia Estephane (until 11 April 2022)
Vicky Fewkes
Manuela Grayson
Ngaryan Higham (Li)
Peter Kandler
Sue James
Pamela Robotham
Daniel Scrase (co-opted 11 July 2022)
Claire Stern
Linda Summers

From 2 December 2022 to 31 March 2023:

Chair: Helen Rogers
Vice Chair: Ursula O'Hare
Vice Chair: Vicky Fewkes
Treasurer: Patrick Marples
Secretary: Ngaryan (Higham) Li

Committee Members: Helen Bagley
Sara Chandler (co-opted on 12 December 2022)
Michael Fawole
Najwa Hassan
Laura Hastie
Peter Kandler (co-opted on 12 December 2022)
Victor McAllister
Lydia Nash
Pamela Robotham (co-opted on 12 December 2022)
Emma Stradling
Linda Summers

On 31st March 2023 there were 2 elected vacancies on the committee.
The officers and committee members are all members of the Executive Committee.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2023 was 41.

Members of the Executive Committee had no beneficial interest in the charity.

Bankers: The Cooperative Bank
 Islington High Street
 London
 N1 9TR

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

Charity Bank Ltd
Fosse House
182 High Street
Tonbridge
TN9 1BE

Independent Examiner: Moore Kingston Smith LLP
 6th Floor
 9 Appold Street
 London
 EC2A 2AP

Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Law Centres Federation is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It is governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association created in 1978 and last updated at the 2022 AGM. The company is registered at Companies House, registration number 2433492. The company is also a Registered Charity registration number 1088588.

The Law Centres Federation trades as the Law Centres Network (LCN).

The reference and administrative details on page 1 form part of this report.

The Executive Committee, which is also the Board of Directors of the charitable company for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit its annual report and financial statements of the Law Centres Federation for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Executive Committee confirms that the annual report and financial statements of the Law Centres Federation comply with current statutory requirements, the requirements of its governing document, as provided in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, and the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by FRS 102 Charities SORP.

Election of Directors/Trustees to the Executive Committee and ongoing Training

LCN is governed by an elected Executive Committee which has corporate and legal responsibility for all activities and functions of the organisation.

People are nominated prior to election, or re-election, by member Law Centres at the Annual General Meeting, in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Law Centres Federation. This provides for the election of 15 members: five officers, five representatives of member Law Centres' management committees and five employees of member Law Centres. Up to five additional Executive Committee members may be appointed by co-option.

The Law Centres Network is committed to ensuring that the membership of the Executive Committee reflects the diversity of its member Law Centres. It annually reviews its composition for diversity as well as the skills of its members to ensure that a balance is maintained of geographic, developmental, financial, legal and management skills across the Executive Committee to enable it to discharge its duties.

An induction event is offered to new Executive Committee members at the beginning of their term of office. All new Executive Committee members receive an induction pack that includes information about the Law Centres Network, and a briefing that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee as both company directors and charity trustees. Recent copies of minutes, management accounts and management reports, together with copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, are included in the induction pack. This pack is available online for all committee members.

Charity Governance Code

Throughout the year, trustees are provided with updated information on changes to relevant legislation, their responsibilities as trustees, new guidance provided by the Charities Commission including new guidance in September 2023 on charities use of Social Media, or other relevant information that may assist them to carry out their duties as Trustees. We also provide training on relevant topics and invite speakers to the Board Meetings as part of our ongoing training for trustees.

Trustees are aware of the Charity Governance Code published in 2017 that sets out the principles and recommended practice for good governance within the sector. LCN has reviewed its governance

Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

arrangements against the principles within the Code and believes that it is compliant whilst maintaining its need to operate its governance efficiently.

The charity purchased insurance costing £966 included in Support Costs, to protect it from loss arising from neglect or default of the Trustees Directors / Executive Committee members and to indemnify the Trustees against the consequences of neglect or default on their part.

Risk Management

The Executive Committee (EC) has overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise. The system of internal controls is designed to provide assurance that the charity's funds are used in line with its charitable objects, for the purposes for which they were granted and for the public benefit. These controls include:

- A strategic plan and an annual budget approved by the Executive Committee.
- Regular oversight and consideration by the Executive Committee of financial information, variance from budgets and non-financial performance reports.
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties.
- Identification and management of risk.

Overall responsibility for the Law Centres Network rests with the Executive Committee. Day-to-day management of the LCN has been devolved to the Director.

The LCN undertakes formal risk management reviews. The Finance sub-committee of the EC has been charged with monitoring risk each quarter to report back to the EC meeting and alert it of any new risks of issues of concern. The Sub-Committee reviews the types of risk the charity faces, prioritising them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence, and identifying ways to mitigate the risks.

LCN identified the key risk in the coming three years as: securing sufficient core funds particularly given the ongoing impact of inflation, cost of living crisis and ending of multi-year grants; loss of key personnel; and the ongoing difficulty Law Centres, and all across the legal aid sector, have recruiting and retaining suitably qualified staff. The Trustees also consider the potential impact of political instability and a regularly changing policy environment as a risk for both Law Centres and LCN. Mitigations are in place for each of these risks.

The Executive Committee is pleased to report that the charity's internal financial controls conform to guidelines issued by the Charity Commission.

Pay and remuneration of the charity's key management personnel

All LCN staff including key managers have their salary set against the NJC Pay Scales. New staff starting salary is set at the pay point which most closely matches their job description. Increases to the Award, which occur from time-to-time, are passed on to staff. The Human Resources Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee monitor salary policy and make changes as required.

Public Benefit

The Executive Committee (EC) considers that the activity undertaken to achieve its Vision and Mission are for the benefit of the public. The EC referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit including the guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity (PB)'' when reviewing its strategic objectives and setting the approach it will take as part of its annual planning process. The EC also reviews progress against the objectives and activity undertaken on a quarterly basis.

LCN's activities benefit the public in 3 ways:

1. Through working with organisations to establish Law Centre services in new areas, thereby increasing access to free legal assistance for people in financial hardship.

Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

2. Through providing services to Law Centres that enable them to provide legal services to vulnerable and disadvantaged people in their communities with activities such as assisting with tender preparation and funding bids, training, governance support, facilitating effective collaboration and sharing of resources.
3. Through policy work that seeks to address the underlying causes of people's legal problems through strategic projects, through responding to consultations, participating in reviews, representing Law Centres with decision makers, and through working to extend the availability of free legal services for disadvantaged people.

LCN reports publicly on its activity and impact in its Annual Review available on our website: <http://www.lawcentres.org.uk/policy/papers-and-publications> and published with our annual return to the Charities Commission.

Throughout 2022-2023 LCN considered all its activities were for the benefit of the public and were guided by our strategic plan.

Objects and Activities

The Law Centres Federation (LCN) is the national organisation that represents Law Centres. The term "Law Centre" is a registered trademark, available for use only by members of the Law Centres Federation.

The objects of the Law Centres Federation (LCN) are:

1. To relieve charitable need, in particular financial hardship, and in so doing provide assistance to Law Centres and encourage the formation of Law Centres in the United Kingdom
2. To advance the education of the public by assisting Law Centres in improving and diffusing knowledge of the law and the practice of the law and the administration of justice, having regard especially to those areas or the law which are of particular concern to poor people or are directed to the relief of poverty.

Law Centres are not-for-profit legal service providers, specialising in social welfare law (housing, immigration, employment, welfare benefits, mental health, community care, public law, etc) and related areas of law that affect people in their daily lives, particularly people who are vulnerable and/or economically disadvantaged. Without Law Centres hundreds of thousands of people would have no meaningful access to justice and could not resolve their problems so would be hindered from taking up opportunities.

To become a Law Centre an organisation needs to be vetted by the Law Centres Network, and then voted in by the current membership at a General Meeting. To enjoy the benefits of membership each Law Centre has to comply with membership regulations, including employing at least 2 lawyers and having an independent management committee drawn from the community it serves.

On 31 March 2023 there were 41 Law Centres operating that are members of the Law Centres Network. LCN also has 2 Affiliates. Affiliate status is intended specifically for collegiate law clinics, operated by law students under professional supervision, to ally themselves with Law Centres' work for access to justice and to suggest social welfare law as a career path to a new generation of legal professionals.

The Executive Committee secured resources to employ a Director with 12 staff to implement the organisation's strategic objectives in 2022-2023. These are reviewed and agreed each year so that LCN can achieve its vision and mission:

LCN's Vision - The Law Centres Network strives for a just and equal society where everyone's rights are valued, defended and protected.

LCN's Mission - We uphold justice for socially and economically disadvantaged members of society by supporting a national network of Law Centres that use their legal skills as a tool for change and their legal expertise to defend the rights of people in their communities. We represent Law Centres at all levels of government and national forums, we help centres to maximise their potential as sustainable

Law Centres Federation Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

organisations, we initiate new Law Centre services for particularly vulnerable groups, and we champion the Law Centre model. We are the collective voice of Law Centres.

LCN's Strategic Goals for 2022-2023

1. Help Law Centres to thrive
2. Strengthen the network of Law Centres
3. Amplify the collective voice of Law Centres

The Law Centres Network acts as a catalyst for activity across Law Centres, working on a national level to reveal injustice, analysing needs and root causes and advocating for change. LCN is uniquely placed to identify what has worked, collect evidence and share that learning across the network of Law Centres and then support other Law Centres to take up proven methods. It drives quality across Law Centres and enables local Law Centres to join together so they can design strategic national responses and exert influence, yet still be embedded in and driven by the needs in their local communities. In this way LCN achieves its charitable objects and its public benefit is produced.

Impact 2022-2023

Working together for greater impact

Our work helps Law Centres' resources go further, making services more accessible for people who need them and amplifying our collective voice.

For every £1 we receive in membership fees, we give £25 back to each Law Centre in our network:

£11	£14
of direct funding	in services and discounts

In early 2019, LCN engaged Social Finance to carry out an external Strategic Review of LCN. Following the strategic review in 2019, Social Finance made recommendations for each of the key components of LCN's offering which formed the basis of LCN's 10 year outlook (2019-2029) and LCN's three year strategic plan (2019-2022). In late 2022, LCN again engaged Social Finance to review its progress against the recommendations they had made in 2019, but with particular regard to the impact of the pandemic on the support needs of Law Centres.

Social Finance found:

"The offer from LCN was described as 'excellent', 'responsive' and 'first rate' and was evidently well valued and appreciated. Respondents expressed their gratitude to the team for the hard, impactful work"

In relation to LCN's progress against their 2019 recommendations, they found:

"Most of these recommendations were progressed, however, the pandemic hugely impacted the work of LCN as it worked to support Law Centres through the crises - particularly in relation to respond to the increased demand they saw and the changing ways in which they were able to work with clients."

Consequently, at the strategic planning session in March 2023, LCN staff and Executive Committee used Social Finance's findings to consider LCN's progress towards achieving its strategic goals, along with its impact over 2022-2023. This is reported on below:

Progress against LCN's Strategic Goals for 2022-2023

Strategic Goal 1 - Help Law Centres to thrive

2022-2023 priorities to achieve the objective to **Help Law Centres to thrive** were to implement the following programmes of work:

1. Community Engagement
2. Law Centre Support
3. Fundraising for Law Centres
4. The Box – a platform to share resources and learning
5. Data
6. Digital

"Whenever we've needed anything, big or small, it's always easy to contact you. Every time I reached out to LCN for support it has been there in spades!"

Community Engagement Programme

This programme aims to support Law Centres to embed themselves in their local community. Every community is a unique eco-system with specific challenges; through this programme we help members to better understand those challenges, build partnerships with local

Our community of practice continued to meet regularly – a virtual space where practitioners meet to share their learning and wrestle together with the challenges they face. We supported the group to become peer-led and embraced opportunities to explore the purpose and format of the space, and its relationship to other connected Law Centre work, such as communications.

We have launched a new piece of work which explores the role of Law Centres as 'hub organisations' within their communities. Hub organisations collaborate with other civil society organisations (such as tenants' rights, community, and campaigning groups) to help them recognise when, where and how legal action can be used as a tool to achieve social change. LCN is leading on this work, supporting Vauxhall, Suffolk, and Derbyshire Law Centres to explore how they might approach such a model. This started with our launch event in March 2023 where Law Centres developed theories of change and mapped their local civil society communities to identify key partners. Over the next three years, they will work to build collaborative local networks and explore how they can use their legal skills to inform, advise, and represent groups and organisations to achieve meaningful social change. We are grateful to The Baring Foundation for supporting this work, and to DLA Piper for hosting our launch event.



Community in Action
A Law Centre Led Discussion Group

Who: Law Centre Staff, Trustees & Volunteers

What: The ABCs of Community: How Do We Define Community?

When: 4 to 5pm - Thursday September 21st

Where: Microsoft Teams

"turning meaningful discussion into meaningful action"

The poster features a light orange background with a blue speech bubble icon on the right. At the bottom, there is an illustration of a diverse group of seven people standing and talking. The text is arranged in a clear, hierarchical manner, with the title at the top, followed by the group name, and then the details of the event. The quote at the bottom is in a smaller, italicized font.

Law Centres Federation Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

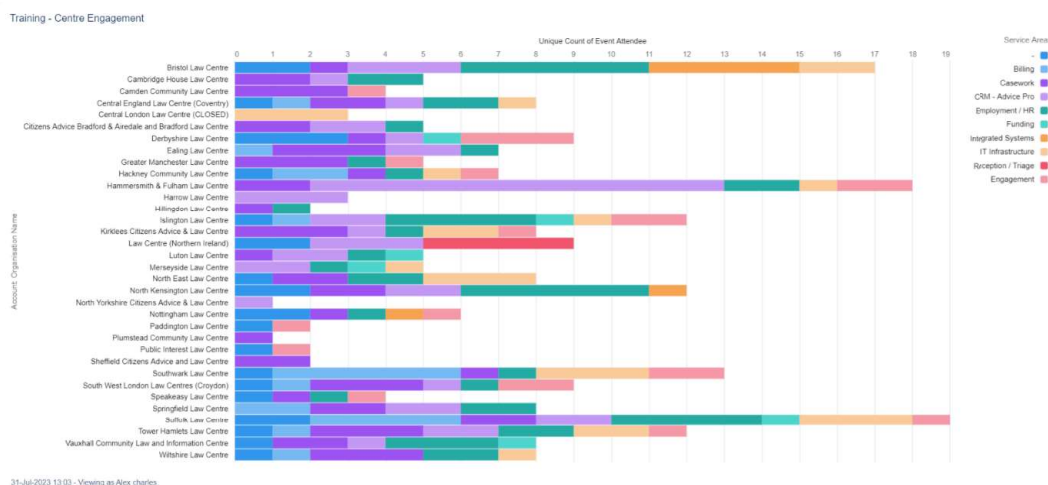
We also spent time considering our role in community engagement in light of the size of the network and our own resource and capacity (not to mention the increasing demand for Law Centre services, which has a direct impact on their capacity to undertake this and other kinds of non-advice work). We decided to focus our energies where we could have most impact - surfacing good examples and best practice and providing Law Centres with practical guidance to help them develop their own practice. At the end of the year we recruited an Assistant Community Engagement Officer to support this approach, which we have developed during 2022-2023.

Law Centre Support Programme

"I am ever so grateful of the very good, kind and effective support I received from you and LCN on this (and other) project."

Our core offer of support to our member Law Centres continued throughout the year, including:

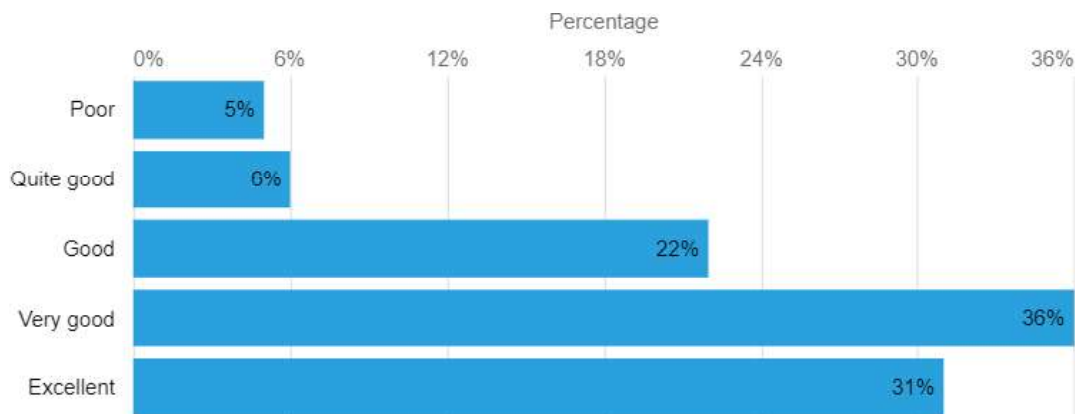
- **Peer support for Law Centre managers** - Weekly meetings where senior leaders can connect with colleagues across the network. Our managers tell us this is highly valued as a space to share challenges, seek advice, and celebrate together.
- **Consultancy** – Direct support, brokered and funded by LCN, to help resolve a variety of issues related to:
 - Project scoping and development
 - Funding strategy
 - Financial planning and reporting
 - Operational policy and procedure
 - Governance
 - Managing people
 - Compliance and quality
- **Strategic opportunities** – Convening and consulting with Law Centres to take advantage of regional and national opportunities, such as our work in Family Law (see below)
- **Coaching** – More than **75 1:1 sessions** between LCN Head of Service Development and senior Law Centre staff to help resolve a variety of operational issues, identify further support needs, and promote wellbeing.
- **Training** – 23 training sessions attended by **369 Law Centre staff**, volunteers and trustees across 34 Law Centres.



Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

These sessions supported Law Centre staff to develop skills across a wide range of topics from paperless working to suicide first aid. Feedback indicates the high quality of training delivered:



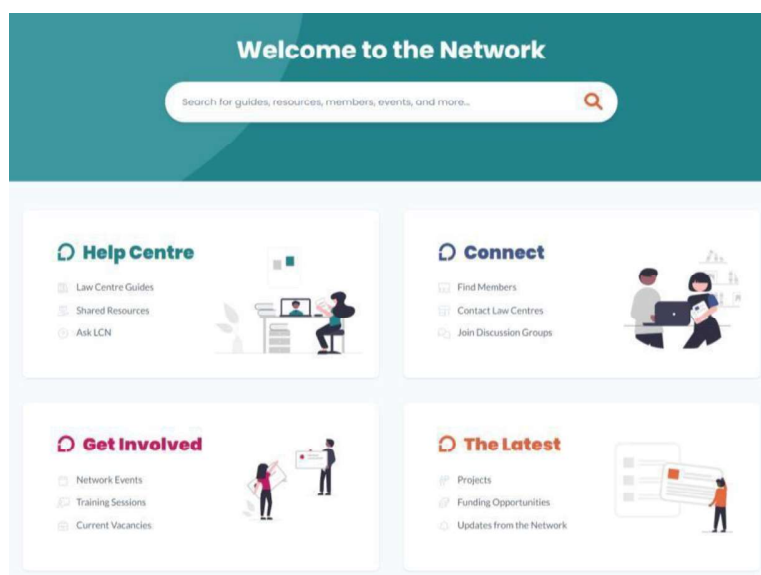
We also started work on a training calendar for Law Centres, informed by a network wide survey of training needs which captured the views of more than 100 Law Centre staff and volunteers.

"I spend a lot of time telling people why we're a member of the Network - I always feel really well supported"

Law Centre Members' Area – *The Box*

Our members' area gives Law Centre staff and volunteers easy access to a wide range of resources. More than half of Law Centre staff and volunteers have joined, giving them access to:

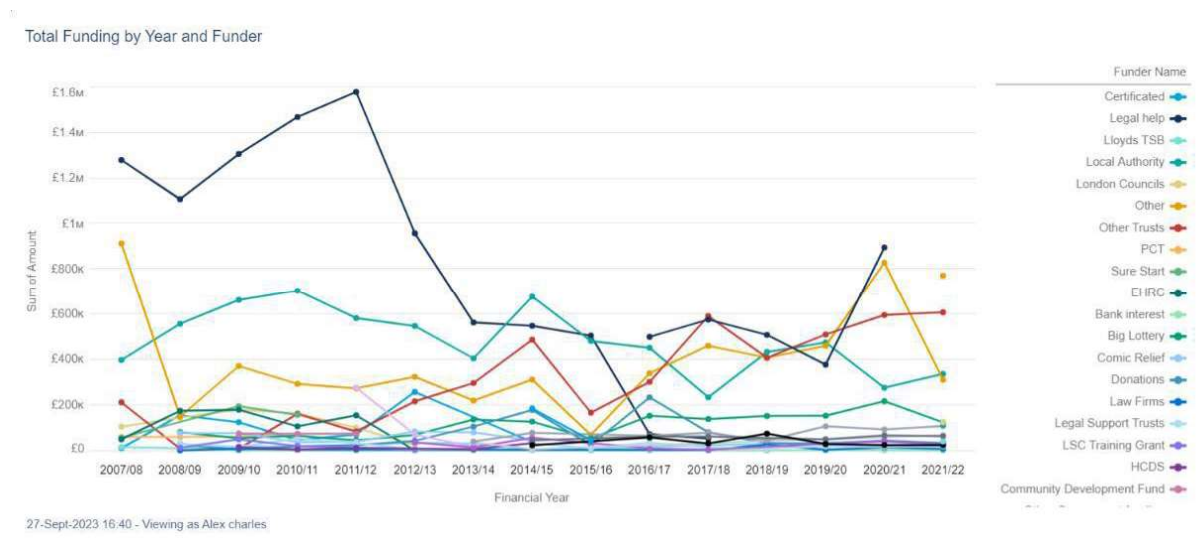
- **137 how-to guides** on a range of topics from governance to wellbeing
- **135 template policies and documents**
- **Bios and contact details** for LCN and Law Centre staff
- More than **20 discussion groups** where practitioners can find support from the peers
- Details of **events, training sessions and vacancies** from across the network
- Over **300 grant funding opportunities**, curated for Law Centres
- **Updates** from LCN and the wider social justice sector



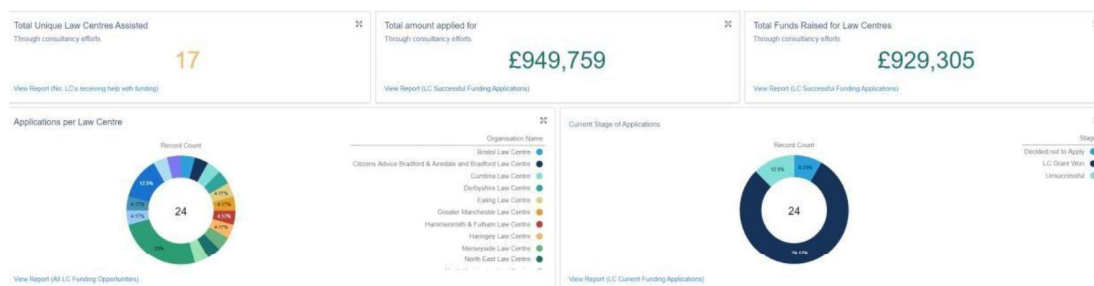
Law Centres Federation Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

Fundraising for Law Centres

As for the entire charitable sector, securing funds continues to be a major challenge for Law Centres. The graph below illustrates the change in Law Centres funds from 2007 to 2022. It shows the considerable drop in legal aid funds and the growing reliance on the support of Trusts and Foundations.



Consequently, providing support to Law Centres to raise funds is a key area of work for LCN. In the past year, the single largest grant funding opportunity for Law Centres this year was the Help Accessing Legal Support programme, administered by the Access to Justice Foundation. We supported 15 Law Centres to apply, brokering 1:1 assistance from our panel of trusted consultants. All 15 applications were successful, bringing more than £700,000 into the network and helping Law Centres to improve access to early legal advice.



In total we supported 17 Law Centres to secure 24 grants totalling £929,305. As always, the support brokered by LCN was very well received:

"We got the grant we asked for. Thanks for prompting us— I had lost the will!"

"[The help] was great, I found it a real struggle but was able to do a far better second draft after help. We got what we asked for"

Data

Data is one of the three essential resources needed by Law Centres, the other two are funds and staff. LCN has a vital role in assisting Law Centres with the collection, protection and use of data. In addition, LCN has its own need for better data and speedier access to current data. Our data journey this year has seen progress on a number of interesting initiatives related to data.

Law Centres Federation
Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

- **Theory of Change development:**
 - Building on our work last year to improve how we capture and evidence the impact of our work and report progress against our Theory of Change.
 - Streamlining our CRM to better capture data on our members, our work and our impact.
 - Building up and documenting our data assets and data flows.
- **Data Strategy and Maturity**
 - Researching and planning the development of a new data strategy to help build data maturity for LCN and Law Centres over the next 3 years.
 - Exploring how data apprenticeships can help improve data skills and capabilities for LCN and Law Centres.
 - Collaborating with other VCS and advice sector organisations to share, learn and engage on data initiatives and improving collection and use of data across the advice sector.
- **Data Standards and Taxonomies:**
 - **Engaging in cross-sector initiatives** on developing Data Standards for enquiries and legal provision, resulting in the development of a draft data standard for Law Centre enquiries which we plan to test out in the coming months.
 - **Developing the data architecture** underpinning LCN's systems and tools we develop, and aligning these with Law Centres, and wider Access to Justice data standards, where possible.
- **Improving use of CMS and digital tools for collection and analysis of legal data:**
 - **Advice Pro workshops:** developed a series of themed workshops to help Law Centres make better use of Advice Pro e.g. paperless working and court bundling.
 - **Advice Pro developments:** working with Law Centres and Advice pro to improve how the system operates e.g. securing a new integration with sharepoint to improve how client files are managed.
 - **Advice Pro Champions:** facilitating a Community of Practice, bringing together Advice Pro users from across the network to share, learn and help each other in their use of Advice Pro.
 - **Enquiry Desk:** A tool under development to help Law Centres capture enquiry information, including turn-aways. Will lead to better data on types of enquiries and in evidencing demand and need.
- **Developing Resources:**
 - **Guides and Resources:** developing guides and templates for Law Centres to support data collection;
 - **Gathering evidence:** from Law Centres on barriers to data collection and developing data maturity;
 - **Funding:** engaging with conversations with funders and policy makers to advocate for more funding for data work.
- **GDPR and Security:**
 - **GDPR Audit:** implementing the recommendations from an independent review last year of our current policies and procedures to identify improvements for compliance and embedding privacy by design principles as our work grows and develops.
 - **Cyber Essentials Plus:** achieving Cyber Essentials Plus certification for LCN and six other Law Centres.

Next steps on the data journey

Data is and always will be a journey. Our focus for the coming year is to benchmark our current level of data maturity and finalise our data strategy to take us where we want to be over the next 3 years. We are actively seeking funding to continue our data work with Law Centres and will appoint a new Data Lead to help drive the work forward.

Law Centres Federation
Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

Digital Transformation

The **National IT Upgrade Project**, funded by Legal Education Foundation, has been running since 2015. It forms part of LCN's wider Digital Transformation initiative to enable Law Centres to embrace digital solutions where relevant, to improve ways of working and improve the experience of clients accessing Law Centre services. It focuses on Digital Infrastructure and facilitating improved ways of working through adoption of cloud technologies and collaborative tools like Office 365 (O365). This involves an audit of existing infrastructure, replacing or updating old or antiquated infrastructure and systems (laptops, equipment, telephone etc.), safe disposal of obsolete equipment (old computers and servers), upgraded networking equipment and capabilities, support to move emails and files into the cloud, as well as training and support to make the most of O365.

Phase 4 of the IT upgrade was successfully completed this year for 8 Law Centres and 1 organisation LCN is supporting on its journey to becoming a Law Centre (North Wales Steering Group). In total over Phase 1 - 4 of the IT upgrade project LCN successfully upgraded 28 Law Centres in 33 locations with over 1000 users.

- The work covered the upgrade of computers, installation of Office 365, establishment of secure cloud storage space, networking infrastructure improvement, migration of office data, emails, shared files to new systems, disposal of old hardware, training and ongoing IT support, support on cyber essentials certification and support to Law Centres already in the scheme to secure more affordable replacement equipment post the initial upgrade.
- Over 280 more staff, trustees and volunteers now leveraging opportunities for new ways of working, including hybrid working, Teams Telephony and O365 Apps such as Bookings, Power BI and Microsoft Forms. For several Law Centres this was an essential component to being able to engage with the Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme.
- The benefits of cloud-based working were crucial to centres' adaptation to remote working during Covid-19, and beyond as Law Centre staff have shifted to a hybrid model of working.
- Over 340 pieces of new IT equipment provided to Law Centres in Phase 4 (including laptops, desktops, docking stations and monitors);
- A further 100 pieces of equipment were secured at discounts ranging from 5-20% for Centres already in the scheme who reimbursed LCN for the cost of laptops, desktops etc (net zero cost to the upgrade project).
- Networking upgrades and managed switches installed at 10 Law Centres (including some centres for previous phases which were unable to upgrade at the time) leading to improved network monitoring and protection of Law Centre systems, also minimising any risks to business continuity from potential time down;
- 7 Law Centres have been supported to secure Cyber Essentials Plus certification (funded through IASME / NCSC). LCN has developed 'model' answers for the shared Tenant configurations which has made the process of certifying much easier for Law Centres.

In addition:

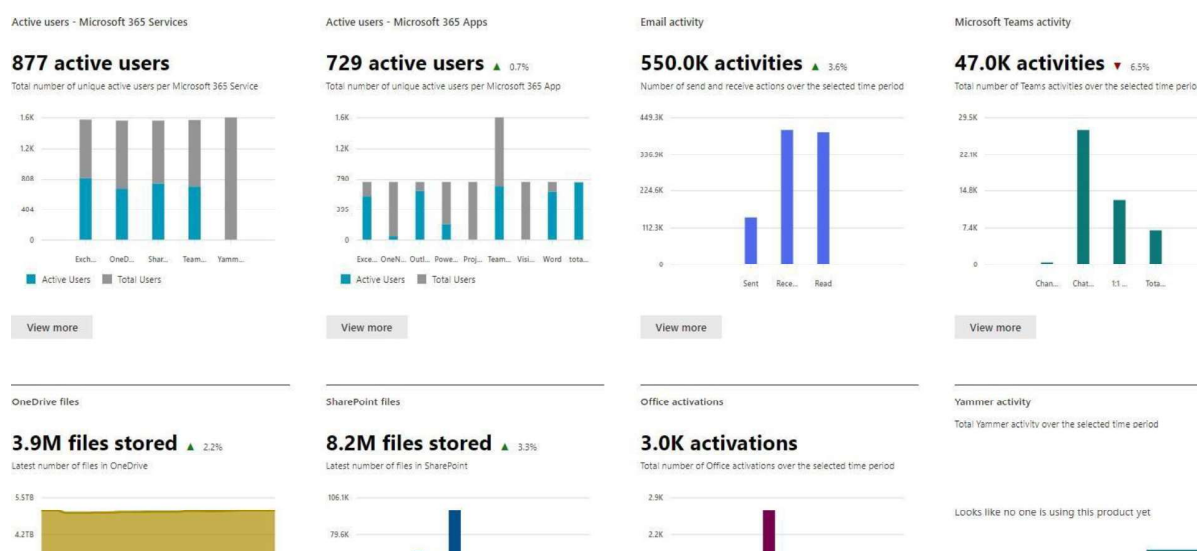
- Better hardware deal negotiated with Dell (up to 20% discount off RRP) through LCN Membership Scheme, open to Law Centres both in and out of the National IT Project
- Improved IT Support offer negotiated for Law Centres;
- Independent audit of security configuration for hardware and O365 ensuring improved security across the O365 Tenant and compliance with best practice;
- Updated documentation to support compliance with GDPR;
- Improved staff satisfaction, trust and confidence in Law Centre IT system;
- Reduction in staff time dealing with IT problems leading to improved service to clients;

Law Centres have reported:

Law Centres Federation Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

- less worried about risks and business continuity
- can explore new ways of working.
- reduced costs
- improved opportunities to collaborate within the Centre and across the network
- improved quality of life through flexible working
- can work more efficiently and effectively
- indirect knock on effect of improved experience for clients

There are still around 10 Law Centres that have not joined the LCN IT upgrade but could benefit from doing so. Most large funders have stopped investing in IT infrastructure and digital development projects. When funders change their focus it makes it difficult to continue large, strategic projects that require development over an extended period. LCN is looking for replacement funders for this work but capital funding is very limited. In the meantime, we will continue to offer Law Centres discounted equipment through the Dell Member scheme and continue to offer training and opportunities to share how others are embracing Office 365 to explore different ways of working with clients, within individual Law Centres and across the Law Centres Network. Law Centres in the tenant have been advised to budget for future upgrades as the lifespan of equipment is only between 3-5 years and can quickly become dated.



Snapshot of analytic data from Microsoft 365

The Back-Office – Salesforce Project

During the year, LCN completed the Pilot phase of its back-office project with three Law Centres. This was a test and learn approach to explore introducing Salesforce to manage back-office functions like grant, contact and volunteer management, as well as HR and other office management related tasks.

LCN took on the research, design, scope and configuration work in Salesforce, and brought in consultancy to act as a sounding board for best-practice and for developer support to package up what had been built to allow it to be deployed into individual Law Centres' instances of Salesforce.

The ethos of this pilot project was to roll out the package to three Centres, letting LCN understand whether it will help Law Centres, and whether it will make enough of a difference to justify rolling it out across the wider Network. It also allows LCN to understand how to support the process, both in implementation and after handover to the Law Centre.

Law Centres Federation Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

Since the pilot launch at the start of 2023, Law Centre users have been getting to grips with the Salesforce platform and the packaged tools, and they've already been feeding back the benefits. Most users had no experience of Salesforce and were impressed by the ability to streamline previously admin-heavy tasks such as recording annual leave and HR information and creation of funding pipeline reports for trustees.

"I showed Salesforce's reports features to my colleague who is involved in writing reports each month on our funding pipeline – I built her a quick report, hit the refresh button and magically all the latest funding data appeared in the report - they were utterly blown away!"

Users are reporting other benefits such as:

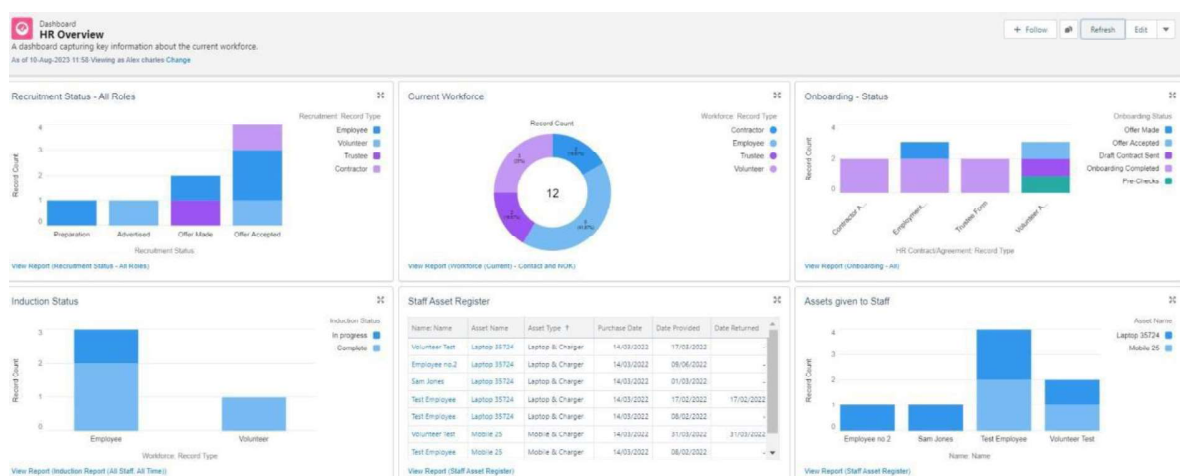
- Minimising risk and increasing efficiency
- Improved collaboration and reduction of duplication
- Centralised systems and more paperless working
- Improved intelligence on operations and office management
- Improved security and compliance with regulation
- Improved systems and processes for succession planning

"Salesforce has helped make accounts preparation much easier. Rather than having to look at separate emails and compare information, it's all in the one place and we can just cross-reference this. We met with our accountant and were able to pull off all the financial info in seconds which was really helpful".

"The most helpful thing for HR has been managing the annual leave records. All records are up-to-date, in one place and so much easier than managing a million different spreadsheets! It makes things 10 x faster than before!!!"

Users who had been struggling to move away from paper are being converted to this new way of working, as LCN have ensured that stakeholders have been brought along for the journey through user-led design. They've had the opportunity to define what they want to ensure that the system will meet their needs. The design hasn't been dictated to them, as key stakeholders have had input throughout. As LCN have let users shape the solution themselves, they feel ownership and excitement for how this can make their lives easier, and how this will improve frontline service delivery. Their continued feedback will allow LCN to further improve the package. Next stage is to roll out the tool to more Law Centres.

LCN is now working with the Justice Innovation Group to bring together a Salesforce advice sector user group to explore approaches for using Salesforce for back-office and front line support, and to share learning and opportunities for data collection and tech development with our advice sector colleagues.



Law Centres Federation

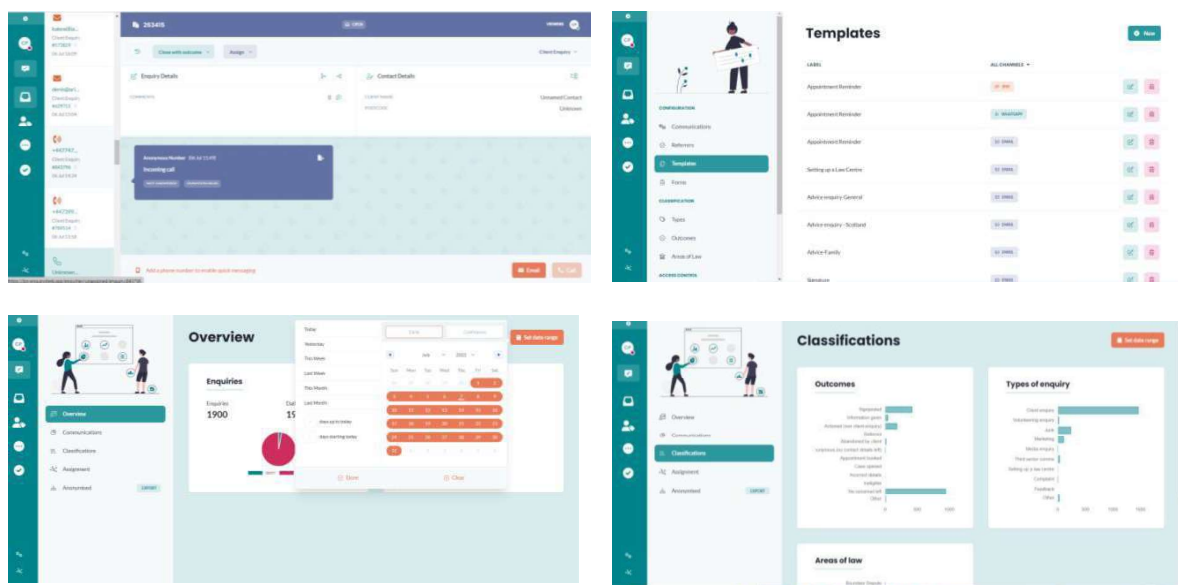
Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

EnquiryDesk

Two Law Centres continued to use this web browser-based digital tool as part of our pilot. EnquiryDesk assists Law Centres to better manage enquiries received through multiple channels: telephone, email, SMS or in person. Our digital funding from the National Lottery has come to an end but we will continue developing the tool as soon as we get more funding so we can roll EnquiryDesk out to other Law Centres that have already shown interest.

Key benefits include:

- Voice calls (incoming/outgoing/voicemails) and emails (incoming/outgoing) can be dealt with in one single tool that can be used by several staff simultaneously
- Person-centred tool that captures and keeps a history of contacts made so clients do not need to repeat themselves and staff know the status of the enquiry at any given time
- Increased efficiency and quality of client contact, no clients fall through the net and Law Centre response is more consistent (use of reply templates)
- Passive collection of enquiries high level statistics and easy monitoring of enquiry volume and type that allows better allocation of resources by management



Other Digital

LCN continued its work on digital development in 2022-2023. As funding ended the pace slowed but LCN is actively fundraising to ensure the progress made is not lost. The next steps are:

- Review and revise the Law Centres' Platform / Members Area / The Box
- Next phase of development for Enquiry Desk
- Roll out The Back-Office tool to more Law Centres
- Continue to work with Law Centres to identify new tools that would assist
- Continue to provide training and assistance around data and digital
- Maintain our IT support contract with Aspira Cloud and maintain our 365 Tenant
- Continue to fundraise for further hardware upgrades.

Strategic Goal 2 - Strengthen the network of Law Centres

Who contacts LCN – What we see

Each week LCN receives around 70 enquiries from people searching for legal assistance. The number of people contacting LCN continues to increase as a consequence of the reduction in lawyers providing legal aid (particularly in the area of immigration) and the reduced capacity of other agencies to assist. Although LCN cannot provide advice, and all our messaging is clear about this, people are so desperate in their search for help that they try us anyway. Below is a snapshot of what LCN sees:

Enquiries to LCN 01/04/2022 – 31/03/2023

TYPE OF ENQUIRY

Advice enquiries	3599
Media enquiries	7
Setting up a Law Centre	9
Volunteering	68

BY AREA OF LAW

Crime	3%
Employment	9%
Family	7%
Housing	10%
Immigration	40%
Welfare benefits	3%
Several areas of law	4%

Strategic national projects

A national Family Law service

"Thank you! an excellent model for service design/improvements in a collaborative way."

This year our members identified the lack of access to specialist legal advice on family matters as a real problem across our network. In response we brought together managers, solicitors, paralegals, trustees and triage workers from 19 Law Centres to explore the problem further.

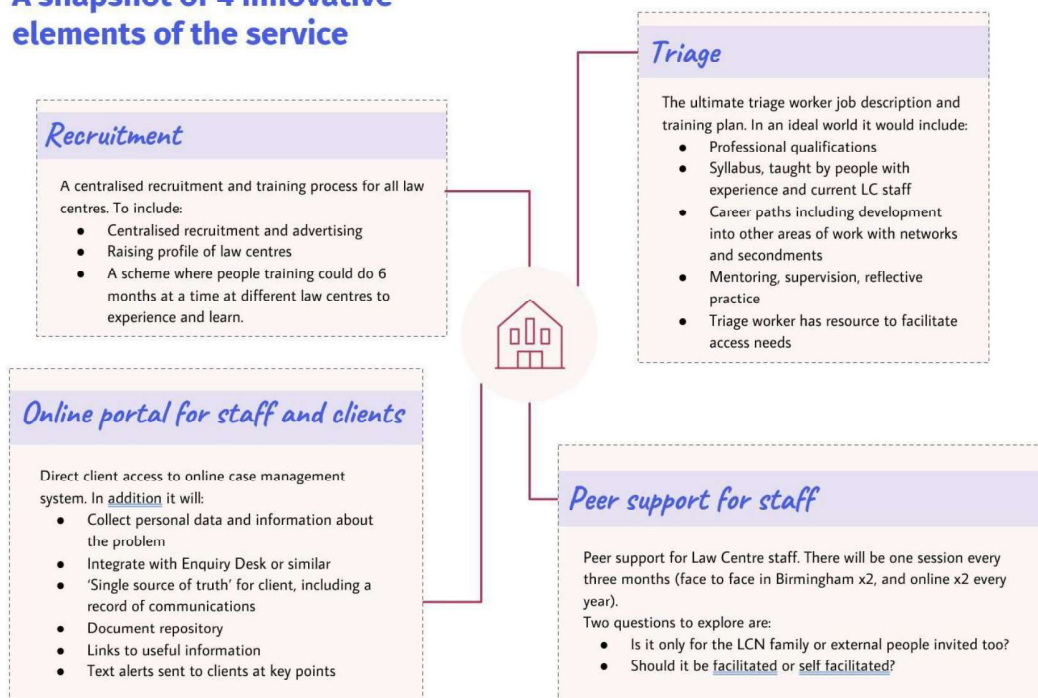


We moved through a series of in-person service design workshops and online discussions where we used creative techniques to help us explore the challenges and potential solutions. We still need to work out which

Law Centres Federation Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

of the ideas below we can put into practice and test, but the approach we adopted was very effective at engaging people around the problem.

A snapshot of 4 innovative elements of the service



Attendees highlighted the benefits of coming together in person for more creative tasks, the benefits of just being together, their learning from the approach, and how their creative thinking increased during the process.

"Thank you for paying for our time to do this. The process was valuable and so many places take our feedback and time totally for granted. It's really appreciated!!"

We're grateful for *Mischon De Reya* for supporting this work.

Overcoming language barriers for victims of crime *The Bell Foundation*

Purpose: The project seeks to address the problem of barriers in access to justice and services faced by victims of crime who have English as another language.

Progress: The primary thrust of this project's work over the past year has been the FOI requests work. It has needed more attention than initially envisaged because, as became clear early on, there was considerable resistance to it from the police forces approached: only 1 in 7 forces answered the questions in full. Most requests were initially refused, in whole or in part, and required specific responses, devised with our pro bono partners Allen & Overy, in order to get sufficient information for compiling a national picture of how forces approach ESOL as a vulnerability.

The emerging picture, while incomplete, is instructive and valuable in introducing new data into the professional discourse, that in itself is a baseline marker for prospective changes. Earlier this summer we have presented the initial findings to the Foundation and discussed ways forward. We are in the process of drawing up a report on the findings and their analysis which we will combine with case studies from the two participating Law Centres. The report will make recommendations on how police forces can improve their understanding of ESOL as a vulnerability in victims of crime, along with the support they provide to victims.

Law Centres Federation Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

This report is also set to be a contribution to wider issues that were at the heart of our victims of crime project from the outset. Over the duration of this project, themes such as police accountability, structural problems in forces that drive discrimination (such as racism), and protecting the data held on victims and witnesses (given recent revealing breaches), have all grown in importance and urgency.

While this was not part of the original plan, we are glad that the report and some of its components is also set to contribute to the Bell Foundation's parliamentary advocacy work. Specifically, it will be used to support efforts to get the right to understand and be understood – and the duty and funds to ensure it is upheld – enshrined in statute and not only in the Victims Code.

In other project work, this year we have also continued sharing intelligence with victims organisations such as Rape Crisis England and Wales around victims policy developments. In particular, we were keen to see the government expand its thinking on supporting victims of domestic violence beyond IDVAs and toward legal advice as well, as the two perform different functions for distinct purposes. Unfortunately, this promising prospect has come to nought, with political changes leading the government to take a more restricted approach and fall out with its own Victims Commissioner, who resigned in protest.

We have also continued to encourage our members to better target services at victims of crime with ESOL. Reflecting on earlier periods in the project, we have devised a toolkit to provoke Law Centres to think through how VoC services might fit within their current service offering and what additional outcomes they might help them achieve. In December, at our racial justice-themed annual conference, we again examined, from several angles, the practical touchpoints that particularly affect racialised communities and potential partnerships to address them, such as with organisations like Black Europeans.

Law Centres support victims of crime





Yasmin came from Iran in 2020 on a visa to marry her British husband. She spoke Farsi and very little English.

After her husband abused her, Yasmin fled their home. Two days later, she called **Greater Manchester Law Centre** for help.

The council temporarily put Yasmin up in a hotel. Alone, afraid and speaking little English, it was not a good place for her.

The Law Centre helped Yasmin to apply for more support under a Destitution Domestic Violence Concession (DDVC). It also challenged Adult Services to accommodate her.

It worked! Adult Services found Yasmin a place in a proper refuge. She was also granted DDVC, so was able to get Universal Credit to support her, as she gets her life back on track.

Law Centres are here to help.

Law Centres Federation Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

Network growth – new Law Centres

After nearly 20 years and despite the best efforts of its staff and trustees, supported by the LCN team, our Isle of Wight Law Centre sadly closed at the end of March 2023. We salute the commitment and perseverance of the team, trustees and volunteers, who had kept services going for so long and in such tough circumstances. The Law Centre's loss will be keenly felt among its peers in the Law Centres movement. However, it is the local community that will feel the Law Centre's loss most bitterly, and recent comments online reflect this. It has been a lifeline and a beacon of support for vulnerable local people in very difficult times and many will struggle without the support it has given in the past.

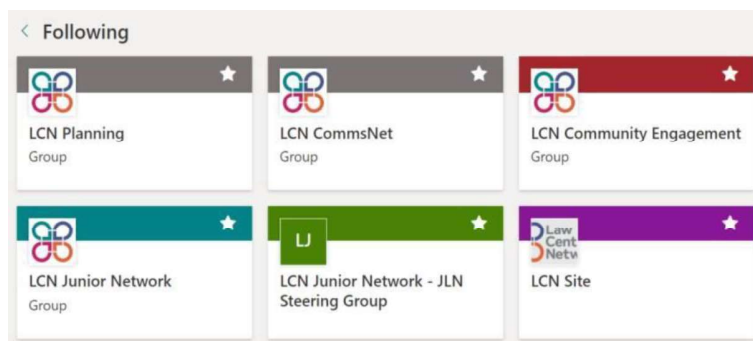
In more positive news, we welcomed North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre as the newest member of our network in December 2022. The benefits to local people of a Citizens Advice also becoming a Law Centre are obvious. As a combined service, they enjoy both a breadth of issues that they can get help with and a depth of support with common legal problems. Along with its eight permanent offices from Skipton to Scarborough, NYCALC offers outreach services in a further 23 locations.

We also continued to work with a number of organisations who are moving towards applying for membership in 2023/24 including in North Wales, Leicestershire, Leeds, London, Oxfordshire and Norfolk.

Bringing the network together – Communities of practice / interest groups

"Thank you to all at LCN for all your ongoing support and guidance, you have brought all of us together and continued to push forward"

We migrated our email groups to Microsoft 365 to make the most of its integration and functionality and have continued setting up additional groups for new areas of interest, practice or projects to facilitate communication between our Members. We currently have over 25 private groups (some with a dedicated Sharepoint site) where members can ask questions, share best practice, discuss challenges and opportunities and connect with other colleagues across the Network. Our most active group (Housing) includes over 100 Law Centres practitioners.



Workforce Development

Building on the scoping work of the previous year, funded by the Legal Education Foundation, we continued exploring the challenges Law Centres face in this area. We consulted with Law Centre and sector colleagues, as well as raising the issues with funders, the Legal Aid Agency, and others. As a result of our improved understanding of the challenges and possible solutions, we were able to secure multi-year funding to work with five London Law Centres over the next 3 years. This will allow us to recruit and develop a cohort of trainee solicitors to increase access to justice in London while testing new approaches to staff recruitment, training and retention. We are grateful to Propel for supporting this work.

Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

Although the lessons learned through the above will be applied across the network, we are conscious that Law Centres outside London face different challenges. We remain committed to meeting this need and will be seeking additional funding for this work in 2023/24.

Wellbeing - Employee Assistance Programme

LCN continued to offer this programme to all Law Centres staff, trustees and volunteers (and their immediate family members) to help them deal with personal and professional problems. The service provides confidential advice and guidance (24/7 free phone number) on a variety of issues ranging from life and bereavement support, legal and medical information, online CBT. It also includes access to a wellbeing portal and app.

Breakdown of assistance requested:

Counselling 63.9%

- Anxiety 39%
- Low Mood 21%
- Depression 21%

Legal Advice: 34%

- Civil 46%
- Employment 23%
- Criminal 15%.

Tackling Systemic Racism - Strengthening Diversity

LCN's Diversity sub-committee continued to meet and discuss options for monitoring and strengthening diversity within Law Centres. However, it was acknowledged that LCN needs to do more and that LCN should work towards becoming an anti-racist organisation. Consequently, one strand of the Workforce development programme will focus particularly on improving opportunities for people from Black and Racialised communities in Law Centres. The Annual Conference focused on Racial Injustice, reported on below.

In April we presented our Racial Justice workplan to Law Centres for discussion and approval.

The plan has 5 strands:

1. Workforce development, creating new opportunities, run masterclasses
2. New and extended services in discrimination and other targeted service
3. Building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones
4. Advocacy, including Windrush Justice
5. Collect the data, build the evidence

The immediate priority is to get funds to fully implement the programme. Meanwhile we are focussing on the aspects where LCN and Law Centres are already working e.g. Windrush justice and with existing partners.

2022 Annual Law Centre Conference

In December, LCN hosted our Law Centres Annual Conference "Racial Justice and the role of Law Centres in dismantling systemic racism" over 3 days (2 online and 1 in person). We upgraded the

Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

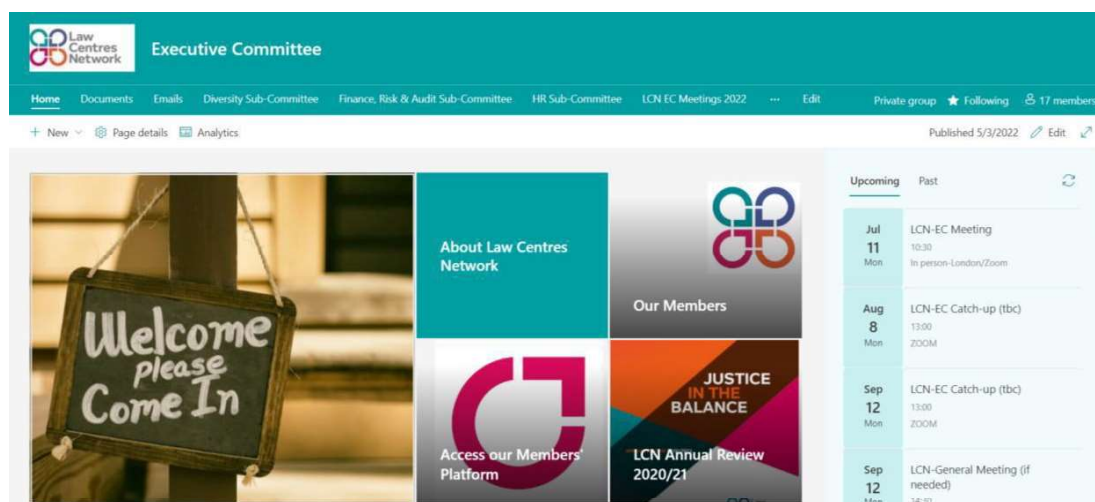
platform that LCN had designed and developed in-house a year prior so details for future events can be updated by LCN staff without having to rely on a developer. The design for this conference was specifically created by an external cooperative of Black designers.



The online conference included 5 Plenaries on income, housing and health inequality, dismantling systemic racism and campaigning, an interactive session on how to gather evidence and a conversation with Ben Crump and Jasmine Rand, American attorneys representing the families of people killed by police, class actions and challenging racist decisions.

455 colleagues attended the online sessions and 83 participated in the 4 workshops held in person, which focused on what Law Centres can do in practice to help dismantle systemic racism.

Governance



We have continued to successfully use our dedicated Executive Committee Sharepoint to share, in an easier and more secure way, all the relevant documents (meeting agendas/papers and minutes of previous meetings), resources (eg new induction pack) and links to forms (eg declaration of Directors' interests), becoming de facto paperless.

Law Centres Federation
Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

We have been holding hybrid meetings, prioritising attendance in person but also allowing remote attendance for those unable to travel.

Strategic Goal 3 - Amplify the collective voice of Law Centres

Policy and advocacy

Engagement is not just on policy but on how it is delivered: "You and the rest of LCN making my job much easier as usual!"

In this last year of the pandemic, public attention has turned to its aftermath, in which hardship became much more widespread, driven in part by a global energy crisis. Growing indebtedness has been leading people and households into more legal problems, increasing not just the need for assistance but its urgency and desperation.

Especially now, people in legal need deserve better support than the patchy, under-resourced public provisions currently available. Therefore, our advocacy work this year all related to bringing about more 'can-do' public-funded legal assistance, that would be responsive to changing needs, so "everybody is looked at as somebody that can be helped" (Ian Byrne MP, speaking of his local Law Centre).

The main part of the work focused on our justice system, including courts, legal aid and other legal assistance. Among our access to justice workstreams:

- Ensuring that renters can still sue landlords for neglecting their home: together with partners Legal Aid Practitioners Group, Housing Law Practitioners Association and campaigners Generation Rent, we pushed back against Fixed Recoverable Costs reform and got a two-year reprieve, which we hope to use to make the housing exemption permanent. If we did not get this reprieve, the policy change would have led renters to struggle to find legal assistance with challenging neglectful landlords. Disrepair is a big problem, affecting 1 in 7 of all rented homes.
- Getting legal aid to work better for preventing home loss: this year a change of policy was announced, reintroducing earlier legal advice for people who are at risk of losing their home. We had been advocating for some elements of the new policy for some time, and continued to engage with the Legal Aid Agency on the practical details of the Home Loss Prevention Advice Scheme. We then supported member Law Centres to bid for local delivery of the scheme, and they continue to make up 1 in 5 of all providers.
- Advocating for simpler and more inclusive legal aid means test: advocacy on this issue has gone on for three years and concluded with a formal consultation on the proposed changes, some of them we had advocated for, that are estimated to make 2 million more people eligible for civil legal aid.
- Working toward a systemic overhaul of civil legal aid: by summer 2021, Parliament's justice committee pronounced civil legal aid too far gone for minor tweaks and in need of an overhaul. By then we had been lobbying the government and its scrutineers for this change for some time. At long last, in late January the government has announced its Review of Civil Legal Aid, with which we have been engaging extensively since. Another review that we had had in our sights, by the National Audit Office, has also been launched in the spring and is already benefiting from our input.
- Court reform and diversion to other channels for resolving disputes: the government has long signalled that it is interested in ways of cutting down the court backlog by diverting most civil law disputes to ombuds schemes or mediation, which run the risk of also reducing the legal assistance that people in need are offered. This year we have sought to challenge its assumptions by advocacy through its project quantifying the cost of civil disputes.
- Introducing new and better ideas into currency: this year we have collaborated with Warwick Law School on a series of public events dedicated to 'reclaiming legal aid', that were also edited into podcast episodes. We have also been seeking to shape the justice agendas of the Opposition and have taken part in discussions with the shadow justice secretary and other members of the shadow cabinet.

The above was complemented by work on particular policy areas that arise from Law Centres' work, such as housing, immigration and human rights. Throughout this work, we have taken care to weave our

Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

communications with the experiences of our Law Centres and their clients, that gives us our standing in these debates:

- Housing law and renters' rights: this year our involvement in the Renters Reform Coalition has become more intensified, following the publication of the 'new deal for renters' white paper, leading up to the Renters (Reform) Bill currently before parliament. We have also been supporting member Law Centres' policy and community engagement work, briefing and advising them and involving them in the joint campaign.
- Human rights: all year long we were preoccupied by the progress of the government's Bill of Rights Bill, that threatened to repeal and replace the Human Rights Act and devalue human rights in the UK. We were very pleased to ease off our joint campaign work on this when, following ministerial changes, the Bill was deprioritised and subsequently scrapped.
- Immigration: the government has repurposed some of the Bill of Rights Bill provisions in the Nationality and Borders Act and the subsequent Illegal Migration Bill (aka the small boats bill). Both bills promise migrants access to legal aid if they face removal, but we have been briefing parliamentarians about the many pitfalls of that false promise. We also continue to campaign for more family-friendly immigration policies and for lifting the ban on asylum seekers working as they wait for their cases to be decided.
- Victims of crime: having English as one's second language can be a big setback, especially at tougher turns in life. As part of our dedicated project, to understand and expose just how poorly ESOL as a vulnerability is treated by UK police forces, we have made Freedom of Information requests with every force and are analysing the results. The intention is to use this to press for greater accountability by the forces, and to support the inclusion of the right to understand and be understood in law, in the new Victims and Prisoners Bill.

In numbers

- 2 research reports that we contributed evidence to
- 3 open discussions co-organised on [reclaiming access to justice](#)
- 6 ministers and shadow ministers met
- 7 joint public statements with campaigning partners
- 13 oral or written policy submissions made

In other words

"Working with LCN has been so encouraging and it seems like you all led with boldness not reticence or fear. Hope to see more of this approach in the space, don't think we can afford to mince words and actions with the world being as it is."



Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

LCN and Greater Manchester Law Centre at Renters Reform Coalition day of action in Westminster

Communications

This year, thanks to increased communications capacity, we have allowed ourselves to set more ambitious priorities. These priorities have aimed at making our output more engaging, more distinct and more consistent, that is, along recurring themes.

These include the highlighting of Law Centre client cases, especially those featuring the client's own voice or their caseworker's perspective. We have also sought to make our content more engaging by creating and using more visual assets. Additionally, we have looked to develop the community of practice of Law Centre staff with communications responsibilities.

- More people: humanity is at the heart of Law Centres' work and we are keen to highlight this, pay tribute to frontline Law Centre staff and volunteers, and in particular get more exposure for clients' own voices.
- More issues: the appointment of LCN's first full-time Communications Officer has allowed us to produce more campaign-oriented content, as well as to take part in more campaigning events. This has included a Renters' Day of Action from the Renters' Reform Coalition, and a roundtable on noting a decade since the civil legal aid cuts of 2013 by Legal Action Group.
- More of our members: we have been featuring much more content about Law Centres, their work, their positions and their successes.
- More visually engaging: we have been developing a suite of new assets for use in social media and in other contexts. This, together with the dedicated capacity, has allowed us to increase our social media output, even it out and increase its reach.
- More distinct: in the run-up to an imminent website relaunch in August 2023, we have been working with designers on a 'brand refresh' that should update our visual identity while adhering to the core of what people already know us for.
- More networked: we continue to support the community of practice of Law Centre staff members with communications responsibilities. This year has seen three network-wide meetings and an increase in media requests shared through the dedicated emailing list. These have been instrumental for Law Centre input to influence our communications work. We also launched the comms network's SharePoint portal, where the network can share communications resources, tools and updates. Overall, Law Centres are able to more easily and more regularly share relevant material, which we are then able to use as online content and as evidence in our advocacy work.
- LCN's new website will be launched in October 2023.



In numbers:

- 1 news media appearance a week on average, with LCN accounting for a quarter of them
- 4 in 5 media appearances were in national rather than local outlets
- 25% more Law Centre news features on our website this year, showing the value of legal advice and celebrating successes
- 8% increase in subscribers to our supporters newsletter.
- 37% increase in our social reach on Facebook and LinkedIn (old Twitter/X data unavailable)

"Bringing a civil case, such as this one, in the small claims' court was stressful, daunting and hard work, particularly when faced with a defendant so much larger and more powerful than myself. I would not have been able to bring this case without the support of Bristol Law Centre."

Auriol Britton, discrimination client
Bristol Law Centre

Law Centres fight to make the
UK a more equal society

Law Centres Network

The Future - the next 10 years

The simple reality is that the speed of change is such that detailed planning for any longer than 6-12 months is often of very limited value as the staffing, funding, political and technological environment

Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

changes at a pace which means that strategic and operational planning need to be agile and adaptable (to ensure that opportunities are taken and that risks are managed and mitigated).

For this reason, LCN has changed its approach to business planning. Instead of annual reviews, we have implemented a 6 monthly review process. At each review, detail for the coming six months will be updated and the plan will be extended so that it always looks at least three years into the future.

In December 2019 LCN set out a longer term (10 years) outlook for Law Centres and for LCN. This gives us a clear sense of direction and aspiration. In early 2023 we reviewed the 10 year outlook.

Our 10 year ambition is that we will work towards:

1. The national network of Law Centres will have grown to at least 50 Centres;
2. All Law Centres will be resilient and secure with access to the latest technology and able to meet community needs and expectations;
3. Law Centres will be recognised as rights-based organisations working with local communities to use the law as a tool for change;
4. LCN will remain at the heart of the network providing an increased range of support services to Law Centres and recognised nationally as the voice of Law Centres and a champion for access to justice and social change.

The next 3 years

The following recommendations were made by Social Finance following their review earlier in the year and consultation with Law Centres. LCN is currently developing a new 3 year strategic plan based on the updated Theory of Change that will incorporate the recommendations below:

1. **Funding:** Help to identify sources of funding outside of legal aid and coordinate funding applications.
2. **Workforce development:** LCN to assist Law Centres manage the staffing challenges informed by the needs of the centres. This could include support for recruitment, succession planning; developing relationships with universities/schools and benchmarking data on Law Centre pay scales.
3. **Collaboration:** LCN to continue to support more cross-centre collaboration in Law Centres. Ensure all LC staff are aware of LCN offering.
4. **Advocacy:** Make a louder policy push to gain updated Legal Aid contract fees.
5. **Impact:** Support Law Centres to articulate succinctly the impact of Law Centres work in ways that appeal to funders, including storytelling linked to data and focus on the client perspective.
6. **Community:** Build on current work with Law Centres to be embedded (organisationally connected and visible to those in need) in the service of their communities.
7. **IT, Data and Digital:** Offering IT and digital training opportunities to meet the needs of those who are less skilled in this area. Continue to develop the digital programme. Work to develop data maturity across the network.

The Year Ahead - 2023/2024

Following the external review of LCN and the continued focus on our new Theory of Change, in 2023-2024 LCN aims to continue to work towards the following 3 objectives:

Law Centres Federation
Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

- 1. Help Law Centres to thrive – getting more help to people in need**
- 2. Strengthen the network of Law Centres – solving bigger problems together**
- 3. Amplify the collective voice of Law Centres – speaking out for change**

Fundraising Practice

As for many charities, raising voluntary funds from trusts, foundations and individuals is a vital source of income for LCN, enabling us to fulfil our charitable objectives as effectively as possible. We are very grateful for the support given by all our donors.

LCN believes that fundraising should be an open, honest and respectful process. We aim to build and maintain solid partnerships with our supporters and donors, based on mutual understanding and shared values. In developing our approach to fundraising we have taken account of the Code of Fundraising Practice issued by the Fundraising Regulator. LCN is registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

LCN operates with a small internal fundraising team. In addition to this, we engaged external consultants to assist us with our 50th Anniversary fundraising campaign. LCN does not, nor will not, engage in face-to-face or telephone fundraising. LCN has received no complaints about its fundraising activities either during the financial year or subsequently.

GDPR

LCN continues to monitor our compliance with GDPR. LCN's Privacy Policy, published on our website, clearly states what personal data LCN will hold in relation to supporters and how this data will be used. It also sets out how individuals can raise concerns or complaints. In 2022 -2023, we reviewed our compliance with GDPR and continue plan to monitor our data protection procedure and privacy policy.

Financial review

The total net outgoing resources for LCN were (£156,667) (2022: outgoing resources (£169,509)).

LCN had a net deficit on unrestricted funds of (£199,289). Together with the accumulated surplus brought forward from previous years, the charitable company now has unrestricted funds of £112,845 (2022 £312,134).

Our main source of unrestricted funds continues to be from subscriptions from Law Centres and donations. In addition, a contribution this year of £9,470 (2022: £0) as gifts-in-kind was generously provided by several law firms.

Restricted funds carried forward at 31 March 2023 amounted to £167,970 (2022: £125,345) This is sufficient for the activities for which the funds were provided.

Reserves policy

The Executive Committee has considered the following factors when considering a reserves policy:

- the organisation's contractual obligations to its staff in terms of parental rights, sickness pay and redundancy provisions;
- the organisation's obligation to maintain a safe and clean working environment;
- that certain equipment is essential for our work;

Law Centres Federation

Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2023

- that an increasing proportion of the organisation's income is now derived from fixed term project grants.

The Executive Committee agreed that LCN should aim to maintain unrestricted funds equal to six month's core service running costs. This amounts to £228,930. The current level of unrestricted reserves is £112,845, at Balance Sheet date. This is sufficient for LCN to run for 3 months.

The level of unrestricted reserves and available cash is sufficient for LCN to meet its obligations should it cease trading. The Executive Committee has budgeted to break even in the coming year. With the award of new multi-year grants, the EC anticipates that they will achieve a small surplus in 2024 - 2025 and will be able to rebuild reserves to the level they believe is prudent given the current circumstances in the UK.

Going Concern

At its meeting on 10 July 2023, the Executive Committee considered whether LCN will be a going concern for the coming twelve months. The EC was provided with draft end of year accounts, Quarter 1 2023/2024 Management Accounts including the Balance Sheet, revised budget (2023-2024) with cash flow projections to June 2024 and LCN Fundraising Strategy. They also considered Charity Commission Guidance as well as Guidance from the Auditors.

The EC discussed whether LCN has sufficient reserves to cover its liabilities should it have to close; they assessed whether the documents indicated that LCN is on sound financial footing for the immediate future. They considered the Reserves policy, how LCN manages its finances, its staffing requirements, its charitable objects, its strategic plan, its obligations to funders, the safeguards it has in place to protect against fraud, its leases and premises, and our current banking arrangements. Importantly the Committee considered the current funding climate. They asked whether LCN is robust enough to address unexpected situations. Finally, they discussed the likelihood of the number of Law Centres increasing or decreasing in coming years and what impact that would have. It was also asked whether LCN had considered merging with other charities. It was agreed that the Finance Sub-Committee should monitor cashflow and funding opportunities on a regular basis alongside the finance reports. It was agreed to review going concern at the EC meeting in October when results of 3 funding applications should be known.

The Executive Committee agreed that LCN is a going concern until the end of 2024. They also noted that if two of its funding applications are successful, then its financial position is likely to be stronger in 2024-2025.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of the Law Centres Federation 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) including FRS 102.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Events since the end of the year

In the opinion of the Executive Committee no event since the balance sheet date significantly affects the company's financial position. However, the Executive Committee is continually monitoring LCN's current and future finances.

Having carried out a detailed review of the Charity's resources and the current economic challenges facing both the Charity and its members, together with the review of Going Concern discussed above, the Trustees are satisfied that the Charity has sufficient cash flows to meet its liabilities as they fall due for at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Approved by the Executive Committee on 16 October 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
Helen Rogers

Chair of Trustees

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF LAW CENTRES FEDERATION

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 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 the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of 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 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.

Signed: *Moore Kingston Smith LLP.*

Name: James Saunders, FCCA DChA

The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants:

Address: 9 Appold Street, London, EC2A 2AP

Date: 22 November 2023

Law Centres Federation

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

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Income and Endowments					
Donations	2a	36,226	133,018	169,244	159,847
Charitable activities	2b	483,260	245,426	728,686	893,971
Investments		-	169	169	37
Other	2c	-	14,492	14,492	3,753
Total		519,486	393,105	912,591	1,057,608
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	43,475	43,475	33,064
Charitable activities	3	476,864	548,919	1,025,783	1,194,053
Total		476,864	592,394	1,069,258	1,227,117
Net income/(expenditure)		42,622	(199,289)	(156,667)	(169,509)
Net movement in funds	10	42,622	(199,289)	(156,667)	(169,509)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	10	125,348	312,134	437,482	606,991
Total funds carried forward		167,970	112,845	280,815	437,482

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above.

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**Law Centres Federation
Balance sheet**

As at 31 March 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Fixed Assets	9	<u>1,047</u>	1,047	<u>2,254</u>
				2,254
Current assets				
Debtors	7	144,063		163,970
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>295,756</u>		<u>410,923</u>
Total Current Assets		439,819		574,893
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	<u>(160,051)</u>		<u>(139,665)</u>
Net current assets			<u>279,768</u>	<u>435,228</u>
Net Assets			<u><u>280,815</u></u>	<u><u>437,482</u></u>
Funds				
Restricted funds				
In surplus	10		167,970	125,348
Unrestricted funds:				
General fund	10		112,845	312,134
<i>of which designated</i>			<u>20,593</u>	<u>62,253</u>
Total funds			<u><u>280,815</u></u>	<u><u>437,482</u></u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

For the year ending 31st March 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from Audit under section 477 of the companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

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

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts .

Approved and authorised for distribution by the Executive Committee on 16th October 2023 and signed on its behalf by



Helen Rogers
Chair



Patrick Marples
Treasurer

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Company no. 2433492

Law Centres Federation

Cash Flow Statement

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash used in operating activities	15	(115,336)	(154,362)
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Interest income		169	37
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		-	(767)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		169	(730)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(115,167)	(155,092)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		410,923	566,015
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		295,756	410,923

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash in hand	295,756	410,923
Total cash and cash equivalents	295,756	410,923

Analysis of changes in net debt	1 April 2022	Cash flows	31 March 2023
	£	£	£
Cash	410,923	(115,167)	295,756
Total	410,923	(115,167)	295,756

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1.1) Accounting policies

Basis of Preparation

- a) The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), published on 16 July 2014. The Charitable Company is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102 and therefore the charity also prepared its financial statements in accordance with the 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 (The FRS 102 Charities SORP), the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

- b) Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the statement of financial activities when there is entitlement, it is measurable and receipt is probable. Intangible income is recognised as a gift in kind where the provider of the service has incurred a financial cost and is valued at the value to the charity. Income is deferred when it relates to a specific later period, or there are conditions yet to be fulfilled for entitlement.
- c) Subscription income from Law Centre members is recognised in the year in which it relates.
- d) Gifts in Kind reflect the costs of rooms, catering and staff support from Law Firms and other suppliers to promote seminars, training and advice sessions conducted by Law Centres Federation as well as pro bono legal advice provided to LCF. Gifts in Kind are either valued by the suppliers undertaking the work or, where this is not immediately obtainable, by taking a reasonable estimate of the length of time involved in doing the work multiplied by the Standard London pro-bono rate.
- e) Grants are recognised in full in the statement of financial activities in the year in which they are receivable.
- f) Resources expended are recognised in the period in which they are incurred. Resources expended include irrecoverable VAT.

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Direct service provision	0.92
Cost of generating voluntary income	0.08

Governance costs, which are included within support costs, include the management of the charity's assets, organisational management and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

- g) The costs of generating voluntary income relate to the costs incurred by the charity in raising funds for the charitable work.

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

- h) Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value on a straight line basis over its expected useful life. The useful lives are as follows:

Computer equipment	4 years
Office equipment	4 years

Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. During the period of their depreciation, assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicated their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

- i) Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.
- j) Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity.
- k) Rentals payable under operating leases, where substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership remain with the lessor, are charged to the statement of financial activities in the year in which they fall due.
- l) The charity operates a defined contribution auto-enrolment pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pensions costs represent contributions payable under the scheme for the payment of those contributions calculated at 8% of gross pay (7% employer contribution; 1% employee contribution).

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1.2) Going concern basis

The Executive Committee at each of its meetings throughout 2022-2023 considered its financial position and whether LCN continued to be a going concern. At its meeting on 10th July 2023 it also considered the guidance provided by the Charity Commission in relation to 'going concern'. The EC also considered LCN's ability to sustain and grow its membership and its cash position. The Executive Committee's Finance Sub-Committee monitored risk, LCN's future funding 'pipeline' and the financial position of Law Centres as part of its judgement about 'going concern'. LCN secured 3 new multi-year grants in quarter of 2022-2023 and continues to submit other funding applications. The EC noted that there is sufficient cash for the year ahead. There is concern that LCN's free reserves have dropped below the Charity Commission's recommendation of holding equivalent of 3 months of running costs. The EC are taking the necessary steps to mitigate this risk and aim to rebuild reserves in 2024/25. EC agreed that LCN is a going concern. The charitable company therefore continues to adopt the going concern in preparing its financial statements.

1.3) Accounting estimates and judgements

In the view of the trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements, nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year.

1.4) Staff Policies

The costs of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense.

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the company is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment or to provide termination benefits.

1.5) Financial Instruments

Basic Financial Instruments

The charity only holds basic financial instruments as defined by FRS 102.

a) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash at banks and in hand and short term deposits with a maturity date of three months or less.

b) Debtors and creditors

Debtors and creditors receivable or payable within one year of the reporting date are carried initially at their transaction price and subsequently at the recoverable amount. Debtors and creditors that are receivable or payable in more than one year are carried at their present value of the expected future receipts or payment discounted at a market rate of interest.

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

2a. Donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Subscriptions - Law Centre members	-	89,600	89,600	83,800
Donations	36,226	43,418	79,644	76,047
	36,226	133,018	169,244	159,847

In the preceding year, all income from donations was attributable to unrestricted funds.

2b. Charitable Activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
AB Charitable Trust	-	50,000	50,000	70,000
Allen & Overy Foundation	-	-	-	25,000
Access to Justice	-	10,000	10,000	-
Baring Foundations	184,729	-	184,729	-
Bell Foundation	8,020	-	8,020	6,666
Comic Relief	6,986	-	6,986	62,876
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	78,000	78,000	-
IT - Digital Transformation (TNLCF)	91,250	-	91,250	170,000
IT National Project (TLEF)	85,600	-	85,600	279,401
John Ellerman Foundation	-	49,000	49,000	-
London Legal Support Trust	33,350	-	33,350	-
Money For LC _TLEF	20,000	-	20,000	-
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	-	-	40,000
Philip King Charitable Trust	-	-	-	25,000
Sustainability (TLEF)	16,667	-	16,667	66,666
TLEF	7,500	-	7,500	-
Trust for London Post Brexit	24,500	-	24,500	52,500
Training Fee /Services to LCs	-	39,738	39,738	37,050
Gifts in Kind	4,658	4,812	9,470	-
Annual conference	-	13,876	13,876	8,812
Total	483,260	245,426	728,686	893,971

In the preceding year, £180,863 of total income from charitable activities were related to unrestricted funds and £713,108 attributable to restricted funds.

2c. Other income

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Sundry income	-	14,492	14,492	3,753
Total	-	14,492	14,492	3,753

In the preceding year, £3,753 were attributable to unrestricted income

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

3. Total expenditure

		Raising Funds	Charitable Activities	Support Costs	2023	2022
		£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	5	36,907	368,619	75,964	481,490	512,238
Staff Travel, Training, Recruitment & Meetings		-	10,403	2,742	13,145	11,323
Governance costs	3b	-	11,362	-	11,362	14,987
Premises costs		-	25,967	-	25,967	23,284
Office: Office costs, ICT, Insurance & Comms		-	3,410	5,325	8,735	13,344
Legal and Professional Fees		-	7,833	1,662	9,495	6,780
Services to Law Centres		-	77,776	-	77,776	75,071
Grants & Payments to Law Centres	3a	-	128,482	-	128,482	242,509
Annual Conference & Events		-	23,947	-	23,947	10,802
Subscriptions & Journals		-	10,186	-	10,186	-
Training and Course Costs		-	12,422	-	12,422	9,651
Website / Digital Development		-	24,936	-	24,936	149
Bad debts expense		-	-	-	-	8,700
Project specific cost		-	231,845	-	231,845	298,279
Gifts in Kind		-	9,470	-	9,470	-
Total expenditure		36,907	946,658	85,693	1,069,258	1,227,117
Support Costs		6,569	79,125	(85,693)	-	-
Total expenditure		43,475	1,025,783	-	1,069,258	1,227,117

In the preceding year, £338,667 of expenditure was attributable to unrestricted funds and £888,450 attributable to restricted funds.

3 Total expenditure (comparison 2022)

		Raising Funds	Charitable Activities	Support Costs	2022	2021
		£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs		32,349	434,537	45,352	512,238	485,075
Staff Travel, Training, Recruitment & Meetings		715	3,461	7,147	11,323	7,504
Governance costs	3b	-	14,987	-	14,987	14,084
Premises costs		-	23,284	-	23,284	12,302
Office: Office costs, ICT, Insurance & Comms		-	4,867	8,477	13,344	21,332
Legal and Professional Fees		-	-	6,780	6,780	4,182
Services to Law Centres		-	75,071	-	75,071	80,289
Grants & Payments to Law Centres	3a	-	242,509	-	242,509	454,703
Ministry of Justice Grant & Payments		-	-	-	-	3,000,037
Annual Conference & Events		-	10,802	-	10,802	29,962
Publication design & print		-	-	-	-	8,771
Subscriptions & Journals		-	9,651	-	9,651	3,503
Training and Course Costs		-	149	-	149	3,389
Website / Digital Development		-	8,700	-	8,700	12,057
Bad debts expense (Note 3c)		-	-	-	-	720
Gifts in kind		-	-	-	-	5,062
Other (Travel & Project Specific costs)		-	296,629	1,650	298,279	282,018
Total expenditure		33,064	1,124,647	69,406	1,227,117	4,424,990
Support Costs		4,383	65,023	(69,406)	-	-
Total expenditure		37,447	1,189,670	-	1,227,117	4,424,990

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

3a Analysis of Grant Payments to Law Centres

	2023	2022
	£	£
Baring Foundations	30,482	-
Crisis Hub	-	39,000
Comic Relief - Digital Innovation	-	37,550
Justice Fund - Money for LC	60,000	102,089
LLST	28,000	-
TNLF Covid	-	12,900
TFL - Post Brexit	10,000	20,000
Three Guineas	-	30,970
	<u>128,482</u>	<u>242,509</u>

3b Analysis of governance costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Annual Report	1,815	1,638
Audit fees - prior year (under-accrual)	2,428	-
Audit fees - current year	-	12,957
Independent examiner fees	6,000	-
EC travel (reimbursed)	1,119	58
Governance meetings	-	334
Total governance costs	<u>11,362</u>	<u>14,987</u>

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

4. Net (expenditure) / income for the year

This is stated after charging:	2023	2022
	£	£
Executive Committee's reimbursed expenses	1,119	58
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
▪ Audit	2,428	10,975
▪ Independent Examination	6,000	-
Operating lease rentals:		
▪ property	8,064	7,680

Executive Committee expenses of £1,119 were incurred in 2022 - 2023 (£58 in 2021/22). None of the 16 members (17 members to Dec 2022; 16 members from Dec 22) of the committee serving during 2022-23 were remunerated.

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

5. Staff costs and numbers

	2023	2022
	£	£
Staff costs were as follows:		
Salaries and wages	416,967	439,399
Social security costs	36,248	41,595
Pension contributions	28,275	31,244
	481,490	512,238

5a. Staff costs by activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Raising Funds	36,907	32,349
Charitable Activities	368,619	434,537
Support Cost	75,964	45,352
	481,490	512,238

One employee earned more than £60,000 during the year. Total pension
(In 2021, one employee earned more than £60,000 during the year and
received £4,328 in pension contributions).

5b. Staff numbers by activities

The average monthly number of employees (full-time equivalent) during the year
is as follows:

	Head Count		Full Time Equivalent	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
	No.	No.	No.	No.
Cost of generating income	4	4	0.6	0.6
Support costs	5	5	1.6	1.1
Direct Service provision	13	17	7.0	9
Average Employee Numbers	12	13	9.2	10.5

Staff have been allocated to areas of work where they spend most time.

Key Management Personnel

The Key Management of the Charity is considered to be the Director (FT), Finance Officer (0.5 FTE) (& Trustees). The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £ 97,179 (2022: £93,336), which includes total employer NIC Contributions of £3,359 (net of 5k employment Allowance) and total employer pension contributions of £4,592

Trustees are not remunerated but are reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses incurred through attendance of governance meetings.

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

6. Taxation

All income is charitable and applied for charitable purposes only and thus is exempt from Corporation Tax.

7. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Grants receivable	18,582	100,000
Prepayments	48,492	28,477
Conference fees	8,487	2,500
IT Licensing	-	4,680
Membership & Lexis Nexis	35,092	24,673
Other debtors (Including PII Due from LC)	33,410	3,640
	<u>144,063</u>	<u>163,970</u>

8. Creditors: amounts due within 1 year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	16,691	87,546
Taxation and social security	9,376	1,748
Accruals	30,516	17,687
Pension contributions	3,175	3,175
Deferred Income	70,380	-
Amount held on behalf of Law Centres	27,673	27,673
Other creditors	2,240	1,836
	<u>160,051</u>	<u>139,665</u>

9. Fixed assets

	Computer equipment	Total
	£	£
Cost		
As at 01 April 2022	15,837	15,837
Additions	-	-
As at 31 March 2023	<u>15,837</u>	<u>15,837</u>
Depreciation		
As at 01 April 2022	13,583	13,583
Charge for the year	1,207	1,207
As at 31 March 2023	<u>14,790</u>	<u>14,790</u>
Net book value		
As at 31 March 2022	<u>2,254</u>	<u>2,254</u>
As at 31 March 2023	<u>1,047</u>	<u>1,047</u>

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

10. Movements in funds

	At the				Net	At the
	start of	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfer	Movement	end of
	the year	resources	resources		of Funds	the year
	£	£	£	£		£
Restricted funds:						
AB Charitable Trust (Nth Wales Law Centre)	20,000		20,000	-	(20,000)	-
Baring Foundation	-	184,729	45,576	-	139,153	139,153
Bell Foundation	1,107	8,020	9,127	-	(1,107)	-
Comic Relief	-	6,986	6,986	-	-	-
IT - Digital Transformation (TNLCF)	84,001	91,250	162,334	-	(71,084)	12,917
IT - Digital Upgrade(TLEF)	10,413	85,600	96,013	-	(10,413)	
London Legal Support Team	-	33,350	33,350	-	-	-
Mischon Donation	-	23,973	23,973	-	-	-
Philip King Charitable Trust	8,697	12,253	5,050	-	7,203	15,900
Sustainability (TLEF)	595	16,667	17,262	-	(595)	
TLEF (Money for NWLCSG)	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	-
TLEF (Work force Development)	-	7,500	7,500	-	-	-
Trust for London Post Brexit	535	24,500	25,035	-	(535)	-
Gifts in Kind		4,658	4,658	-	-	-
Total Restricted Funds	125,348	519,486	476,864	-	42,622	167,970
Unrestricted funds **	312,134	393,105	592,394	-	(199,289)	112,845
<i>**Includes Gifts in Kind income of £4,812</i>						
Total Funds	437,482	912,591	1,069,258	-	(156,667)	280,815
General fund ***						
General Funds	249,880	309,347	466,976	-	(199,289)	92,250
of which designated 10a	62,253	34,757	76,417	-	(41,661)	20,593
Restricted Funds	125,348	519,486	476,864		42,622	167,970
Total funds	437,482	912,591	1,069,258	-	(156,667)	280,815

*** Resources include Bank Interest

10a Designated Unrestricted Funds

The 2022/2023 incoming designated funds were donations raised through the Big Give and from other donors which were passed on to Law Centres during the year. Funds were again raised through the Big Give and other donors during 2022/2023 of which £20,593 remain for the coming year.

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

10d Comparative information: Movements in funds for year ended 31 March 2022

		At the start of the year £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:						
Development and support of Law Centres						
AB Charitable Trust (LCN)		1,396	-	1,396	-	-
AB Charitable Trust (Nth Wales Law Centre)		-	20,000	-	-	20,000
Bell Foundation		3,317	6,666	8,876	-	1,107
Comic Relief		-	62,877	62,877	-	-
Covid Support (TNLCF)	10b	99,757	-	84,757	(15,000)	-
Covid Support (TLEF)	10b	3,359	-	3,359	-	-
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation		29,739	-	29,739	-	-
IT - Digital Transformation (TNLCF)		62,697	169,999	148,695	-	84,001
IT - Digital Upgrade(TLEF)	-	-	279,400	268,987	-	10,413
Philip King Charitable Trust		-	25,000	16,303	-	8,697
CRISIS / Public Law Project	10c	9,000	30,000	54,000	15,000	-
Legal Support and Social Care (TLEF)		5,100	-	5,100	-	-
Sustainability (TLEF)		46,519	66,666	112,591	-	594
Three Guineas Trust		31,516	-	31,516	-	-
Trust for London Developing New Models		1,858	-	1,858	-	-
Trust for London Post Brexit		6,432	52,500	58,396	-	536
Total Restricted Funds		300,690	713,108	888,450	-	125,348
Unrestricted funds		306,301	344,500	338,667	-	312,134
		606,991	1,057,608	1,227,117	-	437,482
General fund ***						
General Funds		161,301	269,807	181,227	-	249,881
of which designated 10a		145,000	74,693	157,440	-	62,253
Restricted funds		300,690	713,108	888,450		125,348
Total funds		606,991	1,057,608	1,227,117	-	437,482

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

10. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

AB Charitable Trust: 5 year Core fund grant to LCN to increase capacity and extend the impact of LCN's work based on recommendations from the Strategic Review of LCN conducted in 2018.

Baring Foundation: to undertake in-depth work with three Law Centres (Suffolk, Vauxhall (Liverpool) and Derbyshire) to develop and scale hub activities in their locales to achieve longer-term social change for their communities and beyond.

Bell Foundation: Project lead by Harrow Law Centre to support victims of Crime, particularly those who speak languages other than English. LCN's role is to extend the learning from Harrow's project to other Law Centres with view to establish model in other parts of the UK.

Comic Relief: A collaborative project, which co-designed the 'front-end' of LCN's Enquiry Desk, working closely with GMLC, their partners and people affected by homelessness and housing insecurity, to better manage enquiries, ensuring distributed teams can keep track of an individual's enquiry across different channels and get people the assistance they need more quickly.

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation: New 2 years funding for core costs to maintain capacity and delivery on LCN's policy objectives.

John Ellerman Foundation: A new 3 years core fund granted to support LCN focus on further developing its strategy and theory of change, and to make community engagement more central to our work.

Legal Education Foundation: National IT infrastructure project that will upgrade Law Centres ICT, titled Law Centres 2020 Digital Vision. The project is being implemented over 5 phases and will upgrade computers, migrate all software and data to cloud-based services. In 2022, Phase 4 of the project was completed.

Legal Education Foundation: Sustainability - 3 year grant awarded to LCN to assist it to implement recommendations made following its strategic review aimed at helping LCN become more sustainable. 2022 was the final year of the grant.

Legal Education Foundation: Workforce Development - 1 year grant to scope a scheme to assist Law Centres outside London recruit and retain staff.

Paul Hamlyn Foundation: A five year core grant provided to work on influencing government departments and other public bodies on the future of a fair and effective justice system, particularly in response to the impact of changes arising from the Covid pandemic.

London Leagal Support Trust - Cost of Living Project: Funds grant to support London Law Centres work to increase advice capacity to help people affected by the rising cost of living; improve community outreach; increase provision of specialist legal advice in the boroughs of Brent and Haringey.

Philip King Charitable Trust: This grant was provided to support the development of the Ride for Justice fundraising event aimed at securing donations for Law Centres.

CRISIS / Public Law Project - In partnership with CRISIS, an exploratory project to test the provision of legal assistance, particularly in areas of welfare rights and immigration, to better address situation of people facing homelessness. 3 Law Centres were partners in this project. LCN also focused on learning about the impact of Covid on the legal needs of people who were homeless and particularly without access to digital assistance. This project has been completed.

The National Lottery Community Fund: Realising Law Centres 2020 Digital Vision - grant awarded to LCN to work together with Law Centres to explore and implement digital technology to assist them to achieve their mission. This grant will end in 2023.

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Trust for London: Post Brexit - analyse data collected over 5 years of LCN work with EU nationals and produce report and other learning from this to shape legal assistance for vulnerable EU nationals living in the UK. Grant includes funds to work with 2 partner Law Centres.

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

11. Net Assets by Fund

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	1,047	-	1,047
Net current assets	111,798	167,970	279,768
	<u>112,845</u>	<u>167,970</u>	<u>280,815</u>

11a. Net Assets by Fund (2022 Comparison)

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2022 Total
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	2254	-	2254
Net current assets	309,880	125,348	435,228
	<u>312,134</u>	<u>125,348</u>	<u>437,482</u>

12. Operating lease commitments

The charity had annual commitments at the year end under operating leases expiring as follows:

	Property 2023	2022
	£	£
Within 1 year	9,486	9,486
	<u>9,486</u>	<u>9,486</u>

13. Related party transactions

Some members of LCN's board of trustees work in community Law Centres that receive funds from LCN. When funding decisions are taken in respect of these community Law Centres, the relevant representative is excluded from the discussions taking place.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Camden Law Centre (Sean Canning)	10,500	-
Derbyshire Law Centre (Sharon Chandlers)	9,834	18,000
South West london Law Centre (Patrick Maples)	15,000	12,527

14. Reconciliation of net income/expenditure to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net expenditure as per the statement of financial activities	(156,667)	(169,509)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	1,207	1,207
Investment income	(169)	(37)
Decrease in debtors	18,997	445
Decrease in creditors	<u>21,297</u>	<u>13,278</u>
Net cash used in operating activities	<u>(115,336)</u>	<u>(154,616)</u>

Law Centres Federation

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

15. COMPARATIVE INFORMATION: Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account) for year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Income and Endowments				
Donations	2a	-	159,847	159,847
Charitable activities	2b	713,108	180,863	893,971
Investments		-	37	37
Other	2c	-	3,753	3,753
Total		713,108	344,500	1,057,608
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		-	33,064	33,064
Charitable activities	3	888,450	305,603	1,194,053
Total		888,450	338,667	1,227,117
Net (expenditure) / Income		(175,342)	5,833	(169,509)
Net movement in funds		(175,342)	5,833	(169,509)
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	10	300,690	306,301	606,991
Total funds carried forward		125,348	312,134	437,482

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above.