



The change we've made

Support Through Court's Annual Report 2023-24

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Company number: 04360133
Charity number: 1090781

Introduction from Caroline Artis, Chair of the Board of trustees

Looking back at another busy year for Support Through Court, it's so important to reflect on how we're doing. Despite challenges for many charities with inflation rises and the cost-of-living crisis, I have been delighted to see how many litigants in person (LiPs) we've helped, and to hear and read the stories from volunteers and clients alike. It continues to be a privilege to be Chair of this incredible charity and to be able to be involved with this crucial work. I'm now well into my second year as Chair and I'm even more inspired and impressed by what I have heard and seen, only a fraction of which ends up in a report like this one. My hope is that you, too, enjoy taking the time to read the stories shared in this report.

I want to thank the charity's staff and volunteers for their commitment to our work. We are hugely grateful for our partners and this coming year we look forward to collaborating more closely with others to achieve our mutual aims. It's amazing to see our services grow and adapt as we work in partnership with universities; these services have gone from strength to strength this year and we're delighted to have launched Support Through Court Online, a service which enhances our remote support to clients across England and Wales. Of course, all of this wouldn't be possible without our supporters. A big 'thank you' to them for giving their time, energy and money to enable people to access justice throughout England and Wales.

We are grateful for the funding and partnerships that have enabled us to do what we do and for what it will enable us to do in the coming year. Fiscal responsibility remains at the top of the agenda in Board meetings as the cost-of-living crisis continues and the need for our services grows. The Executive team and Board are committed to maintaining financial stability, with an increased focus on ensuring funding is used as effectively as possible in the months ahead. Meanwhile, we hope that we will continue to see the fruit of working alongside others, as we are able to support more LiPs both practically and emotionally through our collaborative efforts. We are so grateful to be able to achieve more by joining forces with our partners and supporters, long may it continue.

Caroline Artis, Chair of the Board of trustees
May 2024

No one should face court alone

Every year, thousands of people in the UK face court alone. Often through no choice of their own, they must represent themselves at a moment that could have life-changing outcomes such as loss of access to children or homelessness. They may find themselves up against a party with legal representation. They are instantly at a disadvantage, often scared, confused, and overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenges they are up against. In a legal system that was not designed with laypeople in mind, amid rigid, complicated procedures and complex terminology, they are surrounded by legal professionals who have years of training and experience in the law. Clients' anxiety about the frightening potential outcomes is compounded by this bewildering and intimidating environment. This can prove to be too much for people alone in court, leaving them desperate for somewhere to turn.

We provide a safe space, with volunteers who listen to each client's individual story. We help people to get their thoughts in order, problem solve and decide next steps, source relevant and reliable legal information, explain complex procedures, complete court forms and clearly present statements. Our practical and emotional support alleviates clients' concerns about the complicated legal system. Our partnerships with legal clinics and third sector organisations enable us to source complimentary specialist support for clients, such as domestic abuse or homelessness charities, and legal support if it's available.

Our close work with HMCTS (His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service) and the judiciary also enables us to provide a more holistic support system for LiPs, who are often overwhelmed and up against short deadlines.

Everyone has a right to access justice. No one should have to face court alone.

Review of the year

This year, we've been delighted to see the partnerships with universities we launched in the previous financial year grow and flourish. By working with Birmingham City University, Cardiff University, Leeds Beckett University, Liverpool John Moores, Manchester Metropolitan University, Nottingham Trent University, and University of Sheffield we have been able to support many more people facing court alone, whilst providing students with opportunities to volunteer and gain first-hand experience of providing support to people going through court without a lawyer as LiPs. Whilst this work has meant a shift away from our court-based services, with some services moving to university premises, this move has enabled us to work more flexibly and creatively, ultimately enabling us to deliver high quality, person-centred support. Thanks to this innovative work, we were shortlisted for and highly commended at the 2023 Charity Awards.

We were delighted to launch our National Online service in 2023. Like our National Helpline, Support Through Court Online supports anyone in England and Wales who is unable to access one of our local services. Clients can book appointments to receive support via phone or video, or receive help by email. This service, which was set up in partnership with Nottingham Trent University less than a year ago, has so far held 705 support sessions.

Even in the face of funding changes, we've seen the need for our support grow. We provided 51,178 support sessions last year, with 19,048 of these being through our National Helpline which enables us to reach people, irrespective of where they live in England or Wales. This service means that people do not need to live near a local office to benefit from our volunteers' support.

The fundraising team have been working on creating an estimate of the total gift in kind value across our court and university spaces. Not including the valuable time commitment of our 600+ volunteers, this work aims to demonstrate the value of gifted space across each service. Totalling £718,611, this figure is hugely impactful in illustrating the significance of these contributions.

We really value this amazing contribution, and we continue to support the amazing work our volunteers do. We've spent time investing in our staff and volunteers, developing policies and practices, e.g. improving the way we train new staff and ensuring that we have rigorous safeguarding policies in place.

Client feedback

'You were not judgemental, you listened to me and there was never any doubt that you would help' - Client, National Helpline

'As a single parent on benefits with a disabled son, I felt supported. Things are really tough. I'm terrified of my ex-husband, but I was reassured and we are speaking again.' Client, London

'The advice I received and answers provided to my questions were invaluable and left me feeling far more reassured and prepared with regards to my impending court hearing.' Client, Chelmsford

The volunteer helped me to have more confidence

Yes: 95%

No: 5%

Total relevant responses: 883

The volunteer helped me better understand the procedures

Yes: 95%

No: 5%

Total relevant responses: 929

The volunteer helped me be better prepared?

Yes: 95%

No: 5%

Total relevant responses: 907

Who we've helped

The people we support often face complex and challenging personal circumstances. Our clients face the prospect of going through court without anyone to help them. But with our help and guidance, they are given an opportunity to represent themselves to the best of their abilities and have the best chance of accessing justice.

This year, 24% of our clients who completed our diversity monitoring form told us English was their second language, 37% were not in employment, and 34% reported serious health problems, with 38% describing themselves as BAME.

Types of case we've supported litigants through

We most often support people with money claims, housing, employment cases, child arrangements, divorce and non-molestation cases.

Case background	Percent of support sessions involving:
Civil	52%
Family	49%

Helping people to access justice

Total number of support sessions provided

Year	Number of contacts
2020/21	28,154
2021/22	49,346
2022/23	57,383
2023/24	51,178

These numbers are based on information gathered after each client session. The figure for 2021/22 has been adjusted based on calendar appointments and email logs.

Client stories

Client stories as told by volunteers. Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Sameer's story

Sameer and his ex-wife had an agreement about their daughter's care. He was able to see his daughter every other weekend and facetime her weekly on a predetermined date.

One day, out of the blue, his daughter messaged to say she did not want to see him anymore, despite being perfectly happy and comfortable during her previous visits. He was concerned as she had recently started staying at her mother's new partner's house and he expressed safeguarding concerns about her general hygiene. His ex also moved his daughter's school without informing him, which caused a lot of distress and anxiety.

We listened to Sameer as he shared his anxiety and frustration of the previous weeks, and ultimate sadness for not being able to see his daughter. He had already spent £10,000 in legal fees and was no longer in the position to engage any further legal support. We signposted him to appropriate advice agencies and helped him to piece together all the information. We set out a plan for his next steps and directed him to the correct forms to start the process.

Sameer was happy to have his voice heard and felt confident that he finally had options to get his daughter back.

Molly's story

Molly recently left her partner, who had been abusing her. Molly had shared a business with her ex-partner, so leaving him meant losing both her home and her income. After she'd left, her ex decided to take her to court about the living arrangements of the pet they owned together. She felt this was his last-ditch attempt to keep control over her and it made her extremely anxious and stressed.

When Molly first came to us, she was extremely emotional and intimidated by the court process ahead of her. We listened to Molly's story and acknowledged that she had been through a lot. This gave Molly a space to cry and unload her anxieties at a time when she felt increasingly alone.

We took Molly through the free help that was on offer for survivors of domestic abuse and empowered her to contact these services. We also explained that she could write to the courts to let them know about her PTSD and any other circumstances that would make the hearing even more stressful. This also included advising them of her experience with domestic violence and giving her the option not to see her ex if the hearing was in court.

We also reassured Molly that she could have a volunteer attend the trial with her, so she didn't have to digest all the information by herself. After the session, we sent through an email with suggested next steps, so she had a record of what to do which she mentioned was extremely helpful for her.

Molly was visibly relieved to have someone there to listen to her story. She felt calmer knowing that she had options and places to turn to and, crucially, didn't have to go through the whole process alone.

Henry's story

Eleanor, a social worker, called our National Helpline on behalf of Henry. Eleanor described Henry as extremely vulnerable, suffering from mental health conditions and a learning disability. He was facing a Section 21 Eviction Notice and needed some help and information on the next steps, such as whether he was completing the correct court forms. Although this was a short interaction, Eleanor expressed how helpful the information and signposting provided by one of our volunteers was. Eleanor explained that this was an incredibly vulnerable client facing a very tough situation and she showed her gratitude for the help and support we were able to give at a difficult time.

Our five-year strategy: what we've achieved

We're three years into our five-year strategy: here's how we're doing so far.

Objectives 2021-2026	What we've achieved so far
We will double the number of client contacts from 80,000 in 2019/20 to 160,000 in 2025/26.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We supported clients in person, email, by video call or spoke with them over the phone 51,178 times during the last financial year. We've grown volunteer numbers from 500 to 600 and will continue to recruit in the coming year to replace those leaving. Face-to-face volunteers now work in pairs to better support clients and each other. Given an uncertain external climate, and following a trustee-led strategic review, it has been agreed we will focus on building stability and resilience in the charity rather than increasing client numbers at this time.
We will extend the geographic coverage of our service to provide a service to people using the civil and family courts throughout England and Wales.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We had 19,048 contacts through our National Helpline in the last year. We opened Support Through Court Online, our new remote service, in partnership with Nottingham Trent University. We have reached more courts that were previously unaware of our services e.g. Norwich and Hull.
We will offer a range of ways to access our support through a multi-channel service, offering clients choice and tailoring our support to our clients' needs as far as we are able.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are grateful to our volunteers for their dedication and support in enabling us to now offer client appointments by phone, in person, by email, and by video call. We continue to work with We Are Digital to support people in completing online legal processes. Our National Helpline continues to go from strength to strength: calls to the Helpline this year represented 37% of all support sessions and over 2000 more calls than we received last year. Our Online Service enables video call and email support nationally. Offering remote hearing support from local offices.
We will grow our income to achieve long term sustainability of our financial resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our income this year sits at £1,357,861. We are delighted to have 67 Guardians in our network and 59 companies who have joined our community of Guardians championing the work we do. We restructured the fundraising team to focus on partnership working.
We will make more efficient use of our resources including volunteers, providing value for money,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have continued to recruit and train new student volunteers to increase our capacity.

resulting in efficiency savings and enabling investment in service improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteers are properly equipped and supported in ensuring safeguarding for clients. • We have invested in our staff with training such as time management, resilience, and train the trainer as well as all staff development day meetings twice a year. • We have increased our staff resources to help boost our provision with secondments, pro bono consultants and interns from partner universities. A six-month secondment from the civil service enabled us to migrate our volunteer records onto our CRM database. • We have effectively used the phone system 3CX to support volunteers and enable volunteers to support in different areas.
We will use our knowledge of the court system and the issues faced by LiPs to seek improvements for LiPs navigating the court system, offering a better opportunity to access justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've continued to build relationships with HMCTS and court staff in courts around our main service sites. • We had funding from the National Lottery Cost of Living Fund to create training on 'Breathing Space' for our volunteers. This training will enable us to better support and inform clients on the new debt respite scheme. • We were asked to support with Pathfinder Project in Birmingham and Cardiff which aims to reform child arrangement cases by reducing its adversarial nature and prioritising the voice of the children. • We were asked to support on a DAPO (Domestic Abuse Protection Order) pilot in Manchester and via our Online Service. We are working with the courts to ensure people experiencing abuse get the support they need.

Looking ahead

This year we are focusing on building our internal resilience and optimising the funds we have to help the most clients in a sustainable way. We will close our part-time volunteer led London Satellite services at the start of the financial year to focus our resources on delivering services at our staff led face-to-face services at the Royal Courts of Justice and Central Family Court. Clients who are unable to reach those will be encouraged to contact our remote services for support.

We are looking to continually develop our services for the benefit of our clients. Many have been affected by the increased cost-of-living and, thanks to a National Lottery Community Fund grant, we have strengthened our service provision in this area at our service in the Royal Courts of Justice. In addition, we developed a new project to create a step change in the housing and debt support we can give vulnerable court users going forward. Our volunteers will be able to make referrals to external organisations where appropriate and we look forward to collaborating with others, providing more in-depth and holistic support for our clients. We have also received funding from the National Lottery Community Fund in Wales to enable our Cardiff face-to-face service to deliver services in Welsh.

In our Nottingham office, we have joined HMCTS in piloting their Special Measures Court project to ensure that vulnerable clients and survivors of abuse are supported to have special measures at their court hearings. This is a part of our long-term plans to ensure the charity is trauma informed to provide the right support to those who need it. We have recruited new volunteers to be present in the court once a week to help facilitate the smooth running of hearings where the parties have requested special measures. We will be assisting by doing things like: collecting clients from separate entrances and helping clients move around the building safely, providing emotional support before the hearing starts, and making sure that their special measure requests are implemented, such as the use of screens.

In the coming year we will look to strengthen and grow our funding partnerships, whilst developing our Guardians Network. We will also build service partnerships, continuing to work closely with HMCTS. We will contribute to the HMCTS Engagement Groups and other legal support forums, representing our clients' voices and our staff and volunteer insight.

As well as focussing on how we can partner with others and strengthen our external work, we are looking at how we can make internal improvements. We plan to review our monitoring and evaluation, ensuring we are capturing how we work and needs of our clients, which will help us develop our services and understand the impact we're having.

Thank you for empowering people facing court

We're enormously grateful to all our funders: individuals across the country, law firms, chambers, universities, trusts and foundations, as well as our Guardians, Champions, and the Business and Family Ambassadors Boards. Thank you for empowering people going through court and enabling them to access justice.

Support Through Court aims to maintain our quality service whilst helping even more people going through court without representation, for many years to come. We can only do this by working in partnership with others. The committed support of universities and HMCTS allows us to keep our costs low. We're extremely grateful to them for accommodation and utilities. This ongoing generosity will allow us to carry on providing our core service from bases in court buildings.

We value our partnerships with others involved in the justice system: court staff all over the country who so generously devote time and energy to enabling our service to flourish; and the judiciary, who consistently support our work, in particular our Liaison Judge, Lady Justice Asplin, and our Liaison Judges across England and Wales.

You're changing lives

To all those who have so generously donated to us: thank you. You're making a world of difference to people going through court without representation.

Corporate supporters	Individuals	Universities
1 Crown Office Row	Ali Malek KC	Birmingham City University
1 Hare Court	Andrew Hochhauser KC	Bloomsbury Institute London
11KBW	Angela Camber	Cardiff University
12 King's Bench Walk	Audley Sheppard KC	City University, London

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1GC	Caroline Artis	Leeds Beckett University
1KBW	Cecily Crampin	Liverpool John Moores University
2 Bedford Row	Colin Liebenrood	Manchester Metropolitan University
29 Bedford Row	Damien Byrne Hill	Nottingham Trent University
3 Verulam Buildings	David Lewis KC	St Mary's University, Twickenham
30 Park Place	Duncan Matthews KC	University of Essex
36 Family	Eleanor Brass	University of Sheffield
3C Foundation	Elisabeth Long	
4PB	Emily Wood KC	Trusts
5 Stone Buildings	Graham Huntley	Adint Charitable Trust
5RB	Guy Beringer	Alchemy Foundation
7 Bedford Row	Guy Fetherstonhaugh KC	Alfred Haines Charitable Trust
9 St Johns Street Chambers	Helen Lawrence	Amelia Chadwick Trust
AFP Bloom	Henrietta Hill KC	Anthony and Elizabeth Mellows Charitable Settlement
Ampla Finance	Henry King KC	Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation
Anthony Gold	James Goss	Big Lottery Cost of Living Fund
Atkin Chambers	James Kessler	Bower Trust
Bar Standards Board	James Howells KC	Charles S French Charitable Trust
Blackstone Chambers	Javan Herberg KC	Charlotte Bonham-Carter Charitable Trust
Brown Rudnick	Jean Edwards	City of London Solicitors' Company
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner	Jenny and Stephen Kingsley	CPF Trust
Burges Salmon	Joanne Wicks KC	Edward and Dorothy Cadbury Trust
Cilex	John Gould	Essex Community Foundation
Clifford Chance	Lady Justice Andrews	Freshgate Trust Foundation
Cloud Gateway	Lady Justice Asplin	Garden Court Chambers
CMS	Lady Chief Justice Carr	Gerald Palmer Eling Trust Company
Cooley	Lady Diana Copisarow OBE	Gowling WILG (UK) Charitable Trust
Debevoise & Plimpton	Lord Justice David Richards	Grimmit Trust
Deka Chambers	Lord Justice Nugee	James Neill Trust Fund
Devereux Chambers	Lord Justice Stuart-Smith	Jessie Spencer Trust
Doyle Clayton	Lord Justice Warby	Jomati Foundation
etiCloud LTD.	Lord (David) Wolfson KC	Lady Hind
Eversheds Sutherland	Lord Pannick KC	Loppylugs & Barbara Morrison Foundation
Falcon Chambers	Lord Sales	M T and S D Burton Charitable Settlement
Farrer	Marcus Haywood	Matrix Chambers
Forsters	Martin Lewis CBE	Michael Marsh Charitable Trust
Fountain Court Chambers	Matthew Lavy KC	Mulberry Trust

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Fourteen	Michael Todd KC	Persula Foundation
Freemans	Michael Zuckerman	Pilkington Charities Fund
Harcourt	Mr Justice Constable	Schroder Charity Trust
Henry Dannell	Mr Justice Holgate	Stevenson Family's CT
Herbert Smith Freehills	Mr Justice Murray	The Aylesford Family Charitable Trust
Hunters	Mr Justice Zacaroli	The Drapers' Company
Irwin Mitchell	Mrs Justice McGowan	The G D Herbert Charitable Trust
Keating	Murray Rosen	The Hemby Trust
Landmark Chambers	Nigel Tozzi KC	The J G Graves Charitable Trust
Laura Devine Immigration	Niranjan Venkatesan	The Jones 1986 CT
Lewis Silkin	Patrick H. Corr	The Lord Austin Trust
Littleton Chambers	Peter Crisp	The Pat Newman Memorial Trust
Mills & Reeve	Philip Waller CBE	The Souter Charitable Trust
Monckton Chambers	Pieter Knook and Anne Wolff	The Worshipful Company of Arbitrators
Old Square Chambers	Professor Sara Chandler KC	Thomas Farr Charity
Our Family Wizard	Richard Liddell KC	Thomas Sivewright Catto Charitable Settlement
Payne Hicks Beach	Richard Lissack KC	Three Oaks Trust
QEB	Robin Abraham	Zochonis
Radiant Law	Sean Wilken KC	
Rhea Family Finance	Simon Davis	
Ropewalk Chambers	Sir Christopher Floyd PC	
Sedgwick	Sir David Wootton	
Selborne Chambers	Sir Julian Flaux	
Sentry Funding	Sir Rupert Jackson	
Serjeants' Inn	Sir Vivian Ramsey	
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett	Stephanie Barwise KC	
South Square	The Rt. Hon. Lord Carnwath of Notting Hill	
Stephenson Harwood	Thomas Seager Berry	
Weil Gotshal & Manges	Tina Kyriakides KC	
White & Case	Tom Smith KC	
	William Norris	

Help us transform more lives

Could you help us reach more people facing court alone by volunteering, fundraising or partnering with us visit: www.supportthroughcourt.org or email us: fundraising@supportthroughcourt.org

Please consider making a donation so that we can secure our financial future and continue to be there for those alone in court: www.supportthroughcourt.org/donate

Let's help more people to effectively represent themselves and access justice. Thank you.

Where to find us

[All our locations can be found on our website.](#)

Who we are

Trustees

The trustees, who are also directors of Support Through Court for the purposes of company law, are:

Alexander Hulbert
Anthony Fincham
Benjamin Moore, until 30 June 2024
Caroline Artis, Chair
David Wilkin, Vice Chair
Judith Helen Lawrence, from 4 December 2023
Kay-Dene Petgrave
Robert Pitt
Samantha Gargaro
Stephen Adler
Timothy Nash
Zubair Chaudhry, Treasurer

Founder

The late Diana Copisarow OBE

Patrons

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Burnett of Maldon
The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Butler-Sloss, GBE PC
The Rt. Hon. Lord Dyson, PC
The Rt. Hon. Sir Terence Etherton
The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Hale of Richmond, DBE PC FBA
Martin Lewis, CBE
The Rt. Hon. The Lord Neuberger, PC GBS HonFRS
The Rt. Hon. The Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers, KG PC
The Rt. Hon. The Lord Reed of Allermuir, PC FRSE
The Rt. Hon. The Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, Kt PC
The Rt. Hon. The Lord Woolf, CH PC FBA FMedSci

Liaison Judge

The Rt. Hon. Dame Sarah Asplin

Chief Executive: Emma Taylor

Company Secretary: Ingela Ekstrom

Registered Address: C/O Sayer Vincent LLP, 110 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0TG

Principal Office: Support Through Court, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL

Bankers: CAF Bank Ltd, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

Auditor: Sayer Vincent LLP, Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor, 110 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0TG

Objects and activities

The charity's objects are:

- (a) to pursue charitable purposes by the provision of personal support and assistance, without regard to race, gender, sexuality, age or disability, for (i) those suffering or likely to suffer emotional or psychological stress or otherwise in need of such support or assistance by reason of their involvement with actual or anticipated legal proceedings at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London or elsewhere in the United Kingdom, and (ii) their spouses, partners, families and friends supporting them in relation to such legal proceedings; and
- (b) to further all and any purposes which are charitable according to English law.

The trustees have fully complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties.

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set. The charity's Covid-19 activities come under its existing objects and aims.

Financial review

Our income this year sits at £1,357,861. We've received income from the following sources:

Source of funding 2023/24	£	%
Friends and individuals	296,718	21.9
University partnerships	291,192	21.4
Corporate	251,015	18.5
Government	249,976	18.4
Trusts	210,904	15.5
Community	30,946	2.3
Investments	23,337	1.7
Earned income	3,773	0.3
Total	1,357,861	100.0

We received 16% of our income from the Ministry of Justice, via the Access to Justice Foundation through Improving Outcomes Through Legal Support (IOTLS) fund to deliver our services to LiPs in the courts.

Our total expenditure sits at £1,471,500. We restructured our fundraising team to focus on areas that would generate income for our services while cutting costs. We invested in our first gala event which generated £45,000 profit. We have invested in our systems; we are now able to record and access volunteer information more easily. The organisation has maintained strong control of expenditure as well, ending the year with an underspend of £150,963 against the set budget. The charity holds its reserves in cash, utilising interest-bearing bank accounts.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

As part of the charity's risk management process, the trustees acknowledge their responsibility for the charity's system of internal control and reviewing its effectiveness. It is also recognised by the trustees that such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve the charity's objectives and can only provide reasonable, not absolute, reassurance against material misstatement or loss.

Support Through Court utilises a comprehensive risk register which is updated on a quarterly basis and reviewed by the trustees. The Board pays particular attention to those risks with critical and high-risk scoring (based on impact and probability) and whether there have been any changes in the score since the previous review. The Board also questions and analyses the existing controls and planned actions.

Safeguarding and data protection incidents are reported on to the trustees as standing agenda items during the Audit and Risk Committee meetings. Two Trustee Safeguarding Champions were appointed during the year and attended trustee safeguarding training sessions.

The key risks identified for the past year, and the actions taken to mitigate them, were:

Risk	Mitigating actions
Significant reduction or loss of income; delays in funding decisions and inability to replace funding for strategic objectives in the short term.	The charity's reserves policy is set out in full below. The principal purpose of this policy is to maintain service provision as well as resolving short-term, in-year, cash flow issues that might arise. The trustees believe that the reviewed target of four and a half months reserves provides enough time to consider options and take action to maintain a viable service in line with a changing funding environment. Income and risk are assessed monthly. Fundraising pipelines and plans are in place to establish new funding streams and targets and progress are reviewed by the Fundraising Committee quarterly.
Front line wellbeing and safeguarding	Safeguarding is an ongoing risk for the charity and we are continuing to monitor our responses to clients' needs. We have a new safeguarding team and policy which will be renewed annually. Two Trustee Safeguarding Champions were appointed in the year. Student volunteers work in pairs to support clients and each other. Last year staff were offered flexible working opportunities and a wellbeing day, as well as training on resilience, time management and a presentation from LawCare who provide support for staff and volunteers.
System security and permissions compromised (virus, hackers, cyberattack) Data compromised.	All main systems are cloud based and delivered by providers with appropriate accreditations and cyber security. Permission and set up/deletion of cloud accounts is restricted to nominated authorised staff only. Homeworking data protection and acceptable use policies are in place. This coming year our website will be updated, and we are reviewing our processes to improve how we work.

Reserves policy

The trustees consider it appropriate for Support Through Court to hold a general reserve, primarily to maintain its service if funding is disrupted through the ebb and flow in fundraising streams.

Our reserve is available to support in-year short-term cash flow issues arising from intermittent income receipts. Taking this into account, the trustees have agreed to target an unrestricted reserve equating to four and a half months of the charity's expected running costs for the following financial year. The trustees understand that the level of reserves will fluctuate as strategic aims are met and have agreed that the general unrestricted reserve should not fall below two and a half months of the charity's expected running costs for the following financial year. The trustees have put trigger points in place to ensure that there is enough time to consider and take the best course of action to allow the charity to maintain a level of service commensurate with any change in its funding environment.

The charity's reserves and cash flow are reviewed by the Treasurer, CFO and CEO (under the scrutiny of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee) quarterly. A contingency plan is in place to deal with delays in funding and in-year cash flow issues. This plan comes into effect at the point the level of unrestricted reserves based on months of the following years expenditure fall below 3 months. Trigger points alert the trustees to any deteriorating reserves position. The charity's running costs for the year to 31 March 2025

are expected to be £1,477,073 (2023: £1,471,500). The restricted reserve at 31 March 2024 was £nil (2023: £nil), while the unrestricted reserve was £439,955 (2023 £553,594) which equates to 3.6 months of 2024-25 total running costs (2023: 4.5).

Going concern

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

The ability of the charity to continue in its current shape is dependent on its ability to secure funding. We successfully applied for the Improving Outcomes Through Legal Support grant offered by the Access to Justice Foundation which has provided some certainty for the period ending 31 March 2025. The grant represents 21% of the total income budget for 2024/25.

This brings a degree of financial certainty, and we are confident that the charity remains a going concern. Nonetheless, we have plans in place to deal with any significant losses and to mitigate against this key risk, the charity has been taking several steps, including fundraising to increase its non-government income, optimising the use of the funds it has and targeting a level of reserves that the Board believes provides the charity with a suitable breathing period.

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

Investment policy

The trustees have the power to invest monies not immediately required. Given the level of reserves, whose primary use is to ensure that a continuous service can be maintained, and intending to expand the reach of the service, the trustees have, for the time being, decided to keep any monies not immediately required, in interest-bearing accounts with CAF Bank Ltd and CAF Charity Deposit Platform. These accounts are kept under review by the Treasurer, CFO and CEO (under the scrutiny of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee) regarding levels of interest provided by these and alternative accounts. Changes to location of investments can be made in-year by the Treasurer, CFO and CEO, having sought the agreement of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee.

Governing document

The organisation is a Charitable Company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 24 January 2002 and registered as a charity on 26 February 2002.

The Company was established under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note seven to the accounts.

Trustee appointment and induction

The term of office of a trustee is three years from date of appointment. Trustees retiring at the end of the first term of office of three years may be reappointed for a further term of office of three years, save that, should either the Chair or Vice-Chair so recommend a trustee, having served two consecutive terms of three years may be reappointed by resolution for a final term of three years, subject to such resolution being passed by 75% of the other trustees. The selection of trustees is made based on vacancies arising, sympathy with the objects of the charity and the additional skills and experience that potential new trustees can offer that complement those of continuing trustees. A Nominations Committee is in place to improve trustee recruitment practice and support equality and diversity within the trustee group. One of the trustees in office is currently a service volunteer within the charity and two are former volunteers.

Under the Articles of Association, trustees are appointed by a majority vote of the members (who are all the current trustees) by ordinary resolution. Each new trustee is interviewed by at least two members of the Nominations Committee (serving trustees) before being recommended for appointment. Following appointment to the Board, each receives all relevant Charity Commission guidance, as well as the most recently published annual report, the Board's terms of reference and other management information necessary to exercise fully their governance role. At the time of joining, Board sub-committee trustees receive relevant sub-committee terms of reference. The Executive team arranges induction visits to the offices of the charity for new trustees and briefs them about the operation of the charity.

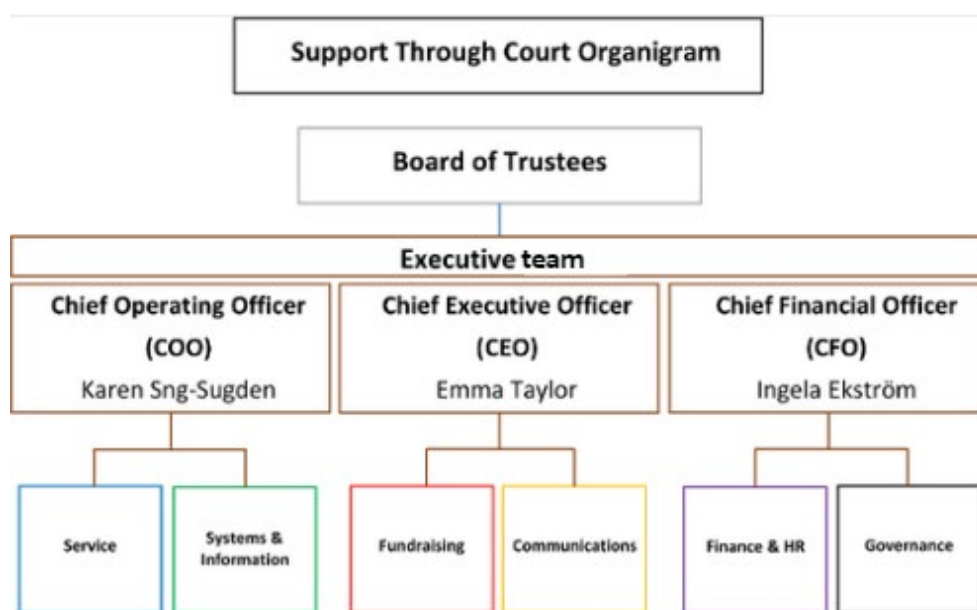
Since 2020/21 the Nominations Committee have achieved their aim of producing a more diverse Board addressing factors including age, gender, and ethnicity.

Organisational structure

The charity was established to enable volunteers to provide services to clients. Volunteers are involved as far as is reasonably practical in the daily operations of our service.

As a charity that complies with the charity code of governance, the trustees are responsible for the governance of the charity and for setting its strategic direction, meeting as a Board four times a year as a minimum. The Executive team is responsible for the overall management of the charity and reports to the trustees formally as a Board, and more informally as circumstance demands.

A trustee chairs the Fundraising Committee of the Board, which comprises three trustees, the CEO, and the CFO. A trustee chairs the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee of the Board, which comprises three trustees, the Treasurer, Chair, and Executive team, and scrutinises financial matters, principally regarding risk, control, and policy. The approval and setting of strategic plans and associated budgets are reserved to the full Board.



Volunteers engaged in the provision of the charity's services are supported by paid staff. Each service has a dedicated Service Manager and some have an additional Volunteer Support Coordinator. Where a service is a "satellite" service, a lead volunteer coordinates the service and support is provided by a Service Manager at another service. This year, our satellite services were located in Barnet Civil and Family Courts Centre, Southend County and Family Court, Wandsworth County Court, and West London Family Court.

Volunteers are encouraged to share their views with their Service Manager. Volunteers are also encouraged to form impact groups to provide feedback and are formally invited throughout the year to feedback via an annual survey and national meeting with senior charity staff to review plans and share good practice. The charity regularly reviews all governance arrangements.

Related parties and relationships with other organisations

Support Through Court has ongoing relationships across England and Wales with universities and their law clinics, HMCTS, the judiciary and other agencies, (Citizens Advice, housing, debt advice) offering cross referral and support for LiPs.

Fundraising statement

Support Through Court's fundraising is done by an in-house team of staff who comply with the code of fundraising practice laid out by the fundraising regulator. No street fundraising or telephone fundraising took place. One third-party fundraiser continued to consult on our Gala event and one to fill an employment gap when a Fundraiser Manager role was unable to be filled for several months. Both fundraisers follow the Fundraising Regulators Code of Practice and their progress was monitored with regular catch-ups. No fundraising complaints were received last year. The charity has a privacy policy and complies with data protection law and has a Donor Policy. Fundraisers do not put undue pressure on individuals (vulnerable or otherwise), are clear in communications about who they are, and are open and honest about the service provided and fundraising activities.

Compliance with statutory requirements

Reference and administrative information set out on pages 11-13 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. This trustees' Annual Report includes a directors' report as required by company law.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

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

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charitable Company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the Charitable Company for that period. In preparing 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 and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate 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 audit information of which the Charitable Company's auditor is unaware
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor 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.

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 on 31 March 2024 was 12. The trustees are members of the charity, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP was appointed as the charitable company's auditor during the year and has expressed its willingness to continue in that capacity.

The trustees' Annual Report was approved by the trustees on 15 July 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Caroline Artis
Support Through Court Chair

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Support Through Court (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' Annual Report, including the strategic report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material

Independent auditor's report
To the members of
Support Through Court

misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' Annual Report including the strategic report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

Independent auditor's report
To the members of
Support Through Court

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

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

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

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgments made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

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

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

Independent auditor's report
To the members of
Support Through Court

Use of our report

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

Jonathan Orchard (Senior statutory auditor)

Date: 11 September 2024

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

Where to find Support Through Court volunteers

If you're facing court alone, get in touch by calling our National Helpline, or via a local service.

Support Through Court National Helpline 03000 810 006

A list of our face-to-face services and opening hours can be found on our website: [Our locations](#)

Support Through Court. Registered charity No. 1090781
A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no. 04360133
Registered Office: C/O Sayer Vincent LLP, 110 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0TG
Principal Office: Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London, WC2A 2LL
Tel: 0300 400 0142 E-mail: enquires@supportthroughcourt.org www.supportthroughcourt.org

Support Through Court

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

For the year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
	Note						
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	732,628	97,852	830,480	564,130	79,630	643,760
Charitable activities	3						
Local services		-	426,678	426,678	-	469,628	469,628
National helpline		-	-	-	-	12,135	12,135
Support Through Court Online		-	-	-	-	-	-
Legal Support For Litigants in Person		-	-	-	-	70,197	70,197
Other trading activities	4	77,366	-	77,366	11,248	-	11,248
Investments		23,337	-	23,337	11,215	-	11,215
Total income		833,331	524,530	1,357,861	586,593	631,590	1,218,183
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5b	585,042	897	585,939	526,623	2,205	528,828
Charitable activities							
Local services	5b	233,528	513,633	747,161	262,318	547,053	809,371
National helpline		70,876	-	70,876	67,009	12,135	79,144
Support Through Court Online		57,524	10,000	67,524	17,866	-	17,866
Legal Support For Litigants in Person		-	-	-	-	70,197	70,197
Total expenditure		946,970	524,530	1,471,500	873,816	631,590	1,505,406
Net movement in funds		(113,639)	-	(113,639)	(287,223)	-	(287,223)
Net movement in funds		(113,639)	-	(113,639)	(287,223)	-	(287,223)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		553,594	-	553,594	840,817	-	840,817
Total funds carried forward		439,955	-	439,955	553,594	-	553,594

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15a to the financial statements.

Support Through Court

Balance sheet

Company no. 04360133

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets			-		-
			-		-
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	25,641		18,633	
Short term deposits		363,956		295,530	
Cash at bank and in hand		357,313		511,999	
		<u>746,910</u>		<u>826,162</u>	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(306,955)		(272,568)	
		<u></u>		<u></u>	
Net current assets			439,955		553,594
Total net assets			439,955		553,594
			<u></u>		<u></u>
The funds of the charity:	15a				
Restricted income funds			-		-
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		-		-	
General funds		439,955		553,594	
		<u></u>		<u></u>	
General unrestricted funds			439,955		553,594
Total charity funds			439,955		553,594
			<u></u>		<u></u>

Approved by the trustees on 15 July 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Caroline Artis
Chair

Support Through Court

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net (expenditure) / income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(113,639)	(287,223)
Depreciation charges	-	-
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	(23,337)	(11,215)
(Profit)/loss on the disposal of fixed assets	-	-
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(7,008)	10,382
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	34,387	197,248
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	(109,597)	(90,808)

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash provided by operating activities	(109,597)	(90,808)
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Interest received	23,337	11,215
Net cash provided by investing activities	23,337	11,215
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	(86,260)	(79,593)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	807,529	887,122
Change in cash and cash equivalents due to exchange rate movements	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	721,269	807,529

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 1 April 2023 £	Cash flows £	Other changes £	At 31 March 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	807,529	(86,260)	-	721,269
Total cash and cash equivalents	807,529	(86,260)	-	721,269

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Support Through Court is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom.

The registered office address is c/o Sayer Vincent LLP, 110 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0TG

The principal office address is Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL.

b) Basis of preparation

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

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

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

c) Public benefit entity

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

d) Going concern

Despite the uncertainties in the funding environment noted above, the trustees are confident that there are viable plans in place to ensure that STC remains a going concern for the period of 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements.

The ability of the charity to continue in its current shape is dependent on its ability to secure funding. Following the decision of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to change the funding regime under which the charity has been funded over the past 11 years, we have been moved to a new MoJ department. The extension of the Help Accessing Legal Support grant and the new Improving Outcomes Through Legal Support through the Access to Justice Foundation, represented 18% of income in 2023/24. The final grant of the Improving Outcomes Through Legal Support has provided some certainty for the period ending 31 March 2025. The grant represents and 20% of total income for 2024/25.

This brings a degree of financial certainty, and we are confident that the charity remains a going concern. Nonetheless, we have plans in place to deal with any significant losses in other income streams and to mitigate against this key risk, the charity has been taking several steps, including investing in fundraising to increase its non-government income and targeting a level of reserves that the board believes provides the charity with a suitable breathing period.

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

e) Income

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

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

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

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

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time and free office space and utilities provided by the courts are not recognised so refer to the Trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

g) Interest receivable

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

h) Fund accounting

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

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

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

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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

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

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

j) Allocation of support costs

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 are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff head count attributable to each activity.

<input type="checkbox"/> Local services	51%
<input type="checkbox"/> National Helpline	5%
<input type="checkbox"/> Support Through Court Online	5%
<input type="checkbox"/> Raising Funds	40%

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

k) Operating leases

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

l) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Computer equipment	3 years
---	---------

m) Debtors

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

n) Cash at bank and in hand

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

o) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

p) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

q) Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable under the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year to which they relate.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Gifts	447,450	87,852	535,302	387,581	78,415	465,996
Gifts from legacies	-	10,000	10,000	-	-	-
Grants	285,178	-	285,178	176,549	-	176,549
Donated services	-	-	-	-	1,215	1,215
	732,628	97,852	830,480	564,130	79,630	643,760

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Grants	-	176,702	176,702	-	124,691	124,691
Grants from the Ministry of Justice						-
Litigants in Person Support Strategy	-	-	-	-	282,070	282,070
Legal Support For Litigants in Person	-	-	-	-	70,197	70,197
Help Accessing Legal Support	-	37,500	37,500	-	75,000	75,000
Improving Outcomes Through Legal		212,476	212,476	-	-	-
Total income from charitable activities	-	426,678	426,678	-	551,958	551,958

4 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Fundraising Events	77,366	-	77,366	11,248	-	11,248
	77,366	-	77,366	11,248	-	11,248

Support Through Court

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

5a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities								
	Raising funds £	Local services £	National Helpline £	Support Through Court Online	Legal Support For Litigants in Person £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Salary costs (Note 7)	332,713	443,736	43,178	39,786	-	15,004	402,139	1,276,556	1,357,507
Other staff costs	913	7,809	396	476	-	-	945	10,539	19,082
Legal and professional	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,259	6,259	6,008
Recruitment costs	-	597	-	18	-	-	386	1,001	3,283
Fundraising costs	69,567	-	-	-	-	-	-	69,567	14,831
Marketing costs	350	-	-	-	-	-	-	350	4,898
IT costs	192	26,858	4,491	4,354	-	-	39,854	75,749	60,023
Volunteer costs	-	12,643	-	-	-	-	-	12,643	12,555
Office costs	23	1,849	37	112	-	-	3,222	5,243	14,370
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	320	2,473	2,793	2,805
Audit Fees	-	-	-	-	-	10,500	-	10,500	9,840
Trustee expenses	-	-	-	-	-	300	-	300	204
	403,758	493,492	48,102	44,746	-	26,124	455,278	1,471,500	1,505,406
Support costs	171,731	240,607	21,468	21,472	-	-	(455,278)	-	
Governance costs	10,450	13,062	1,306	1,306	-	(26,124)	-	-	
Total expenditure 2024	585,939	747,161	70,876	67,524	-	-	-	1,471,500	

Support Through Court

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

5b Analysis of expenditure (previous year)

	Charitable activities							
	Raising funds £	Local services £	National Helpline £	Support Through Court Online	Legal Support For Litigants in Person £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2023 Total £
Salary costs (Note 7)	368,045	541,076	52,192	9,677	60,463	14,541	311,513	1,357,507
Other staff costs	1,287	6,935	259	3	5,744	-	4,854	19,082
Legal and professional	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,008	6,008
Recruitment costs	-	746	-	624	-	-	1,913	3,283
Fundraising costs	12,899	1,873	59	-	-	-	-	14,831
Marketing costs	439	540	44	-	-	-	3,875	4,898
IT costs	-	16,190	4,412	2,626	2,200	-	34,595	60,023
Volunteer costs	-	11,441	114	-	1,000	-	-	12,555
Office costs	48	6,950	197	-	790	-	6,385	14,370
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	296	2,509	2,805
Audit Fees	-	-	-	-	-	9,840	-	9,840
Trustee expenses	-	-	-	-	-	204	-	204
	382,718	585,751	57,277	12,930	70,197	24,881	371,652	1,505,406
Support costs	136,942	209,589	20,495	4,626	-	-	(371,652)	-
Governance costs	9,168	14,031	1,372	310	-	(24,881)	-	-
Total expenditure 2023	528,828	809,371	79,144	17,866	70,197	-	-	1,505,406

6 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging / (crediting):

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation	-	-
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	8,750	8,200

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

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	1,076,404	1,136,302
Redundancy and termination costs	-	13,059
Social security costs	106,985	116,169
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	93,167	91,977
	1,276,556	1,357,507

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

	2024 No.	2023 No.
£60,000 - £69,999	-	1
£70,000 - £79,999	3	1

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £278,543 (2023: £293,626).

The charity Trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No charity Trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel, subsistence and training costs totalling £300 (2023: £204) incurred by 2 (2023: 2) members relating to training for the two Trustee Safeguarding Champions.

8 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 34 (2023: 35).

The average number of employees (head count based on equivalent number of full-time staff) during the year was 30.8 (2023: 32.6).

9 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2024.

Aggregate donations from related parties were £68,911 (2023: £34,807).

10 Taxation

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

Support Through Court

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

11 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Other debtors	12,471	11,784
Accrued income	13,170	6,849
	25,641	18,633

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	34,393	9,847
Taxation and social security	25,164	29,754
Accruals	10,500	9,840
Deferred income (note 13)	236,898	221,557
	306,955	270,998

13 Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	221,557	14,500
Amount released to income in the year	(219,757)	(4,500)
Amount deferred in the year	235,098	211,557
	236,898	221,557

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Current assets	535,353	-	211,557	746,910
Current liabilities	(95,398)	-	(211,557)	(306,955)
Net assets at 31 March 2024	439,955	-	-	439,955

14b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Current assets	824,592	-	-	824,592
Current liabilities	(270,998)	-	-	(270,998)
Net assets at 31 March 2023	553,594	-	-	553,594

Support Through Court

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Support Through Court Online		10,000	(10,000)		-
Local services					
Birmingham	-	48,722	(48,722)	-	-
Caerdydd/ Cardiff	-	60,552	(60,552)	-	-
Chelmsford/ Southend	-	68,946	(68,946)	-	-
Leeds	-	38,881	(38,881)	-	-
Liverpool	-	38,438	(38,438)	-	-
London Services:					
Barnet Civil and Family Courts		993	(993)	-	-
Central Family Court	-	75,191	(75,191)	-	-
Royal Courts of Justice	-	81,683	(81,683)	-	-
West London Family Court	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Manchester	-	43,350	(43,350)	-	-
Nottingham	-	10,860	(10,860)	-	-
Sheffield	-	7,000	(7,000)	-	-
Other service funds	-	11,593	(11,593)	-	-
Other funds	-	26,821	(26,821)	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	524,530	(524,530)	-	-
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	553,594	833,331	(946,970)	-	439,955
Total unrestricted funds	553,594	833,331	(946,970)	-	439,955
Total funds	553,594	1,357,861	(1,471,500)	-	439,955

Support Through Court

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds:					
Local services					
Birmingham	-	13,705	(13,705)	-	-
Bristol	-	8,300	(8,300)	-	-
Caerdydd/ Cardiff	-	39,500	(39,500)	-	-
Chelmsford	-	9,670	(9,670)	-	-
Exeter	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	-
Leeds	-	1,116	(1,116)	-	-
Liverpool	-	22,184	(22,184)	-	-
London Services:					
Central Family Court	-	57,268	(57,268)	-	-
Royal Courts of Justice	-	12,010	(12,010)	-	-
West London Family Court	-	1,615	(1,615)	-	-
Manchester	-	9,970	(9,970)	-	-
Newcastle	-	11,515	(11,515)	-	-
Nottingham	-	10,518	(10,518)	-	-
Other service funds	-	81,030	(81,030)	-	-
National Helpline	-	12,135	(12,135)	-	-
Legal Support For Litigants in Person	-	70,197	(70,197)	-	-
Other funds	-	268,857	(268,857)	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	631,590	(631,590)	-	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Support Through Court Online	17,866	-	(17,866)	-	-
Developing technology and systems	40,926	-	(12,926)	(28,000)	-
Investing in our team	92,673	-	(92,673)	-	-
Total designated funds	151,465	-	(123,465)	(28,000)	-
General funds	689,352	586,593	(750,351)	28,000	553,594
Total unrestricted funds	840,817	586,593	(873,816)	-	553,594
Total funds	840,817	1,218,183	(1,505,406)	-	553,594

Support Through Court

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Restricted funds have been restricted for use in specific geographical service locations, as shown above.

The National Helpline provides support to people calling in to our service through a central phone number.

Support Through Court Online, is an extension of our current service supporting people alone in the courts. People that currently do not live near one of our existing court-based or university-based services will be able to meet with a volunteer remotely and get practical and emotional support by email and videocall.

The Legal Support for Litigants in Person project (LSLIP3) is designed to achieve joint working in a way that has not previously been addressed by the LIPs Support Strategy; piloting safe spaces; providing direct access to legal advice from our partner in this project, RCJ Advice, who have a dedicated LSLIP3 lawyer on hand for life of the project together with remote legal assistance which will improve the pathway to the vital range of support needed by LIPS including virtual/remote contact and access to digital packages. The project is further supported the LIPSS partnership and the wider LSLIP projects under streams 1 & 2

Other service and other funds cover expenditure of the Help Accessing Legal Support grants on salaries for service and support staff as well as funds restricted to specific items, such as IT equipment and budget relieving gifts in kind.

Investment pot for development: Over the next five years we're looking to make significant changes in the way that we work, so that we can double the number of clients we're working alongside. An investment pot will enable this development. The investment we're making will help us to improve our systems and tech, launch a new remote service that allows us to reach clients anywhere across England and Wales, and grow as a team so we have the capacity to meet this need.

Support Through Court Online: Our investment in new technology and a Support Through Court Online Service Manager will enable us to reach more people.

Developing technology and systems: We will use technology to connect with more people, in more places, more cost effectively. The investment in new technologies and telephony systems will support our National Helpline and Support Through Court Online, our new remote service. The Trustees agreed to transfer £28,000 of these funds into general reserves as we are now looking to obtain funding for the client data base and volunteer rota externally.

Investing in our team: We will invest in recruiting and training staff and volunteers; this pot will enable the training required for volunteers as we launch a new remote service.

16 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.