

CITIZENS ADVICE STROUD & COTSWOLD DISTRICTS LTD

England & Wales · Charity number 1096398

Details

Other names	STROUD & DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU LIMITED, STROUD & DISTRICT CAB
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	04389411
Registered	2003-03-06
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Brunel Mall London Road Stroud Gloucestershire GL5 2BP
Phone	08088000510
Email	elizabeth.hall@ca-scd.org.uk
Website	www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE CHARITY'S OBJECTS ARE TO PROMOTE ANY CHARITABLE PURPOSE FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT BY THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION, THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF HEALTH AND THE RELIEF OF POVERTY, SICKNESS AND DISTRESS IN PARTICULAR, BUT WITHOUT LIMITATION, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE DISTRICT OF STROUD, COTSWOLD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND SURROUNDING AREAS.

Activities: To promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health, and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in the Districts of Stroud, Cotswold, Gloucestershire and surrounding areas.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** DISTRICT OF STROUD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE
- Gloucestershire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£724,835	£711,750	£719,329	20
2024-03-31	£754,783	£735,158	£707,909	20
2023-03-31	£693,976	£554,237	£687,177	16
2022-03-31	£730,808	£591,780	£576,653	19
2021-03-31	£614,044	£502,859	£424,071	15

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Christopher William Youard Underhill	Chair	2023-10-17
Barry O'Driscoll		2021-10-06
Dr Martin Cook		2021-10-06
Dr Pilar Sepulveda		2026-01-27
Ian Michael George Buswell		2024-07-25
Jane Elizabeth Whaley		2021-10-06
John Hammond		2019-06-05
Mark Hamilton		2026-01-27
Paul Blacker		2024-07-25
Philip Bedos		2025-01-28

CITIZENS ADVICE STROUD & COTSWOLD DISTRICTS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1096398

Accounts

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 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 (effective from January 2019).

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The organisation is a registered charity. It became incorporated on 7 March 2002 as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The name of the organisation was changed, on 13th September 2016, to Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited and the Articles of Association were amended accordingly. The Articles of Association were further amended on 21 December 2020, to permit and regulate remote meetings, and on 17 October 2023, to change the limit on the term of office of chair, vice-chair and treasurer to nine consecutive years. This change provided greater flexibility in managing succession of those key roles.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees and organisation of the Board

Trustees are primarily recruited from the community served by the charity, with particular individuals and groups targeted depending on the skills or knowledge gaps identified. Interested individuals are required to submit a statement of their experience and qualifications and go through a selection process and are then formally elected by the charity's membership at the annual general meeting. Additional trustees may be co-opted by the Board of trustees during the year.

At the Annual General Meeting in November 2024, Paul Blacker and Ian Buswell were elected as trustees (having previously been co-opted) and Martin Cook, Barry O'Driscoll and Jane Whaley were re-elected as trustees.

Philip Bedos was co-opted as a trustee in January 2025.

Trustee induction and training

There are induction procedures for new trustees to make them aware of their role and training is offered throughout their term of office.

Trustees must undertake mandatory training on data protection (UK GDPR) and the Senior Managers and Certification Regime (SMCR) which is required to meet Financial Conduct Authority Rules. In addition, the CA-SCD Board have agreed to undertake all the Citizens Advice online training courses recommended by national Citizens Advice. This includes training on safeguarding; health and safety; cyber security; equity, diversity and inclusion and financial governance. Compliance with mandatory and recommended training is monitored by the Chief Executive Officer and reported to the HR Sub Group.

Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the understanding of their role.

Organisational Structure

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited is an independent member of Citizens Advice, the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management as well as monitoring progress against these standards. Citizens Advice appoints a representative who is invited to attend the Board as a non-voting member.

The charity is governed through a Trustee Board, all of whom are unpaid. Trustees who have held office during the year are listed on page 1. The Articles of Association provide for a minimum of three and a maximum of twenty-one trustees.

The Board of Trustees governs the charity and defines overall policy and future strategy. It also monitors performance, risk and the quality of service. The Board is ultimately responsible for the financial control of the organisation and for financial reporting to its members and others.

All trustees have a responsibility to safeguard the resources of the organisation, and to use them in an economical and effective way furthering the work of the charity. The Trustee Board meets four times a year, in addition to holding its Annual General Meeting.

The Board has four sub-committees, the Finance and Risk sub-committee, the Human Resources sub-committee, the Operational Performance sub-committee and the Fundraising committee, which meet regularly throughout the year. These sub-committees discuss and work on issues in more detail and make recommendations to the Board. In general decisions are taken by the full Board but the Board may from time to time delegate authority to a sub-committee to take a decision on a specific issue. In addition, from time to time the Board may establish ad hoc sub-committees to consider specific issues.

The Trustee Board discusses the finances regularly. Financial Reports are circulated in advance of Board meetings and are scrutinised in detail by the Finance and Risk sub-committee.

Day to day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Senior Leadership Team meet to review progress against targets and the Charity's financial position and to discuss issues referred to them by the Trustee Board. Reports and recommendations are then taken to the full Board for approval, and their implementation is organised by the Chief Executive Officer and the staff team. There are regular staff, volunteer and Senior Leadership Team meetings which ensure that progress is being made against targets. There is an Annual General Meeting, which involves the staff team, Trustee Board, members, and other stakeholders.

The day-to-day service is delivered by a team of 53 volunteers assisted by a small team of paid staff. In addition, the service is supported by a number of volunteer fundraisers and research and campaign group members. In the Cotswold District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Cotswold District from its main office in Cirencester and from two outreach outlets in Tetbury and Moreton-in-Marsh. The Cirencester and North Cotswold Foodbank advisers also operate from Foodbank outlets in the district. In the Stroud District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Stroud District from its main office in Stroud and outreach outlets at: Dursley; Stonehouse All Pulling Together; Stonehouse Town Council and Wotton-under-Edge (at the Keepers Community Hub). The Stroud Foodbank adviser operates from Foodbank outlets in the Stroud district.

Key risks and Uncertainties

The charity actively monitors its risk profile by way of a risk register, which identifies the principal

risks, the likelihood of their occurrence and their potential impact on the work of the charity. The register, together with the wider risk landscape and environment is regularly considered by the Finance and Risk sub-committee, which meets at least quarterly, and thereafter by the Board.

Key risks and issues currently being actively managed are:

- The recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers.
- The financial landscape and need to secure funding for the service in the longer term, especially for our core service.
- Managing the ongoing high demand for our service.

Objectives and Activities

Objects

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in the Districts of Stroud, Cotswold, Gloucestershire and surrounding areas.

In furtherance of these objectives, the charity provides advice and information via a variety of communication channels. Our aims are:

- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face, and
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives

Our service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

We have developed our own vision statement to reflect our ambition to become the leading advice service across Stroud and Cotswold Districts:

*A caring, dynamic and skilful organisation reaching out to every corner of the community to supply quality advice and support.... **The advice service of choice!***

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

The business plan for 2025-28 seeks to tailor the four strategic themes of the National Citizens Advice Living Strategy, namely advice, advocacy, inclusive access and organisational health to fit with the needs of the two districts we serve.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and who we try to help are described below. All our charitable activities focus on providing the advice people need for the problems they face and by doing this we provide public benefit. The Board of Trustees has had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and has complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

Achievements and Performance

Advice and Information Services

Our main areas of charitable activity are:

- the provision of general advice and information services
- the provision of specialist advice and casework services in the debt and welfare benefits categories of social welfare law

During 2024-25, we offered advice and information in the following ways:

- Telephone – we continued to offer our freephone telephone helplines. The lines were covered on a rota basis between the hours of 10am and 4pm on Mondays and Tuesdays and from 10am to 12.30pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Our call handlers assess the situation and take the appropriate action – this may be a booked telephone ring back, a face to face appointment or signposting to a national Citizens advice helpline or another organisation.

- At our first contact with clients, a full exploration of their situation is undertaken. Where possible we aim to resolve their issues at this first contact. If this is not possible, clients are contacted again or given an appointment, as appropriate.
- Clients who needed debt or benefit casework services have been dealt with via telephone and email advice as well as face to face in our main offices and outreach venues.
- Email advice – clients could ask for email advice via our website.
- Face to face – we have prioritised face to face appointments for clients who cannot access telephone or email advice due to one or more of the following:
 - A lack of telephone or email access including mobile phone reception and capability issues.
 - A vulnerability that made remote advice difficult.
 - The client's case was so complex that telephone advice would lead to a slower resolution of the case or a potential negative impact on the outcome for client.
 - The client needed to be seen face to face for an adviser to assess capability or give full advice.
- Clients who drop into an office or outreach are triaged and the appropriate way forward ascertained and arranged.

In addition to general advice, the following specialist services were provided in 2024-25:

- Specialist debt advice funded by St James's Place.
- Homelessness prevention money advice for Stroud residents funded by Stroud District Council;
- Specialist welfare benefits advice was funded through a Thriving Communities Grant from the County Council, funding from St James's Place, a generous donation from an anonymous donor and a Health and Wellbeing Grant from NHS Gloucestershire ICB;
- Energy advice (we had two specialist energy advisers during this year);
- During the year we had 4 dedicated foodbank advisers who gave generalist advice to clients referred by the Stroud, North Cotswold and Cirencester Foodbanks. We also had a dedicated Foodbank specialist debt caseworker taking referrals from the foodbank advisers for clients who need specialist debt advice. These advisers were funded by the Foodbanks;
- We also started a countywide Advice First Aid pilot project with North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice, funded by Gloucestershire County Council, Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council and Feeding Britain.

Whilst we endeavour to resolve a client's issue or issues (many clients come to us with more than one problem) as quickly as possible, we do not limit clients to a set number of appointments or to a limited timescale for their access our help. Some clients will need appointments over several weeks or months with multiple specialists within the organisation. For example, a client with debt issues may need not only debt advice, but specialist benefits advice and support to maximise their income and ensure that their income will be sufficient to avoid further debt issues in the future, and specialist energy advice to help them reduce their living costs.

Whilst we aim to empower clients to resolve their problems using the advice we give, many of our clients need additional support in order to achieve a solution. This may be due to the vulnerability of the client, the complexity of the problems or a combination of the two.

Individual clients often need us to advocate for them – for example by contacting third parties by telephone and in writing to resolve debt problems; by drafting submissions for benefits appeals and speaking to the councils and DWP about benefit claims; by contacting organisations to make formal complaints; contacting energy suppliers to resolve problems etc.

In addition to advocating for individual clients we also seek to influence wider issues through our local and national research and campaigns work We use the information that we gather from working with our clients in our research and campaigns work – both locally and by feeding into

the national Citizens Advice data. This information is then used to raise awareness and campaign on local and national issues – for example, our joint work on housing in Gloucestershire with North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and the monthly cost of living data insights briefing delivered by national Citizens Advice. During 2024-25 our Research and Campaigns Team started work on a project researching child poverty in both our districts.

Contribution of Volunteers and Paid Staff

Our success could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of volunteers and staff. The Trustee Board and senior leadership team recognise the tremendous contribution made by our volunteers in advising the public and administering the service. Without this amazing effort, given freely for no financial reward, the service could not operate. Throughout 2024/25 the service employed 20 paid workers and 53 volunteers together delivering projects in addition to the core service.

Advice Session Supervisors are essential to advice delivery ensuring the smooth running of the service, supporting client facing staff in the delivery of advice to clients. The supervisor is responsible for maintaining and improving advice quality standards and ensuring adherence to process and therefore compliance with regulatory requirements. We currently have six supervisors covering core and specialist services.

The supervisor recruited under a new trainee programme completed their training and started on the supervision rota. The Board agreed during 2025 to use reserves to fund a further trainee adviser/supervisor role. This post has been recruited for, with commencement of the adviser training to start in October 2025.

The Helpline is open 17 hours pw to receive incoming calls from clients and third parties. The four call handlers schedule telephone or in-person adviser meetings and signpost to recognised agencies or sources of information. Clients in an emergency situation are referred to the supervisor. Reserves were allocated to fund a paid call handler for twelve months to increase capacity on the helplines and this role has continued in 2025-26.

We were fortunate to recruit an experienced supervisor in November 2024. This supervisor also had experience of training volunteer advisers. We are grateful to her for training a new cohort of volunteer advisers from March 2025. We are still committed to the recruitment and training of volunteer advisers in order to meet the continuing high demand for our services.

We are very grateful to everyone for their commitment to our clients and the running of our service.

Who used and benefited from our services?

During the reporting year (2023-24 figures in brackets) the Citizens Advice network as a whole advised 4,310 (4,084) clients from the Stroud and Cotswold Districts across 23,815 (23,666) issues. This includes clients helped through National Citizens Advice helplines such as the Help to Claim (Universal Credit) helpline, the Help through Hardship helpline (which distributes Trussell Trust food bank vouchers and information) and the Consumer helpline.

During 2024-25 (2023-24 figures in brackets) Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts:

- Advised 3,547 (3,368) clients with 16,334 (16,330) issues.
- Over the last few years, the numbers of issues have been rising, which may indicate that clients are presenting with more complex problems. The number of issues stabilised last

year. Our advisers continue to experience clients presenting with multiple issues and complex cases;

- Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts generated a total of £1,860,876 (£1,399,238) in additional income for clients, primarily through tax credits, benefits or salaries. Welfare benefits and tax credits made up a total of 35% (33%) of the issues we have supported on;
- Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts helped 755 (662) households with debt advice making people's lives more sustainable;
- £654,723 (£461,203) of debt was written off by Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts negotiating with creditors, obtaining Debt Relief Orders and giving advice on budgeting and £23,863 (£3,004) worth of repayments were rescheduled;
- We delivered the Household Support Fund for both Cotswold District Council and Stroud District Council – distributing financial support with energy, wider essentials and supermarket vouchers for support with the cost of food;
- Advised 553 (515) clients on housing issues, including problems with disrepair;
- Helped 406 (404) families with relationship issues including divorce, separation and contact with children;
- Assisted 340 (361) households with utilities and communications issues, including energy issues;
- Advised 208 (232) clients on employment issues, including issues relating to disputes, redundancy and dismissal;

Our staff and volunteers assisted a wide range of clients:

- 63% of clients reported that they were disabled or had a long-term health condition. (61% in 2023-24)
- We helped clients across a wide age range – with clients in all age categories from 15-19 to 95-99.

Factors Affecting the Achievement of Objectives

The year ending 31 March 2025 was another challenging year for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold District as the cost of living crisis continued. Despite the considerable efforts of our staff and volunteers, our resources were not sufficient to meet the increased demand for our services which resulted from the crisis.

We are seeing more and more clients with very complex issues and/or a much higher number of problems at first presentation, which take longer to resolve.

Financial review

The trustees have continued to focus on delivering a cost-effective service that meets the needs of our clients. The reserves of the charity have grown in recent years with additional funding and unexpected salary savings due to vacant posts. The trustees have reviewed our reserves policy and aim to only hold reserves sufficient to cover expected funding shortfalls for the next three years.

Over the last three years, the Board has used reserves to approve a funding programme to replace outdated IT infrastructure, increase support for volunteers and improve services to our clients.

Income for the year was £724,835. We spent £711,750 giving a surplus of £13,805 This includes the Household Support Fund which we have administered for Cotswold District Council and Stroud District Council.

The charity has total reserves of £719,329– please see the breakdown on page 28 for further details. This includes £56,353 from the Household Support Fund which will be paid to clients to assist with energy and wider essentials.

We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed to the organisation, be that from donations, legacies, grants and voluntary effort. During the year we received funding from Citizens Advice, Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, , the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust, St James's Place, the Kinsella Foundation, , North Cotswolds Foodbank, Cirencester Foodbank, Stroud District Foodbank, NHS Gloucestershire ICB, Stroud Town Council, Cirencester Town Council, Stonehouse Town Council, and other Town and Parish Councils.

In addition, we are grateful to the local businesses who have supported our work, whether indirectly through the provision of reduced-rate services or premises, or through donations.

In April 2025, the Trustee Board approved the funding and expenditure budgets for 2025-26.

Friends of Cotswold Citizens Advice

During the year, the Friends continued to promote and support Cotswold Citizens Advice.

With a view to promoting the service in the north of the District, a street collection was held in Moreton-in-Marsh during a market day in May 2024. Unfortunately it proved disappointing, with even the market traders commenting that it was a very quiet day. Members of the Friends provided front of house assistance to Cirencester Choral Society at their concerts on two occasions, in return for which the Society made a donation to Citizens Advice. They again set up and ran the Citizens Advice pitch at the Phoenix Festival, and raised funds from donations for books and the ever-popular "Climb the Wall" game.

Apart from money raised directly for Cotswold Citizens Advice, The Friends funded a teardrop banner that can be used at outdoor events which has proved invaluable and were able to make a donation towards the cost of boiler repairs in the Cirencester premises.

Reserves Policy

The reserves policy for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts is reviewed annually by the Board. We maintain free reserves at such a level as: (i) to provide adequate working capital in the event of potential changes of funding from major funders, (ii) to meet staff redundancy costs

and premises costs should the organisation have to severely reduce in size, (iii) to provide for settlement of The Pension Trust Employer Debt, in the event that the organisation is forced to close and has no active employees in The Pension Trust, (iv) to mitigate some key risks facing the charity. In particular, the target level for free reserves aims to give a reasonable chance of survival should one of these risks occur: it is recognised that it is not possible, nor it is intended, to protect against every risk. In addition, the Board aims to hold reserves at least equal to future projected funding shortfalls for three years. The Board assesses the Charity's target and actual reserves annually. When the level of reserves is materially different from the target level, the Board will determine what action should be taken.

Our reserves target is £161,906. We measure free reserves as total assets less endowments, restricted funds, designated reserves, undepreciated fixed assets and any approved budget deficits. Our free reserves at 31 March 2025 were £324,712.

The Board acknowledges that the level of reserves is more than our short term target but, given that most of our funding is not committed for more than a year, having additional reserves allows us to plan the service in the longer term. The Board keeps the level of reserves under review.

FUTURE PLANS

The Trustees agreed a continuation of the priorities in the Business Plan for 2024-27 for this year with a review later in the year. The Business plan for 2024-27 was based on the Citizens Advice Living Strategy and their Business Plan for 2024-27.

The plan is based on the four key strategic priorities: Advice, Advocacy, Inclusive Access and Organisational Health and our strategic aims for the next 12 months are below.

Over the next 12 months we will:

Advice

We will improve the client offer and experience by:

- Undertaking a comprehensive service delivery model review.
- Increasing the number of clients we inform, advise and advocate for.
- Removing blocks in the client journey to achieve quicker resolution of problems.
- Maintaining our focus on providing good quality advice and information.

Advocacy

We will be a stronger voice for our clients by:

- Increasing our campaigning using the research undertaken and data provided by our Research and Campaigns group and national Citizens Advice.
- Working with other individuals and organisations to achieve a greater impact for our clients.
- Resourcing Research and Campaigns effectively.

Inclusive Access

We will improve the service accessibility for marginalised clients by:

- Identifying barriers to advice in our districts and working hard to remove those barriers.
- Working with clients and partner agencies to tackle any barriers identified.

Organisational health

We will improve the experience of staff and volunteers by:

- Ensuring that our organisation is a great place to work and volunteer.

We will increase our financial resilience by:

- Reducing our reliance on local authority funding and securing new funding to increase our longer-term sustainability.

We will ensure that our technology meets the needs of our staff, volunteers and clients by:

- Ensuring that our IT strategy is up to date and forward looking, our IT is secure, resilient; hardware and software needs are reviewed and met where possible; and that staff and volunteers are confident using our IT equipment and software programs.

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Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (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 charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting 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; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is appropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

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 trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Statement of Internal Control

The Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited Trustee Board oversee the information security of all personal information of our clients, staff, funders and strategic partners that is processed. Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited hold joint responsibility for client data that is held in our case management system, with the National Citizens Advice Service. An information assurance management team exists to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all personal and sensitive data is maintained to a level which is compliant with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

Independent Examiners

Burnside chartered accountants were appointed as independent examiners to the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on **DATE** and signed on their behalf by

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C. William Underhill, Chair of the Trustees

CITIZENS ADVICE STROUD & COTSWOLD DISTRICTS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1096398

Accounts

Company no. 4389411
Charity no. 1096398

**Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold
Districts Limited
Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements
31 March 2024**

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Contents

For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Page
Reference and Administrative Details	1
Report of the Trustees	2 - 11
Independent Auditors' Report	12
Statement of Financial Activities	13
Balance Sheet	14 - 15
Statement of Cashflows	16
Notes to the Financial Statements	17 - 32

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Company number 4389411

Charity number 1096398

Registered office and operational address Unit 8 1st Floor
Brunel Mall
London Road
Stroud
Gloucestershire
GL5 2BP

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Martin Cook	from 6 October 2021
Claire Feehily	resigned 1 January 2024
Edward Fitter	from 17 October 2023 to 28 June 2024
John Hammond	from 5 June 2019
Juliet Kilty	from 5 October 2017
Andrew Lindsay	from 17 October 2023
Barry O'Driscoll	from 6 October 2021
Rachel Penney	from 17 October 2023 to 25 March 2024
Beatrix Pitel	resigned 17 October 2023
Martyn Price	resigned 13 May 2024
Christopher William Underhill	from 17 October 2023
Jane Whaley	from 6 October 2021
Paul Blacker	from 25 July 2024
Ian Buswell	from 25 July 2024

Chief executive officer and company secretary Elizabeth Hall

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank PO Box 7193 Planetary Road Willenhall WV1 9DG	NatWest Bank Buildings, George Street Stroud Gloucester GL5 3DT
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Scottish Widows Bank
PO Box 883
Leeds
LS1 9TY

Independent examiners Burnside
Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
61 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4JZ

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

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Structure, governance and management

Governing document

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Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

Trustees are primarily recruited from the community served by the charity, with particular individuals and groups targeted depending on the skills and knowledge gaps identified. Interested individuals are required to submit a statement of their experience and qualifications and go through a selection process and are then formally elected by the charity's membership at the annual general meeting. Additional Trustees may be co-opted by the Board of Trustees during the year.

Four new trustees were elected at the Annual General Meeting in October 2023. Claire Feehily resigned on 1 January 2024. Claire became a Trustee in January 2017 and was appointed Chair in January 2022. We are grateful to Claire for her significant contribution and in particular her leadership during some challenging times for the organisation. Juliet Kilty was appointed Chair on an interim basis to replace Claire and she was replaced as treasurer by William Underhill. On 1 May 2024, Juliet was replaced as Chair by John Hammond, again on an interim basis. On 30 September 2024, William Underhill was appointed Chair and Juliet Kilty resumed her role as treasurer. The Board is conscious that repeated governance changes of this kind are undesirable and is actively developing succession plans which should allow a smoother transition in future, when changes become necessary.

Unfortunately, one of the new trustees appointed in October resigned in March 2024 for personal and work related reasons. Since then, two trustees have resigned due to work and personal commitments. We are grateful to Edward Fitter, Rachel Penney and Martyn Price for their contributions. Two new trustees have been appointed in July 2024.

Trustee induction and training

There are induction procedures for new Trustees to make them aware of their role and training is offered throughout their term of office.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Trustees must undertake mandatory training on data protection (UK GDPR) and also the Senior Managers and Certification Regime (SMCR) which is learning required to meet Financial Conduct Authority Rules. In addition the CA-SCD Board have agreed to undertake all the Citizens Advice online training courses recommended by national Citizens Advice. This includes training on safeguarding; health and safety; cyber security; equity, diversity and inclusion and financial governance. Compliance with mandatory and recommended training is undertaken by the Training and Development Officer and the CEO and is also monitored by the HR Sub Group.

Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the understanding of their role.

Organisational structure

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited is an independent member of Citizens Advice, the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management as well as monitoring progress against these standards. Citizens Advice appoints a representative who is invited to attend the Board as a non-voting member.

The charity is governed through a Trustee Board. Trustees who have held office during the year are listed on page 1. The Articles of Association provide for a minimum of three and a maximum of twenty-one Trustees.

The Board of Trustees governs the charity and defines overall policy and future strategy. It also monitors performance, risk and the quality of service. The Board is ultimately responsible for the financial control of the organisation and for financial reporting to its members and others.

All Trustees have a responsibility to safeguard the resources of the organisation, and to use them in an economical and effective way furthering the work of the charity. The Trustee Board meets every two months, in addition to holding its Annual General Meeting.

The Board now has three sub-committees, the Finance and Risk sub-committee, the Human Resources sub-committee and the Operational Performance sub-committee which meet regularly throughout the year. These sub-committees discuss and work on issues in more detail and make recommendations to the Board. In general decisions are taken by the full Board but the Board may from time to time delegate authority to a sub-committee to make a decision on a specific issue. In addition, from time to time the Board may establish ad hoc sub-committees to consider specific issues.

The Trustee Board discusses the finances regularly. Financial reports are circulated in advance of Board meetings and are scrutinised in detail by the Finance and Risk sub-committee.

Day to day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Senior Leadership Team meet to review progress against targets and the Charity's financial position and to discuss issues referred to them by the Trustee Board. Reports and recommendations are then taken to the full Board for approval, and their implementation is organised by the Chief Executive Officer and the staff team. There are regular staff, volunteer and Senior Leadership Team meetings which ensure that progress is being made against targets. There is an Annual General Meeting, which involves the staff team, Trustee Board, members, and other stakeholders.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

The day-to-day service is delivered by a team of 53 volunteers assisted by a small team of paid staff. In addition, the service is supported by a number of volunteer fundraisers and dedicated research and campaign group members. In the Cotswold District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Cotswold District from its main office in Cirencester and from two outreach outlets in Tetbury and Moreton-in-Marsh. The Cirencester and North Cotswold Foodbank advisers also operate from Foodbank outlets in the district. In the Stroud District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Stroud District from its main office in Stroud and outreach outlets at: Dursley; Stonehouse All Pulling Together; Stonehouse Town Council and Wotton-under-Edge (at the Keepers Community Hub). The Stroud Foodbank Adviser operates from Foodbank outlets in the Stroud district.

Key risks and uncertainties

The organisation actively monitors its risk profile by way of a risk register, which identifies the principal risks, the likelihood of occurrence and their potential impact on the work of the charity. The register, together with the wider risk landscape and environment is regularly considered by the Finance and Risk sub-committee, which meets at least quarterly, and thereafter by the Board.

Key risks and issues currently being actively managed are:

- The recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers;
- The financial landscape and need to secure funding for the service in the longer term, especially for our core service; and
- Managing the increased demand for our service as a result of the cost of living crisis.

Objectives and activities

Objects

The Charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in the Districts of Stroud, Cotswold, Gloucestershire and surrounding areas.

In furtherance of these objectives, the company provides advice and information via a variety of communication channels. Our aims are focused on:

- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face; and
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

Our service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

We have developed our own vision statement to reflect our ambition to become the leading advice service across Stroud and Cotswold Districts:

*A caring, dynamic and skilful organisation reaching out to every corner of the community to supply quality advice and support... **The advice service of choice!***

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

The business plan for 2024-27 seeks to tailor the four strategic themes of the National Citizens Advice Living Strategy, namely advice, advocacy, inclusive access and organisational health to fit with the needs of the two Districts we serve.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and who we try to help are described below. All our charitable activities focus on providing the advice people need for the problems they face and by doing this we provide public benefit. The Board of Trustees has had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

Achievements and performance

Advice and Information Services

Our main areas of charitable activity are:

- the provision of general advice and information services
- the provision of specialist advice and casework services in the debt and welfare benefits categories of social welfare law

During 2023-24, we offered advice and information in the following ways:

- Telephone – we continued to offer our freephone telephone helplines. The lines were covered on a rota basis between the hours of 10am and 4pm on Mondays and Tuesdays and from 10am to 12.30pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Our call handlers assess the situation and take the appropriate action – this may be a booked telephone ring back, a face to face appointment or signposting to a national Citizens advice helpline or another organisation.
- At our first contact with clients, a full exploration of their situation is undertaken. Where possible we aim to resolve their issues at this first contact. If this is not possible, clients are contacted again or given an appointment, as appropriate.
- Clients who needed debt or benefit casework services have been dealt with via telephone and email advice as well as face to face in our main offices and outreach venues.
- Email advice – clients could ask for email advice via our website.
- Face to face – we have prioritised face to face appointments for clients who cannot access telephone or email advice due to one or more of the following:
 - A lack of telephone or email access including mobile phone reception and capability issues;
 - A vulnerability that made remote advice difficult;
 - The client's case was so complex that telephone advice would lead to a slower resolution of the case or a potential negative impact on the outcome for client; and
 - The client needed to be seen face to face for an adviser to assess capability or give full advice.
- Clients who drop into an office or outreach are triaged and the appropriate way forward ascertained and arranged.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

In addition to general advice, the following specialist services were provided in 2023-24:

- Specialist debt and financial capability advice funded by St James's Place and the Multiply project in partnership with North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice.
- We were funded for homelessness prevention money advice for Stroud residents by Stroud District Council;
- Specialist welfare benefits advice was funded through a Thriving Communities Grant from the County Council, funding from St James's Place and a generous donation from an anonymous donor;
- Specialist advice on the EU Settlement Scheme was funded by the Home Office through a partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and GARAS;
- Energy advice (we had three specialist energy advisers during this year) was funded by National Citizens Advice energy projects and a Smart Meter GB project with North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice;
- We had 3 dedicated foodbank advisers who gave generalist advice to clients referred by the Stroud, North Cotswold and Cirencester Foodbanks. In March 2024, a dedicated Foodbank specialist debt caseworker joined the team – this caseworker takes referrals from the Cirencester and North Cotswold foodbank advisers for clients who need specialist debt advice. These advisers were funded by the Foodbanks themselves.

Whilst we endeavour to resolve a client's issue as quickly as possible, we do not limit clients to a set number of appointments or to a limited timescale that they can access our help. Some clients will need appointments over several weeks or months with multiple specialists within the organisation. For example, a client with debt issues may need not only debt advice, but specialist benefits advice and support to maximise their income and ensure that their income will be sufficient to avoid further debt issues in the future, and specialist energy advice to help them reduce their living costs.

Whilst we aim to empower clients to resolve their problems using the advice we give, many of our clients need additional support in order to achieve a solution. This may be due to the vulnerability of the client, the complexity of the problems or a combination of the two.

Advocating for clients is a key part of what we do – on an individual basis and through our local and national research and campaigns work.

Individual clients often need us to advocate for them – for example by contacting third parties by telephone and in writing to resolve debt problems; by drafting submissions for benefits appeals and speaking to the councils and DWP about benefit claims; by contacting organisations to make formal complaints; contacting energy suppliers to resolve problems etc.

The information that we gather is also used in our research and campaigns work – both locally and feeds into the national Citizens Advice data. This information is then used to raise awareness and campaign on local and national issues – for example, our joint work on housing in Gloucestershire with North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and the monthly cost of living data insights briefing delivered by national Citizens Advice.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Contribution of Volunteers and Paid Staff

Our success could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of volunteers and staff. The Trustee Board and senior leadership team recognise the tremendous contribution made by our volunteers in advising the public and administering the service. Without this amazing effort, given freely for no financial reward, the service could not operate. Throughout 2023/24 the service employed 20 paid workers and 71 volunteers (including fundraisers) together delivering projects in addition to the core service.

The recruitment and retention of paid staff during 2023-24 continued to be challenging. The recruitment of advice session supervisors, a key role in the organisation, is a particularly niche role and therefore a difficult role to find experienced candidates locally.

The Trustee Board agreed during 2023 to use reserves to fund trainee adviser/supervisor roles for a two year period. This has been successful – the first trainee adviser has now started the supervisor training. Reserves have also been allocated to fund a paid call handler for twelve months to increase capacity on the helplines.

Our Learning and Development Officer left in January 2024 to pursue a new role with a local council. This is a key role as we are prioritising the recruitment and training of volunteer advisers in order to meet the increased demand for our services and to replace the volunteers who left in the last four years. It has taken some time to find the right candidate for this position and a new Training and Development Officer started work in July 2024.

We are very grateful to everyone for their commitment to our clients and the running of our service.

Who used and benefited from our services?

During the reporting year (2022-23 figures in brackets) the organisation:

- Advised 4,084 (4,451) clients across 23,666 (20,966) issues. Of these, Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts advised 3,368 (3,632) clients with 16,330 (13,771) issues. The remaining clients were helped through National Citizens Advice helplines such as the Help to Claim (Universal Credit) helpline, the Help through Hardship helpline (which distributes Trussell Trust food bank vouchers and information) and the Consumer helpline;
- The number of issues rises each year and may be indicative of more complex problems being dealt with. This is representative of the experience of our advisers who manage a high number of complex cases, which cannot be resolved through our advice alone;
- Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts generated a total of £1,399,238 (£831,663) in additional income for clients, primarily through tax credits, benefits or salaries. Welfare benefits and tax credits made up a total of 33% (31%) of the issues we have supported on;
- Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts helped 662 (543) households with debt advice making people's lives more sustainable;
- £461,203 (£425,467) of debt was written off by Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts negotiating with creditors, obtaining Debt Relief Orders and giving advice on budgeting and £3,004 (£8,562) worth of repayments were rescheduled;
- We delivered the Household Support Fund for both Cotswold District Council and Stroud District Council – distributing financial support with energy, wider essentials and supermarket vouchers for support with the cost of food;
- Advised 515 (536) clients on housing issues, including problems with disrepair;
- Helped 404 (442) families with relationship issues including divorce, separation and contact with children;
- Assisted 361 (384) households with utilities and communications issues, including energy issues;

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

- Advised 232 (310) clients on employment issues, including issues relating to disputes, redundancy and dismissal; and
- Was a partner agency with Gloucestershire County Council, North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and GARAS delivering advice to clients who needed to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Our staff and volunteers assisted a wide range of clients:

- 61% of clients reported that they were disabled or had a long term health condition. (53% in 2022-23)
- We helped clients across a wide age range – with clients in all age categories from 15-19 to 100-104 (unchanged from 2022-23).

Factors affecting the achievement of objectives

The year ending 31 March 2024 was another challenging year for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold District as the cost of living crisis continued. Despite the considerable efforts of our staff and volunteers, our resources were not sufficient to meet the increased demand for our services which resulted from the crisis.

We are seeing more and more clients with very complex issues and/or a much higher number of problems at first presentation, which take longer to resolve.

Financial review

The Trustees have continued to focus on delivering a cost-effective service that meets the needs of our clients. The Charity was fortunate to receive funding above that expected from a number of sources in 2022-23 resulting in a surplus for that year. The reserves of the Charity have grown in recent years with additional funding and unexpected salary savings due to vacant posts. The trustees have reviewed our reserves policy and aim to only hold reserves sufficient to cover expected funding gaps for the next 3 years.

During 2022-23 and 2023-24, the reserves allowed the Board to approve a funding programme to replace outdated IT infrastructure, increase support for volunteers and improve services to our clients.

Income for the year was £754,783. We spent £735,158 giving a surplus of £19,625. This includes the Household Support Fund which we have administered for Cotswold District Council and Stroud District Council.

The charity has total reserves of £707,909 – please see the breakdown on page 26 for further details. This includes £111,807 from the Household Support Fund which will be paid to clients to assist with energy and wider essentials.

We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed to the organisation, be that from donations, legacies, grants and voluntary effort. During the year we received funding from Citizens Advice, Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the Home Office, the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust, St James's Place, the Kinsella Foundation, National Energy Action, North Cotswolds Foodbank, Cirencester Foodbank, Stroud District Foodbank, Stroud Town Council, Cirencester Town Council, Stonehouse Town Council, Moreton in Marsh Town Council and other Town and Parish Councils.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

We are grateful to the Cirencester Choral Society for selecting us as one of the beneficiaries of their Christmas Charity Concert in Cirencester Parish Church.

In addition, we are grateful to the local businesses who have supported our work, whether indirectly through the provision of reduced-rate services or premises, or through donations.

In May 2024, the Trustee Board approved the funding and expenditure budgets for 2024-25.

Stroud PR and Fundraising Committee

Sadly, the Stroud Fundraising Group disbanded after many years of hard work in 2022-23. We are very grateful to those volunteers who have continued to help us - with publicity, awareness and the administration linked with donations.

Friends of Cotswold Citizens Advice

In June 2023, they arranged a "thank you " tea party for CASCD volunteers , with staff also invited, in the delightful North Cerney House gardens, which was much enjoyed by all who attended.

The Friends had a promotional stand at the ever popular Phoenix Festival in August 2023. They gave away books in return for donations and many people could not resist the challenge of our "Climb the wall" game – just under £150 was raised. The Friends were able to speak to people about how to access advice and also deal with enquiries about volunteering with us.

Cirencester Choral Society again held their Christmas Concert in aid (partly) of Cotswold Citizens Advice, and the Friends arranged this and helped with the "front of house" and collection at the end. They also helped with the Advent Festival in Cirencester Parish Church.

During the year the Friends said goodbye to their long time former Chair, John Kendall. He had given many years of service to the former Cirencester CAB and the Friends, and was instrumental in setting up the Friends, and arranging the linking of the Cotswold and Stroud advice services.

Reserves policy

The reserves policy for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts is reviewed annually by the Board. We maintain free reserves at such a level as: (i) to provide adequate working capital in the event of potential changes of funding from major funders, (ii) to meet staff redundancy costs and premises costs should the organisation have to severely reduce in size, (iii) to provide for settlement of The Pension Trust Employer Debt, in the event that the organisation is forced to close and has no active employees in The Pension Trust, (iv) to mitigate some key risks facing the charity. In particular, the target level for free reserves aims to give a reasonable chance of survival should one of these risks occur: it is recognised that it is not possible, nor it is intended, to protect against every risk. The Board assesses the Charity's target and actual reserves annually. When the level of reserves is materially different from the target level, the Board will determine what action should be taken.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Our reserves target is £171,963. We measure free reserves as total assets less endowments, restricted funds, designated reserves, undepreciated fixed assets and any approved budget deficits. Our free reserves at 31 March 2024 were £489,967.

Trustees acknowledge that this is more than our target but does give the organisation the ability to plan the service in the longer term because this amount just covers the known deficit until 2027 based on known core funding levels (which have remained static for many years). Trustees will address the issue of reserves and keep finances under review to ensure the sustainability of the service.

Future plans

The Business plan for 2024-27 is based on the Citizens Advice Living Strategy and their Business Plan for 2024-27.

The plan is based on the four key strategic priorities: Advice, Advocacy, Inclusive Access and Organisational Health.

Over the next 12 months we will:

- Improve the client offer and experience by undertaking a comprehensive service delivery model review; increasing the number of clients we inform, advise and advocate for; removing blocks in the client journey to achieve quicker resolution of problems whilst maintaining our focus on providing good quality advice and information.
- Be a stronger voice for our clients by increasing our campaigning using the research undertaken and data provided by our Research and Campaigns group and national Citizens Advice; working with other individuals and organisations to achieve a greater impact for our clients and by resourcing Research and Campaigns effectively.
- Improve the service accessibility for marginalised clients by identifying barriers to advice in our districts and working hard to remove those barriers and by working with clients and partner agencies to tackle any barriers identified.
- Improve the experience of staff and volunteers by ensuring that our organisation is a great place to work and volunteer.
- Increase our financial resilience by reducing our reliance on local authority funding and securing new funding to increase our longer term sustainability.
- Ensure that our technology meets the needs of our staff, volunteers and clients by ensuring that our IT strategy is up to date and forward looking, our IT is secure and resilient; hardware and software needs are reviewed and met where possible; and that staff and volunteers are confident using our IT equipment and software programs.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (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 charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting 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; and
- 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 proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees 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.

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 trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

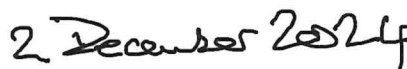
Independent examiners

Burnside Chartered Accountants were appointed as independent examiners to the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 21 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by



C. William Underhill
Trustee - Chair



.....
Date

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 12 to 31.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charitable 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 charitable 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 the charitable company'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.

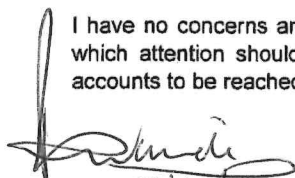
Independent examiner's statement

Since the charitable 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 Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable 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.



Date: 3/12/24
Stephen Burnside FCA
Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:
Burnside Chartered Accountants
61 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4JZ

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

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

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	22,000	38,147	60,147	41,042
Charitable activities	4	496,114	197,566	693,680	652,689
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-
Investments		-	956	956	245
Total income		<u>518,114</u>	<u>236,669</u>	<u>754,783</u>	<u>693,976</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	45,450	45,450	45,242
Charitable activities		599,091	90,617	689,708	508,995
Total expenditure	5	<u>599,091</u>	<u>136,067</u>	<u>735,158</u>	<u>554,237</u>
Net income		(80,977)	100,602	19,625	139,739
Transfers between funds		93,971	(93,971)	-	-
Other recognised gains					
Gains on remeasurement of defined benefit pension scheme		-	1,107	1,107	1,181
Net movement in funds	7	<u>12,994</u>	<u>7,738</u>	<u>20,732</u>	<u>140,920</u>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>141,940</u>	<u>545,237</u>	<u>687,177</u>	<u>546,257</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>154,934</u>	<u>552,975</u>	<u>707,909</u>	<u>687,177</u>

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 16 to the accounts.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2024

Company no.: 4389411

	Note	£	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	10		133	166
Current assets				
Debtors	11	81,156		70,456
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>679,188</u>		<u>732,173</u>
		760,344		802,629
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	12	<u>(51,597)</u>		<u>(113,540)</u>
Net current assets			<u>708,747</u>	<u>689,089</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			708,880	689,255
Provisions for liabilities	14		<u>(971)</u>	<u>(2,078)</u>
Net assets	15		<u>707,909</u>	<u>687,177</u>
Funds	16			
Restricted funds			154,934	141,940
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds			62,875	380,340
General funds			<u>490,100</u>	<u>164,897</u>
Total charity funds			<u>707,909</u>	<u>687,177</u>

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477(2), and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2024

Company no. 4389411

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the Company keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act; and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on 21 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by



.....
C. William Underhill
Trustee - Chair

2 December 2024

.....
Date

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net movement in funds	20,732	140,920
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation	33	2,536
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(956)	(245)
Loss / (profit) on the sale of fixed assets	-	3,775
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	(10,700)	(31,437)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(61,943)	43,912
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	(1,107)	(1,181)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	(53,941)	158,280
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	956	245
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	956	245
Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year	(52,985)	158,525
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	732,173	573,648
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	679,188	732,173

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern. The charity has been able to increase its reserves over recent years and we recently changed our reserves policy to aim to hold enough reserves to cover expected shortfalls for the next 3 years. This leaves us in the fortunate position to have additional funds that we are aiming to spend this year to improve our services. On this basis the Trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved.

c) Income

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

Income from the 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 Trust 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.

d) 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.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the Trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

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

g) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the following basis, which is an estimate of staff time:

	2024	2023
Raising funds	8.0%	9.9%
Charitable activities	92.0%	90.1%

h) Tangible fixed assets

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:

Computer equipment	3 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	20% reducing balance

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000.

i) 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.

j) 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.

k) Creditors

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.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

l) Financial instruments

The charitable company 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 recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

m) Conduit funding

Conduit funds are monies received for third parties and do not belong to the charity. The incoming funds and outgoing payments are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities. Any conduit funds in hand at the year end are shown as creditors in the accounts.

n) Pension costs (defined contribution)

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions.

o) Pension costs (defined benefit)

The charitable company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. It is not possible for the charitable company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. The scheme is therefore accounted for as a defined contribution scheme. A provision is recognised in these accounts for the net present value of future contributions payable under the scheme (see note 14). The valuation is determined with reference to the charity's pension provider, TPT Retirement Solutions.

p) Finance and operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the SOFA over the period in which the cost is incurred. The charity has no finance leases.

q) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are depreciation as described in note 1 (h) and the pension provision as per note 1 (o).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	12,403	28,639	41,042
Charitable activities	234,404	418,285	652,689
Other trading activities	-	-	-
Investments	-	245	245
Total income	246,807	447,169	693,976
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	45,242	45,242
Charitable activities	226,750	282,245	508,995
Total expenditure	226,750	327,487	554,237
Net income / (expenditure)	20,057	119,682	139,739
Transfers between funds	15,209	(15,209)	-
Other recognised gains:			
Gains on remeasurement of defined benefit pension scheme	-	1,181	1,181
Net movement in funds	35,266	105,654	140,920

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Donations	22,000	37,553	59,553
Fundraising	-	594	594
Total income from donations	22,000	38,147	60,147
Prior period comparative			
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Donations	12,403	25,985	38,388
Fundraising	-	2,654	2,654
Total income from donations	12,403	28,639	41,042

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Stroud District Council - Core funding	125,000	-	125,000
Stroud District Council - Household support fund	38,200	1,800	40,000
Stroud District Council - Housing related debt	25,091	-	25,091
Cotswold District Council - Core funding	-	70,920	70,920
Cotswold District Council - Household support fund	138,800	12,000	150,800
Glos County Council - Thriving Communities Grant	7,500	-	7,500
Glos County Council - Core funding	-	70,450	70,450
North & West Glos Citizens Advice - Multiply	32,350	-	32,350
St James Place Foundation	4,000	-	4,000
Town and Parish Councils	-	19,598	19,598
Other grants	125	12,710	12,835
Smart meters	-	10,088	10,088
EAP	6,085	-	6,085
EUSS	1,944	-	1,944
Cirencester Foodbank	44,689	-	44,689
North Cotswold Foodbank	51,386	-	51,386
Stroud Foodbank	20,944	-	20,944
Total income from charitable activities	496,114	197,566	693,680

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

4. Income from charitable activities (continued)			
Prior period comparative			
	Restricted	Unrestricted	2023
	£	£	Total
			£
Stroud District Council - Core funding	-	125,000	125,000
Stroud District Council - Household support fund	-	4,583	4,583
Stroud District Council - Housing related debt	25,065	-	25,065
Cotswold District Council - Core funding	-	72,520	72,520
Cotswold District Council - Household support fund	-	14,750	14,750
Household support fund - CDC and SDC	147,800	-	147,800
Gloucestershire County Council - Core funding	-	41,668	41,668
Gloucestershire County Council - Thrive Grant	7,500	-	7,500
Gloucestershire County Council - Outreach	-	16,666	16,666
St James Place Foundation	7,500	-	7,500
GCF	-	5,000	5,000
Town and Parish Councils	-	13,225	13,225
Citizens Advice - Core / Donation / Gambling	-	15,500	15,500
Other grants	-	15,450	15,450
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	15,000	15,000
Smart meters - CitA	-	8,194	8,194
EAP	19,914	-	19,914
EUSS	26,495	-	26,495
Cirencester Foodbank	-	21,577	21,577
North Cotswold Foodbank	-	19,335	19,335
Stroud Foodbank	-	29,817	29,817
Citizens Advice - money advice service	130	-	130
Total income from charitable activities	234,404	418,285	652,689

Government grants

The charitable company receives government grants, defined as funding from local, town and parish Councils to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the period ending 31 March 2024 was £431,409 (2023: £454,026). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	27,160	312,002	85,762	424,924
Grants paid (note 6)	-	141,274	-	141,274
Staff and volunteer expenses	-	19,890	-	19,890
Staff and volunteer training	-	2,022	-	2,022
Staff recruitment expenses	-	-	-	-
Premises costs	-	-	64,620	64,620
Communications & IT	-	-	35,836	35,836
General office	-	-	17,059	17,059
Finance costs	-	-	18,086	18,086
Consultancy costs	-	4,407	-	4,407
Governance costs	-	-	7,007	7,007
Depreciation costs	-	-	33	33
Loss on disposal	-	-	-	-
Sub-total	27,160	479,595	228,403	735,158
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>18,290</u>	<u>210,113</u>	<u>(228,403)</u>	-
Total expenditure	<u>45,450</u>	<u>689,708</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>735,158</u>

Total governance costs were £7,007 (2023: £4,832).

Prior period comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	24,586	224,460	71,781	320,827
Grants paid (note 6)	-	76,992	-	76,992
Staff and volunteer expenses	-	10,501	-	10,501
Staff and volunteer training	-	1,733	-	1,733
Staff recruitment expenses	-	3,695	-	3,695
Premises costs	-	-	53,644	53,644
Communications & IT	-	-	26,743	26,743
General office	-	-	18,121	18,121
Finance costs	-	-	25,906	25,906
Consultancy costs	-	3,040	1,892	4,932
Governance costs	-	-	4,832	4,832
Depreciation costs	-	-	2,536	2,536
Loss on disposal	-	-	3,775	3,775
Sub-total	24,586	320,421	209,230	554,237
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>20,656</u>	<u>188,574</u>	<u>(209,230)</u>	-
Total expenditure	<u>45,242</u>	<u>508,995</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>554,237</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

6. Grants payable

	2024 £	2023 £
Grants payable to institutions: North & West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice	<u>3,400</u>	-
Total grants payable to institutions	<u>3,400</u>	-
Grants payable to individuals:	<u>137,874</u>	76,992
Total grants payable	<u><u>141,274</u></u>	<u><u>76,992</u></u>

All grants are paid to fund charitable activities. The grants shown above do not include any contribution to core costs.

7. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation	33	2,536
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (excluding VAT)	<u><u>3,500</u></u>	<u><u>3,150</u></u>

8. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	379,077	284,341
Social security costs	22,493	17,581
Pension costs	<u><u>23,354</u></u>	<u><u>18,905</u></u>
	<u><u>424,924</u></u>	<u><u>320,827</u></u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

The key management personnel of the charitable company comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Service Managers. The total emoluments paid to key management personnel for the year was £97,548 (2023: £95,996).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

8. Staff costs and numbers (continued)

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Average head count	<u>19.8</u>	<u>16.9</u>

9. Taxation

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

10. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	29,352	3,361	32,713
Additions in year	-	-	-
Disposals in the year	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	<u>29,352</u>	<u>3,361</u>	<u>32,713</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	29,352	3,195	32,547
Charge for the year	-	33	33
Disposals in the year	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	<u>29,352</u>	<u>3,228</u>	<u>32,580</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>133</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>166</u>

11. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	70,023	46,600
Prepayments	4,435	8,222
Accrued income	<u>6,698</u>	<u>15,634</u>
	<u>81,156</u>	<u>70,456</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

12. Creditors : amounts due within 1 year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	6,113	5,807
Accruals	28,166	6,107
Deferred income	-	84,419
Other taxation and social security	-	2,785
Other creditors	17,318	14,422
	<u>51,597</u>	<u>113,540</u>

13. Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April 2023	84,419	30,396
Deferred during the year	-	84,419
Released during the year	(84,419)	(30,396)
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>84,419</u>

14. Pension provision

The charitable company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. Provision has been made for the net present value of future contributions payable by the charity. The provision is valued based on information provided by TPT Retirement Solutions (dated 31 March 2024). The latest full actuarial valuation of the scheme was dated 30 September 2020 and required participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme. The movement on the provision is recognised on the SoFA as an other recognised (gain) / loss.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Provision at the start of the year	2,078	3,259
Movement in the year	<u>(1,107)</u>	<u>(1,181)</u>
Provision at the end of the year	<u>971</u>	<u>2,078</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	133	133
Current assets	154,934	62,875	542,535	760,344
Current liabilities	-	-	(51,597)	(51,597)
Provisions	-	-	(971)	(971)
Net assets at 31 March 2024	<u>154,934</u>	<u>62,875</u>	<u>490,100</u>	<u>707,909</u>
Prior period comparative (restated)				
	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	166	166
Current assets	141,940	380,340	280,349	802,629
Current liabilities	-	-	(113,540)	(113,540)
Provisions	-	-	(3,259)	(2,078)
Net assets at 31 March 2023	<u>141,940</u>	<u>380,340</u>	<u>163,716</u>	<u>687,177</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

16. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and other gains £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Housing related debt advice	13,907	25,091	(30,414)	-	8,584
Stroud benefits	32,523	33,625	(55,195)	-	10,953
Mental health debt	972	-	-	-	972
Energy advice program	4,712	-	-	-	4,712
European Union settlement scheme	-	1,944	(8,844)	6,900	-
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	17,145	6,085	(6,086)	-	17,144
Household support fund	72,681	177,000	(137,874)	-	111,807
Cirencester foodbank	-	44,689	(51,858)	7,169	-
North Cotswold foodbank	-	51,386	(57,214)	5,828	-
Stroud foodbank	-	20,944	(26,980)	6,036	-
Stroud advice	-	125,000	(193,038)	68,038	-
Multiply adult numeracy project	-	32,350	(31,588)	-	762
Total restricted funds	141,940	518,114	(599,091)	93,971	154,934
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Stroud IT fund	22	-	(22)	-	-
Stroud advice	212,041	-	-	(212,041)	-
Cotswolds advice	73,916	-	-	(73,916)	-
Additional expenditure fund	94,361	-	(31,486)	-	62,875
Total designated funds	380,340	-	(31,508)	(285,957)	62,875
General funds	164,897	236,669	(104,559)	193,093	490,100
Total unrestricted funds	545,237	236,669	(136,067)	(92,864)	552,975
Total funds	687,177	754,783	(735,158)	1,107	707,909

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

16. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Housing related debt advice	To provide advice and support on housing related debt to clients in Stroud and district and in the Cotswold district.
Stroud benefits	Funding from the Good Things Foundation to support people to get the information and advice they need from HMRC including helping them to use new online systems.
Cotswolds money advice	Specialist casework advice to people in the Cotswolds with money problems to help them to maximise their income, reduce their debts and increase their confidence and competence in managing their financial affairs.
Mental health debt	To provide funding to improve access to finance related advice for people with mental ill health.
Energy advice program	Funding to provide one-to-one advice to clients in fuel poverty, or in a fuel poverty risk group.
European Union settlement scheme	Funding to provide advice and practical support to vulnerable EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in Gloucestershire to help them make their EU Settlement Scheme application.
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	Funding to help vulnerable consumers to reduce their energy costs, and to run a campaign to raise awareness of energy issues.
Household support fund	Funds allocated from Cotswold District Council and Stroud District Council from the Household Support Fund to distribute to eligible households.
Cirencester foodbank	To fund dedicated advisors for the Cirencester foodbank.
North Cotswold foodbank	To fund dedicated advisors for the North Cotswolds foodbank.
Stroud foodbank	To fund a dedicated advisor for the Stroud foodbank.
Stroud advice	Funds are restricted for the use by the Bureau for providing advice in the Stroud and District local government area.
Multiply adult numeracy project	Clients who needed advice in relation to debt, food and fuel poverty were helped with living Maths skills eg budgeting and understanding bills to help them manage their personal finances more confidently.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

16. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of designated funds

Stroud IT fund	For the purchase of new computer equipment for the Stroud district.
Stroud advice	Funds raised are designated for the use by the Bureau in the Stroud and District local government area.
Cotswold advice	Funds raised are designated for the use by the Bureau in the Cotswold and District local government area.
Additional expenditure fund	Funds for additional expenditure relating to staffing and IT equipment agreed at the Board meeting in February 2023.

Purpose of transfers between funds

The transfers from the Stroud advice and Cotswold advice designated funds to restricted funds are to top up overspends on projects.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

16. Movements in funds (continued)
Prior period comparative

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and other gains £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds					
Housing related debt advice	1,359	25,065	(12,517)	-	13,907
Stroud benefits	55,551	19,903	(42,931)	-	32,523
Cotswold money advice	6,531	7,500	(29,295)	15,264	-
Mental health debt	13,308	-	(12,336)	-	972
Universal credit help to claim	13,482	-	-	(13,482)	-
Money advice service	-	130	(1,333)	1,203	-
Energy advice program	4,712	-	-	-	4,712
European Union settlement scheme	-	26,495	(37,863)	11,368	-
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	10,715	19,914	(13,484)	-	17,145
Household support fund	-	147,800	(75,119)	-	72,681
Covid Hardship fund	1,016	-	(1,872)	856	-
Total restricted funds	106,674	246,807	(226,750)	15,209	141,940
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Stroud IT fund	635	-	(2,495)	1,882	22
Stroud advice	245,082	229,709	(155,818)	(106,932)	212,041
Cotswolds advice	37,118	146,731	(94,669)	(15,264)	73,916
Additional expenditure fund	-	-	-	94,361	94,361
Total designated funds	282,835	376,440	(252,982)	(25,953)	380,340
General funds	156,748	70,729	(74,505)	11,925	164,897
Total unrestricted funds	439,583	447,169	(327,487)	(14,028)	545,237
Total funds	546,257	693,976	(554,237)	1,181	687,177

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

17. Operating lease commitments

The charity had operating leases at the year end with total future minimum lease payments as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Amount falling due:		
Within 1 year	25,183	23,409
Within 1 - 5 years	-	15,197
	<u>25,183</u>	<u>38,606</u>

18. Conduit funding

	2024	2023
	£	£
Balance at start of year	13,543	2,612
Funding received during year	496	12,409
Funding distributed during year	(296)	(1,478)
Balance at end of year	<u>13,743</u>	<u>13,543</u>

Conduit funds are monies received for third parties and do not belong to the charity. The charity passes them through the accounts under a unique project code as a service to other charities to help their charitable purposes, but does not claim gift aid nor has control over their use. The receipts and payments referred to above have been excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities. The balance held at the end of the year is included in other creditors (note 12).

19. Contingent liability

The charity is party to a multi-employer pension scheme with The Pension Trust. The estimated debt on withdrawal (£75 debt) for CAB Stroud & District has been calculated to be £12,403. This figure has an effective date of 30 September 2023. In the prior year the contingent liability was estimated to be £17,430 (effective 30 September 2022). The charity currently has no intention of withdrawing from the scheme.

20. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current or prior year.

CITIZENS ADVICE STROUD & COTSWOLD DISTRICTS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1096398

Accounts

Company no. 4389411
Charity no. 1096398

**Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold
Districts Limited**

**Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements**

31 March 2023

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Company number	4389411	
Charity number	1096398	
Registered office and operational address	Unit 8 1st Floor Brunel Mall London Road Stroud Gloucestershire GL5 2BP	
Trustees	Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:	
	Martin Cook	
	Gordon Craig	resigned 14 October 2022
	Claire Feehily	
	Carolyn Folley	resigned 14 October 2022
	John Hammond	
	Juliet Kilty	
	Elaine McCarthy	resigned 1 May 2022
	Barry O'Driscoll	
	Beatrix Pitel	
	Martyn Price	
	Jane Whaley	
Chief executive officer and company secretary	Elizabeth Hall	
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank PO Box 7193 Planetary Road Willenhall WV1 9DG	NatWest Bank Buildings, George Street Stroud Gloucester GL5 3DT
	Scottish Widows Bank PO Box 883 Leeds LS1 9TY	
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD	

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 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 (effective from January 2019).

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The organisation is a registered charity. It became incorporated on 7 March 2002 as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The name of the organisation was changed, on 13th September 2016, to Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited and the Articles of Association were amended accordingly. The Articles of Association were further amended on 21 December 2020 to permit and regulate remote meetings.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

Trustees are primarily recruited from the community served by the charity, with particular individuals and groups targeted depending on the skills and knowledge gaps identified. Interested individuals are required to submit a statement of their experience and qualifications, go through a selection process and are then formally elected by the charity's membership at the annual general meeting. Additional Trustees may be co-opted by the Board of Trustees during the year.

Several new Trustees were elected at the Annual General Meeting in October 2021. During 2022-23, the focus has been on developing the Board and the new Trustees. During 2022-23, three Trustees resigned for personal and work related reasons. The Board currently consists of eight Trustees, five of whom were elected in 2021.

Trustee induction and training

There are induction procedures for new Trustees to make them aware of their role and training is offered throughout their term of office.

Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the understanding of their role.

Organisational structure

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited is an independent member of Citizens Advice, the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management as well as monitoring progress against these standards. Citizens Advice appoints a representative who is invited to attend the Board as a non-voting member.

The charity is governed through a Trustee Board. Trustees who have held office during the year are listed on page 1. The Articles of Association provide for a minimum of three and a maximum of twenty-one Trustees.

The voluntary Board of Trustees governs the charity and defines overall policy and future strategy. It also monitors performance, risk and the quality of service. The Board is ultimately responsible for the financial control of the organisation and for financial reporting to its members and others.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

All Trustees have a responsibility to safeguard the resources of the organisation, and to use them in an economical and effective way furthering the work of the charity. The Trustee Board meets every two months, in addition to holding its Annual General Meeting.

The Board now has three sub-committees, the Finance and Risk sub-committee, the Human Resources sub-committee and the Operational Performance sub-committee which meet regularly throughout the year. These discuss and work on issues in more detail and make recommendations to the Board. Only the full Board can make decisions, but the Board can delegate authority to a sub-committee to make a decision on a specific issue.

The Trustee Board discusses the finances regularly. Financial reports are circulated in advance of Board meetings and are scrutinised in detail by the Finance and Risk sub-committee. Day to day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer. In addition, there is an experienced team of paid staff and volunteers who are key to the service offered by the charity. Decisions are made by the Trustee Board in line with the Business Development Plan and are reviewed at least annually.

The Senior Leadership Team meet to review progress against targets and the Charity's financial position and to discuss issues referred to them by the Trustee Board. Reports and recommendations are then taken to the full Board for approval, and their implementation is organised by the Chief Executive Officer and the staff team. There are regular staff, volunteer and Senior Leadership Team meetings which ensure that progress is being made against targets. There is an Annual General Meeting, which involves the staff team, Trustee Board, members, and other stakeholders.

The day-to-day service is delivered by a team of 53 volunteers assisted by a small team of paid staff. In addition, the service is supported by a number of volunteer fundraisers and dedicated research and campaign group members. In the Cotswold District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Cotswold District from its main office in Cirencester and from two outreach outlets in Tetbury and Moreton-in-Marsh. The Cirencester and North Cotswold Foodbank advisers also operate from Foodbank outlets in the district. In the Stroud District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Stroud District from its main office in Stroud. Pre-pandemic, there were outreach advice outlets in Berkeley, Dursley, Nailsworth, Stonehouse and Wotton-under-Edge. During 2022-23, the following outreach locations were open: Dursley; Stonehouse All Pulling Together; Wotton-under-Edge (at the Keepers Community Hub) and Paganhill Community Hub. The Stroud Foodbank Adviser operates from Foodbank outlets in the Stroud district.

Key risks and uncertainties

The organisation actively monitors its risk profile by way of a risk register, which identifies the principal risks, the likelihood of occurrence and their potential impact on the work of the charity. The register, together with the wider risk landscape and environment is regularly considered by the Finance and Risk sub-committee, which meets at every two months, and thereafter by the Board.

Key risks and issues currently being actively managed are:

- The recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers;
- The financial landscape and need to secure funding for the service in the longer term, especially for our core service; and
- Managing the increased demand for our service as a result of the cost of living crisis.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Objectives and activities

Objects

The Charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in the Districts of Stroud, Cotswold, Gloucestershire and surrounding areas.

In furtherance of these objectives, the company provides advice and information via a variety of communication channels. Our aims are focused on:

- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face; and
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

Our service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

The Charity has developed its own vision statement to reflect its ambition to become the leading advice service across Stroud and Cotswold Districts:

A caring, dynamic and skilful organisation reaching out to every corner of the community to supply quality advice and support... The advice service of choice!

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

The business plan for 2022-25 sought to embed the progress made in 2021-22 and reinforce our ambition to become the leading advice service across Stroud and Cotswold Districts, providing accessible, high-quality advice, advocacy and information services, which meet the changing needs of our geographically dispersed communities.

The business plan for 2023-25 seeks to tailor the four strategic themes of the National Citizens Advice Living Strategy, namely advice/advocacy, inclusive access and organisational health to fit with the needs of the two Districts we serve.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and who we try to help are described below. All our charitable activities focus on providing the advice people need for the problems they face and are undertaken specifically to provide public benefit. The Board of Trustees has had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

Achievements and performance

Advice and information services

The main areas of charitable activity are:

- the provision of general advice and information services;
- the provision of specialist advice and casework services in the debt and welfare benefits categories of social welfare law; and
- the provision of advice in relation to the EU Settlement Scheme.

During 2022-23, we offered advice and information in the following ways:

- Telephone – we continued to offer our freephone telephone helplines. The lines were covered on a rota basis between the hours of 10am and 4pm from Monday to Thursday and from 10am to 1pm on Fridays (or until our capacity is reached).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

- At our first contact with clients, a full exploration of their situation is undertaken. Where possible we aim to resolve their issues at this first contact. If this is not possible, clients are contacted again or given an appointment, as appropriate.
- Clients who needed debt or benefit casework services have been dealt with via telephone and email advice as well as face to face in our main offices and outreach venues.
- Email advice – clients can ask for email advice via our website.
- Face to face – we have prioritised face to face appointments for clients who cannot access telephone or email advice due to one or more of the following:
 - A lack of telephone or email access including mobile phone reception and capability issues;
 - A vulnerability that made remote advice difficult;
 - The client's case was so complex that telephone advice would lead to a slower resolution of the case or a potential negative impact on the outcome for client; and
 - The client needed to be seen face to face for an adviser to assess capability or give full advice.
- Clients who drop into an office or outreach are triaged and the appropriate way forward ascertained and arranged.

In addition to general advice, the following specialist services were provided in 2022-23:

- Specialist debt advice funded by St James's Place and the Gloucestershire Communities Foundation Main Grant Programme (partially funded by the Charles Russell Speechlys Cheltenham Community Fund);
- We were funded for homelessness prevention money advice for Stroud residents by Stroud District Council;
- Specialist welfare benefits advice was funded through a Thriving Communities Grant from the County Council and a generous donation from an anonymous donor;
- Specialist advice on the EU Settlement Scheme was funded by the Home Office through a partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and GARAS;
- Energy advice (we had two specialist energy advisers during this year) was funded by National Citizens Advice energy projects and a Smart Meter GB project with North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice;
- We also had volunteer employment specialists who continued to be busy until January 2023 when they decided to retire after many years of service to the organisation; and
- We had 3 dedicated foodbank advisers who gave generalist advice to clients referred by the Stroud, North Cotswold and Cirencester Foodbanks. These advisers were funded by the Foodbanks themselves.

Whilst we aim to empower clients to resolve their problems using the advice we give, many of our clients need additional support in order to achieve a solution. This may be due to the vulnerability of the client, the complexity of the problems or a combination of the two.

Whilst we endeavour to resolve a client's issue as quickly as possible, we do not limit clients to a set number of appointments or to a limited timescale that they can access our help. Where needed and with the appropriate consent, we contact third parties on behalf of clients by making telephone calls or writing letters.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Some clients will need appointments over several weeks or months with multiple specialists within the organisation. For example a client with debt issues may need not only debt advice, but specialist benefits advice and support as well as specialist energy advice to maximise their income and ensure that their income will be sufficient to avoid further debt issues in the future.

Contribution of Volunteers and Paid Staff

The charity's success could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of volunteers and staff. The Trustee Board and senior leadership team recognise the tremendous contribution made by the charity's volunteers in advising the public and administering the service without which the service could not operate. Throughout 2022-23 the service employed 16 paid workers and 64 volunteers (including fundraisers) together delivering projects in addition to the core service.

The recruitment and retention of paid staff during 2022-23 has proved very challenging and time consuming. This has been the case for front line advisers as well as support and admin staff and, more critically, key specialist managerial roles despite the Leadership team reviewing the nature and content of these roles a number of times to try and attract suitable applications. This is reflected in the reduced average headcount for the year and the lower salary costs. Trustees and the CEO will continue to explore every avenue in the coming year to secure these much needed resources.

Volunteers represent the indispensable core of the service for without them there would not be a Citizens Advice service.

We were fortunate that during the pandemic, a high number of volunteers were prepared to work remotely. However, along with other local Citizens Advice, we are aware that training remotely could be difficult and this limited the number of new advisers that were recruited and retained. Post pandemic, several volunteers have left for various reasons, including the desire to travel and spend more time with family and friends.

We recruited a new Learning and Development Officer in 2022-23 who has trained her first cohort of generalist advisers. We are focussing on recruiting more volunteers in 2023-24 in order to help meet the increased demand for our services as a result of the cost of living crisis. We are very grateful to everyone for their commitment to our clients and the running of our service.

Who used and benefited from our services?

During the reporting year the organisation:

- Advised 4,451 clients across 20,966 issues. Of these, Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts advised 3,632 clients with 13,771 issues. The remaining clients were helped through National helplines such as the Help to Claim (Universal Credit) helpline, the Help through Hardship helpline (distributes Trussell Trust food bank vouchers and information) and the Consumer helpline;
- The number of issues rises each year and may be indicative of more complex problems being dealt with. This is representative of the experience of our advisers who manage a high number of complex cases, which cannot be resolved through our advice alone;
- Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts generated a total of £831,663 in additional income for clients, primarily through tax credits, benefits or salaries. Welfare benefits and tax credits made up a total of 31% of the issues we have supported on;
- Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts helped 543 households with debt advice making people's lives more sustainable;

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

- £425,467 of debt was written off by Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts negotiating with creditors, obtaining Debt Relief Orders and giving advice on budgeting and £8,562 worth of repayments were rescheduled;
- We delivered the Household Support Fund for both Cotswold District Council and Stroud District Council – distributing financial support with energy, wider essentials and supermarket vouchers for support with the cost of food;
- Advised 536 clients on housing issues, including problems with disrepair;
- Helped 442 families with relationship issues including divorce, separation and contact with children;
- Assisted 384 households with utilities and communications issues, including energy issues;
- Advised 310 clients on employment issues, including issues relating to disputes, redundancy and dismissal; and
- Was a partner agency with Gloucestershire County Council, North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and GARAS delivering advice to clients who needed to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Our staff and volunteers assisted a wide range of clients:

- 53% of clients reported that they were disabled or had a long term health condition (46% in 2021-22); and
- We helped clients across a wide age range – with clients in all age categories from 15-19 to 100-104.

Factors affecting the achievement of objectives

The year ending 31 March 2023 continued to be a challenging year for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold District as the country emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis took hold.

The increased demand as a result of the cost of living crisis also had a major impact on the service, with our resources unable to meet the demand.

We are also seeing more and more clients with very complex issues and/or a much higher number of problems at first presentation, which take longer to resolve.

Financial review

The Trustees have continued to focus on delivering a cost-effective service that meets the needs of our clients. The Charity was fortunate to receive funding above that expected from a number of sources in 2022-23 resulting in a surplus for the year. The EUSS project was further extended and we received funding for the full year from Cotswold District Council.

The reserves of the Charity have grown in recent years with additional funding and unexpected salary savings due to vacant posts. The Trustees have reviewed our reserves policy and aim to only hold reserves sufficient to cover expected funding gaps for the next 3 years. This has allowed us to approve a funding programme in 2022-23 and 2023-24 to replace outdated IT infrastructure, increase support for volunteers and improve services to our clients.

Income for the year was £693,976. We spent £554,237 giving a surplus of £139,739. The surplus will be used to support the charity in 2023-24. The charity has total reserves of £687,177 – please see the breakdown on page 27 for further details. This includes £72,881 from the Household Support Fund which we administer for both Stroud District Council and Cotswold District Council. This money will be paid to clients to assist with energy and wider essentials.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed to the organisation, be that from donations, legacies, grants and voluntary effort. During the year we received funding from Citizens Advice, Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the Home Office, the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust, St James's Place, Ecotricity, the Kinsella Foundation, Gloucestershire Communities Fund (partially funded by the Charles Russell Speechlys Cheltenham Community Fund), North Cotswolds Foodbank, Cirencester Foodbank, Stroud District Foodbank, Stroud Town Council and other Town and Parish Councils.

We are grateful to our two district-based, volunteer led, fundraising groups. They have returned to being able to raise money through street collections and fundraising activity. They have continued to find innovative ways to raise funds, increase our profile and promote the organisation.

In addition, we are grateful to the local businesses who have supported our work, whether indirectly through the provision of reduced-rate services or premises, or through donations.

In May 2023, the Trustee Board approved the funding and expenditure budgets for 2023-24.

Stroud PR and Fundraising Committee

Sadly the Stroud Fundraising Group have disbanded after many years of hard work fundraising for the service. Some volunteers will continue to assist the organisation with administration, and publicity which we are grateful for. The trustees wish to thank the fundraising group for their enormous contribution and incredible dedication over many years.

We are grateful to the Stroud Symphony Orchestra whose retiring collection at their concert in June 2023 was in aid of Citizens Advice in Stroud – thank you to Ann Horner for speaking at the event.

Friends of Cotswold Citizens Advice

A successful street collection was held in May 2022 at the same time as a Food Festival.

The Phoenix Festival was held in August 2022 for the first time since Covid and the Friends were able to have a promotional stand there which raised £450.

The Friends also assisted staff and volunteers at the Cirencester PPG Health and Wellbeing Event in June 2022, a collection in Tesco at Tetbury and at the Advent Festival in Cirencester Parish Church in December 2022.

Plans for 2023-24:

Thank you to the Friends for holding a delicious afternoon tea at Cerney House Gardens (including a short talk and a walk around the gardens) during volunteers week to thank all volunteers for their commitment to the organisation.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Reserves policy

The reserves policy for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts is reviewed annually by the Board. We maintain free reserves at such a level as: (i) to provide adequate working capital in the event of potential changes of funding from major funders, (ii) to meet staff redundancy costs and premises costs should the organisation have to severely reduce in size, (iii) provision for settlement of The Pension Trust Employer Debt, in the event that the organisation is forced to close and has no active employees in The Pension Trust, (iv) to mitigate some key risks facing the charity. In particular, the target level for free reserves aims to give a reasonable chance of survival should one of these risks occur: it is recognised that it is not possible, nor it is intended, to protect against every risk. The Board assesses the Charity's target and actual reserves annually. When the level of reserves is materially different from the target level, the Board will determine what action should be taken.

Our reserves target is £246,198. We measure free reserves as total assets less endowments, restricted funds, designated reserves, undepreciated fixed assets and any approved budget deficits. Our free reserves at 31 March 2023 were £164,731.

Future plans

The Business plan for 2023-25 is based on the Citizens Advice Living Strategy and their Business Plan for 2023-26.

The plan is based on the four key strategic priorities: Advice, Advocacy, Inclusive Access and Organisational Health.

Over the next 12 months we will:

- Reshape our advice services, increasing the number of clients advised by working “smarter” whilst prioritising the needs of marginalised communities. We will also maintain our focus on providing good quality advice;
- Be a stronger voice for our client by maximising the feedback loop between advice and advocacy to achieve greater impact for our clients. We will also increase our campaigning using the research undertaken and data provided by our R&C group and national Citizens' Advice;
- Improve the service accessibility for marginalised clients by identifying barriers to advice for marginalised groups in our districts, using needs analysis and the voices of those in our community. We will utilise the lived experience of our clients to enable inclusive decisions to be made about our advice provision;
- Review our organisational strategy to improve the experience of staff and volunteers by undertaking a review of our organisational strategy. We will ensure that staff and volunteers have a rewarding and positive experience, focussing on recruitment, satisfaction and retention; and
- Increase and strengthen partnerships and secure new funding. We will work with existing and new partners to identify opportunities and challenges and to address them and secure new funding to reduce our reliance on local authority funding and increase our longer term sustainability.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

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 charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting 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; and
- 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 proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees 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.

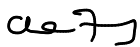
The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

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 trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 17 October 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Claire Feehily - Chair

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages 12 to 32.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charitable 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 charitable 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 the charitable company'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 charitable 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 Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable 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.

Alison Godfrey

Date: 18 October 2023

Alison Godfrey FCA

Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

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

For the year ended 31 March 2023

		Restricted	Unrestricted	2023 Total £	Restated 2022 Total £
	Note	£	£		
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	12,403	28,639	41,042	58,928
Charitable activities	4	234,404	418,285	652,689	649,949
Other trading activities		-	-	-	399
Investments		-	245	245	71
Total income		<u>246,807</u>	<u>447,169</u>	693,976	<u>709,347</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	45,242	45,242	38,758
Charitable activities		<u>226,750</u>	<u>282,245</u>	508,995	<u>553,022</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>226,750</u>	<u>327,487</u>	554,237	<u>591,780</u>
Net income		20,057	119,682	139,739	117,567
Transfers between funds		15,209	(15,209)	-	-
Other recognised gains					
Gains on remeasurement of defined benefit pension scheme		-	1,181	1,181	13,554
Net movement in funds	7	35,266	105,654	140,920	131,121
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>106,674</u>	<u>439,583</u>	546,257	<u>415,136</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>141,940</u>	<u>545,237</u>	687,177	<u>546,257</u>

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 16 to the accounts.

The 2022 comparatives have been restated as set out in note 21 to the accounts.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	Restated 2022 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	10		166	6,477
Current assets				
Debtors	11	70,456		39,019
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>732,173</u>		<u>573,648</u>
		802,629		612,667
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	12	<u>(113,540)</u>		<u>(69,628)</u>
Net current assets			<u>689,089</u>	<u>543,039</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			689,255	549,516
Provisions for liabilities	14		<u>(2,078)</u>	<u>(3,259)</u>
Net assets	15		<u>687,177</u>	<u>546,257</u>
Funds	16			
Restricted funds			141,940	106,674
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds			380,340	282,835
General funds			<u>164,897</u>	<u>156,748</u>
Total charity funds			<u>687,177</u>	<u>546,257</u>

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477(2), and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Balance sheet

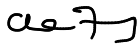
As at 31 March 2023

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the Company keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act; and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on 17 October 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Claire Feehily - Chair

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023	Restated
	£	2022
		£
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net movement in funds	140,920	131,121
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation	2,536	7,036
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(245)	(71)
Loss / (profit) on the sale of fixed assets	3,775	-
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	(31,437)	1,150
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	43,912	7,861
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	(1,181)	(13,554)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	<u>158,280</u>	<u>133,543</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	<u>245</u>	<u>71</u>
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	<u>245</u>	<u>71</u>
Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year	158,525	133,614
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	<u>573,648</u>	<u>440,034</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	<u><u>732,173</u></u>	<u><u>573,648</u></u>

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern. The charity has been able to increase its reserves over recent years and we recently changed our reserves policy to aim to hold enough reserves to cover expected shortfalls for the next 3 years. This leaves us in the fortunate position to have additional funds that we are aiming to spend this year to improve our services. On this basis the Trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved.

c) Income

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

Income from the 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 Trust 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.

d) 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.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the Trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

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

g) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the following basis, which is an estimate of staff time:

	2023	2022
Raising funds	9.9%	7.3%
Charitable activities	90.1%	92.7%

h) Tangible fixed assets

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:

Computer equipment	3 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	20% reducing balance

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000.

i) 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.

j) 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.

k) Creditors

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.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

l) Financial instruments

The charitable company 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 recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

m) Conduit funding

Conduit funds are monies received for third parties and do not belong to the charity. The incoming funds and outgoing payments are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities. Any conduit funds in hand at the year end are shown as creditors in the accounts.

n) Pension costs (defined contribution)

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions.

o) Pension costs (defined benefit)

The charitable company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. It is not possible for the charitable company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. The scheme is therefore accounted for as a defined contribution scheme. A provision is recognised in these accounts for the net present value of future contributions payable under the scheme (see note 14). The valuation is determined with reference to the charity's pension provider, TPT Retirement Solutions.

p) Finance and operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the SOFA over the period in which the cost is incurred. The charity has no finance leases.

q) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are depreciation as described in note 1 (h) and the pension provision as per note 1 (o).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities (restated)

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	28,000	30,928	58,928
Charitable activities	295,907	354,042	649,949
Other trading activities	-	399	399
Investments	-	71	71
Total income	323,907	385,440	709,347
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	38,758	38,758
Charitable activities	324,624	228,398	553,022
Total expenditure	324,624	267,156	591,780
Net income / (expenditure)	(717)	118,284	117,567
Transfers between funds	3,122	(3,122)	-
Other recognised gains:			
Gains on remeasurement of defined benefit pension scheme	-	13,554	13,554
Net movement in funds	2,405	128,716	131,121

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Donations	12,403	25,985	38,388
Fundraising	-	2,654	2,654
Total income from donations	12,403	28,639	41,042
Prior period comparative (restated)			
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Donations	28,000	30,031	58,031
Fundraising	-	897	897
Total income from donations	28,000	30,928	58,928

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Stroud District Council - Core funding	-	125,000	125,000
Stroud District Council - Household support fund	-	4,583	4,583
Stroud District Council - Housing related debt	25,065	-	25,065
Cotswold District Council - Core funding	-	72,520	72,520
Cotswold District Council - Household support fund	-	14,750	14,750
Household support fund - CDC and SDC	147,800	-	147,800
Gloucestershire County Council - Core funding	-	41,668	41,668
Gloucestershire County Council - Thrive Grant	7,500	-	7,500
Gloucestershire County Council - Outreach	-	16,666	16,666
St James Place Foundation	7,500	-	7,500
GCF	-	5,000	5,000
Town and Parish Councils	-	13,225	13,225
Citizens Advice - Core / Donation / Gambling	-	15,500	15,500
Other grants	-	15,450	15,450
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	15,000	15,000
Smart meters - CitA	-	8,194	8,194
EAP	19,914	-	19,914
EUSS	26,495	-	26,495
Cirencester Foodbank	-	21,577	21,577
North Cotswold Foodbank	-	19,335	19,335
Stroud Foodbank	-	29,817	29,817
Citizens Advice - money advice service	130	-	130
Total income from charitable activities	234,404	418,285	652,689

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

4. Income from charitable activities (continued)

Prior period comparative (restated)

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Stroud District Council - core funding	-	125,000	125,000
Cotswold District Council - core funding	-	70,920	70,920
Help 2 Claim	28,235	-	28,235
St James Place Foundation	12,000	-	12,000
Stroud District Council - housing related debt	25,274	-	25,274
Gloucestershire County Council - EU settlement scheme and core funding	51,821	52,935	104,756
Covid grants	-	23,577	23,577
Citizens Advice - money advice service	41,893	-	41,893
Foodbanks	-	28,200	28,200
Citizens Advice - energy advice program	14,952	-	14,952
Town and Parish Councils	-	15,660	15,660
Citizens Advice - BESN / BESW - energy project	5,063	-	5,063
Good Things Foundation	4,800	-	4,800
Other grants	-	11,250	11,250
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	15,000	15,000
Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucester	5,000	-	5,000
Cotswold District Council - household support fund	36,869	5,500	42,369
Gloucester County Council for benefits	20,000	-	20,000
Cotswold District Council - covid hardship fund	50,000	-	50,000
North Cotswold Foodbank	-	6,000	6,000
Total income from charitable activities	295,907	354,042	649,949

Government grants

The charitable company receives government grants, defined as funding from local, town and parish Councils to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the period ending 31 March 2023 was £454,026 (2022: £314,789). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	24,586	224,460	71,781	320,827
Grants paid (note 6)	-	76,992	-	76,992
Staff and volunteer expenses	-	10,501	-	10,501
Staff and volunteer training	-	1,733	-	1,733
Staff recruitment expenses	-	3,695	-	3,695
Premises costs	-	-	53,644	53,644
Communications & IT	-	-	26,743	26,743
General office	-	-	18,121	18,121
Finance costs	-	-	25,906	25,906
Consultancy costs	-	3,040	1,892	4,932
Governance costs	-	-	4,832	4,832
Depreciation costs	-	-	2,536	2,536
Loss on disposal	-	-	3,775	3,775
Sub-total	24,586	320,421	209,230	554,237
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>20,656</u>	<u>188,574</u>	<u>(209,230)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>45,242</u>	<u>508,995</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>554,237</u>

Total governance costs were £4,832 (2022: £4,537).

Prior period comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2022 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	21,334	272,205	71,376	364,915
Grants paid (note 6)	-	85,853	-	85,853
Staff and volunteer expenses	-	2,227	-	2,227
Staff and volunteer training	-	875	-	875
Staff recruitment expenses	-	1,135	-	1,135
Premises costs	-	-	47,262	47,262
Communications & IT	-	-	18,927	18,927
General office	-	-	22,053	22,053
Finance costs	-	-	21,570	21,570
Consultancy costs	3,078	7,695	4,617	15,390
Governance costs	-	-	4,537	4,537
Depreciation costs	-	-	7,036	7,036
Sub-total	24,412	369,990	197,378	591,780
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>14,346</u>	<u>183,032</u>	<u>(197,378)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>38,758</u>	<u>553,022</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>591,780</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

6. Grants payable

	2023	2022
	£	£
Grants payable to institutions:		
Stroud Bereford Group	-	2,100
Total grants payable to institutions	-	2,100
Grants payable to individuals:	76,992	83,753
Total grants payable	76,992	85,853

All grants are paid to fund charitable activities. The grants shown above do not include any contribution to core costs.

7. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Depreciation	2,536	7,036
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (excluding VAT)	3,150	2,900

8. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries and wages	284,341	325,564
Social security costs	17,581	22,574
Pension costs	18,905	16,777
	320,827	364,915

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

The key management personnel of the charitable company comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Service Managers. The total emoluments paid to key management personnel for the year was £104,699 (2022: £102,878).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

8. Staff costs and numbers (continued)

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Average head count	<u>16.9</u>	<u>19.4</u>

9. Taxation

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

10. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	29,352	27,361	56,713
Additions in year	-	-	-
Disposals in the year	<u>-</u>	<u>(24,000)</u>	<u>(24,000)</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>29,352</u>	<u>3,361</u>	<u>32,713</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	26,857	23,379	50,236
Charge for the year	2,495	41	2,536
Disposals in the year	<u>-</u>	<u>(20,225)</u>	<u>(20,225)</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>29,352</u>	<u>3,195</u>	<u>32,547</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>166</u></u>	<u><u>166</u></u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>2,495</u>	<u>3,982</u>	<u>6,477</u>

11. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	46,600	4,250
Prepayments	8,222	8,307
Accrued income	<u>15,634</u>	<u>26,462</u>
	<u><u>70,456</u></u>	<u><u>39,019</u></u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

12. Creditors : amounts due within 1 year

	2023	Restated 2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	5,807	1,323
Accruals	6,107	29,799
Deferred income	84,419	30,396
Other taxation and social security	2,785	5,460
Other creditors	14,422	2,650
	<u>113,540</u>	<u>69,628</u>

13. Deferred income

	2023	Restated 2022
	£	£
At 1 April 2022	30,396	8,935
Deferred during the year	84,419	30,396
Released during the year	(30,396)	(8,935)
	<u>84,419</u>	<u>30,396</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>84,419</u>	<u>30,396</u>

Deferred income relates to contract income for providing foodbank advisors.

14. Pension provision

The charitable company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. Provision has been made for the net present value of future contributions payable by the charity. The provision is valued based on information provided by TPT Retirement Solutions (dated 31 March 2023). The latest full actuarial valuation of the scheme was dated 30 September 2017 and required participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme. The movement on the provision is recognised on the SoFA as an other recognised (gain) / loss.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Provision at the start of the year	3,259	16,813
Movement in the year	<u>(1,181)</u>	<u>(13,554)</u>
Provision at the end of the year	<u>2,078</u>	<u>3,259</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	166	166
Current assets	141,940	380,340	280,349	802,629
Current liabilities	-	-	(113,540)	(113,540)
Provisions	-	-	(2,078)	(2,078)
Net assets at 31 March 2023	141,940	380,340	164,897	687,177
Prior period comparative (restated)				
	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	6,477	6,477
Current assets	106,674	282,835	223,158	612,667
Current liabilities	-	-	(69,628)	(69,628)
Provisions	-	-	(3,259)	(3,259)
Net assets at 31 March 2022	106,674	282,835	156,748	546,257

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

16. Movements in funds

	(Restated) At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and other gains £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds					
Housing related debt advice	1,359	25,065	(12,517)	-	13,907
Stroud benefits	55,551	19,903	(42,931)	-	32,523
Cotswold money advice	6,531	7,500	(29,295)	15,264	-
Mental health debt	13,308	-	(12,336)	-	972
Universal credit help to claim	13,482	-	-	(13,482)	-
Money advice service	-	130	(1,333)	1,203	-
Energy advice program	4,712	-	-	-	4,712
European Union settlement scheme	-	26,495	(37,863)	11,368	-
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	10,715	19,914	(13,484)	-	17,145
Household support fund	-	147,800	(75,119)	-	72,681
Covid Hardship fund	1,016	-	(1,872)	856	-
Total restricted funds	106,674	246,807	(226,750)	15,209	141,940
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Stroud IT fund	635	-	(2,495)	1,882	22
Stroud advice	245,082	229,709	(155,818)	(106,932)	212,041
Cotswolds advice	37,118	146,731	(94,669)	(15,264)	73,916
Additional expenditure fund	-	-	-	94,361	94,361
<i>Total designated funds</i>	282,835	376,440	(252,982)	(25,953)	380,340
General funds	156,748	70,729	(74,505)	11,925	164,897
Total unrestricted funds	439,583	447,169	(327,487)	(14,028)	545,237
Total funds	546,257	693,976	(554,237)	1,181	687,177

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

16. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Housing related debt advice	To provide advice and support on housing related debt to clients in Stroud and district and in the Cotswold district.
Stroud benefits	Funding from the Good Things Foundation to support people to get the information and advice they need from HMRC including helping them to use new online systems.
Cotswolds money advice	Specialist casework advice to people in the Cotswolds with money problems to help them to maximise their income, reduce their debts and increase their confidence and competence in managing their financial affairs.
Mental health debt	To provide funding to improve access to finance related advice for people with mental ill health.
Money advice service	Funding for trainee debt adviser to increase the capacity of debt advice in order to meet predicted increased demand for debt advice as a result of Covid-19. This project ended in 22/23.
Energy advice program	Funding to provide one-to-one advice to clients in fuel poverty, or in a fuel poverty risk group.
European Union settlement scheme	Funding to provide advice and practical support to vulnerable EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in Gloucestershire to help them make their EU Settlement Scheme application.
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	Funding to help vulnerable consumers to reduce their energy costs, and to run a campaign to raise awareness of energy issues.
Household support fund	Funds allocated from Cotswold District Council and Stroud District Council from the Household Support Fund to distribute to eligible families with children.
Covid Hardship fund	Funds allocated from Cotswold District Council to enable the write off of priority debts for clients affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Purposes of designated funds

Stroud IT fund	For the purchase of new computer equipment for the Stroud district.
Stroud advice	Funds raised are designated for the use by the Bureau in the Stroud and District local government area.
Cotswold advice	Funds raised are designated for the use by the Bureau in the Cotswold and District local government area.
Additional expenditure fund	Funds for additional expenditure relating to staffing and IT equipment agreed at the Board meeting in February 2023.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

16. Movements in funds (continued)

Purpose of transfers between funds

The transfers from the Stroud advice and Cotswold advice designated funds to restricted funds are to top up overspends on projects.

The Citizens Advice Help to Claim service provided clients with advice and support in the early stages of a Universal Credit claim up until the first full payment is made. This project ended in 21/22 and the funds were fully spent.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

16. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior period comparative (restated)

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and other gains £	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds					
Housing related debt advice	-	25,274	(23,915)	-	1,359
Stroud benefits	34,068	40,800	(19,317)	-	55,551
Cotswold money advice	-	24,000	(17,469)	-	6,531
Mental health debt	43,589	-	(30,281)	-	13,308
Universal credit help to claim	13,781	28,235	(28,534)	-	13,482
Money advice service	1,150	41,893	(44,660)	1,617	-
Energy advice program	4,898	14,952	(15,138)	-	4,712
European Union settlement scheme	-	51,821	(53,298)	1,477	-
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	-	5,000	(5,028)	28	-
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	6,783	5,063	(1,131)	-	10,715
Household support fund	-	36,869	(36,869)	-	-
Covid Hardship fund	-	50,000	(48,984)	-	1,016
Total restricted funds	104,269	323,907	(324,624)	3,122	106,674
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Stroud IT fund	6,675	-	(6,040)	-	635
Stroud advice	160,998	214,942	(128,797)	(2,061)	245,082
Cotswolds advice	-	136,298	(98,119)	(1,061)	37,118
<i>Total designated funds</i>	<i>167,673</i>	<i>351,240</i>	<i>(232,956)</i>	<i>(3,122)</i>	<i>282,835</i>
General funds	143,194	34,200	(34,200)	13,554	156,748
Total unrestricted funds	310,867	385,440	(267,156)	10,432	439,583
Total funds	415,136	709,347	(591,780)	13,554	546,257

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

17. Operating lease commitments

The charity had operating leases at the year end with total future minimum lease payments as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Amount falling due:		
Within 1 year	23,409	27,959
Within 1 - 5 years	<u>15,197</u>	<u>35,740</u>
	<u>38,606</u>	<u>63,699</u>

18. Conduit funding

	2023 £	2022 £
Balance at start of year	2,612	1,795
Funding received during year	12,409	6,526
Funding distributed during year	<u>(1,478)</u>	<u>(5,709)</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>13,543</u>	<u>2,612</u>

Conduit funds are monies received for third parties and do not belong to the charity. The charity passes them through the accounts under a unique project code as a service to other charities to help their charitable purposes, but does not claim gift aid nor has control over their use. The receipts and payments referred to above have been excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities. The balance held at the end of the year is included in other creditors (note 12).

19. Contingent liability

The charity is party to a multi-employer pension scheme with The Pension Trust. The estimated debt on withdrawal (£75 debt) for CAB Stroud & District has been calculated to be £17,430. This figure has an effective date of 30 September 2022. In the prior year the contingent liability was estimated to be £31,902 (effective 30 September 2021). The charity currently has no intention of withdrawing from the scheme.

20. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current or prior year.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

21. Prior period restatement

The comparative financial statements have been restated due to misclassifying unrestricted contract income as restricted grant income. The effects of the restatement are set out below:

Deferred income	2022 £
Deferred income per original accounts at 31 March 2022	-
Additional contract income to defer	<u>30,396</u>
Restated deferred income as at 31 March 2022	<u><u>30,396</u></u>

Income	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total 2022 £
Income per original accounts at 31 March 2022	379,568	351,240	730,808
Deferred income adjustments	<u>(55,661)</u>	<u>34,200</u>	<u>(21,461)</u>
Restated income at 31 March 2022	<u><u>323,907</u></u>	<u><u>385,440</u></u>	<u><u>709,347</u></u>

Funds brought forward	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total 2021 £
Funds per original accounts at 1 April 2021	113,204	310,867	424,071
Reclassification between funds	<u>(8,935)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(8,935)</u>
Restated funds at 1 April 2021	<u><u>104,269</u></u>	<u><u>310,867</u></u>	<u><u>415,136</u></u>

CITIZENS ADVICE STROUD & COTSWOLD DISTRICTS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1096398

Accounts

Company no. 4389411
Charity no. 1096398

**Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold
Districts Limited**

**Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements**

31 March 2022

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Company number	4389411
Charity number	1096398
Registered office and operational address	Unit 8 1st Floor Brunel Mall London Road Stroud Gloucestershire GL5 2BP
Trustees	Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows: Martin Cook appointed 6 October 2021 Gordon Craig Claire Feehily Carolyn Folley appointed 6 October 2021 John Hammond Juliet Kilty Barry O'Driscoll appointed 6 October 2021 Elaine McCarthy resigned 1 May 2022 Beatrix Pitel appointed 6 October 2021 Simon Pitt appointed 6 October 2021 resigned 24 January 2022 Martyn Price appointed 6 October 2021 Sarah Quinn resigned 26 January 2022 Jane Whaley appointed 6 October 2021
Chief executive officer and company secretary	Elizabeth Hall
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank PO Box 7193 Planetary Road Willenhall WV1 9DG NatWest Bank Buildings, George Street Stroud Gloucester GL5 3DT Scottish Widows Bank PO Box 883 Leeds LS1 9TY
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 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 (effective from January 2019).

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The organisation is a registered charity. It became incorporated on 7 March 2002 as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The name of the organisation was changed, on 13th September 2016, to Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited and the Articles of Association were amended accordingly. The Articles of Association were further amended on 21 December 2020 to permit and regulate remote meetings.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Trustees are recruited from the local community, with particular individuals and communities targeted depending on the skills or knowledge gaps identified by serving Trustees. Interested individuals are required to submit a statement of their experience and qualifications and go through a selection process operated by the Chair of Trustees and then elected by the charity's membership at the annual general meeting. Additional Trustees may be co-opted by the Board of Trustees during the year.

During 2021, the Trustees reviewed the present structure and diversity of the Board and commenced a recruitment drive for new Trustees from the local area, local community groups and stakeholders.

A very positive response resulted in the recruitment of seven new Trustees who were elected at the annual general meeting in October 2021.

The Board has been most impressed by the interest, experience and quality of the new Trustees and is confident that the new Board will be able to develop and continue to meet the challenges that face Citizens Advice in these uncertain times.

Trustee induction and training

There are induction procedures for new trustees to make them aware of their role and training is offered throughout their term of office.

Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the understanding of their role.

Organisational structure

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited is an independent member of Citizens Advice, the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management as well as monitoring progress against these standards. Citizens Advice appoints a representative who is invited to attend the Board as a non-voting member.

The charity is governed through a Trustee Board. Trustees who have held office during the year are listed on page 1. The Articles of Association provide for a minimum of three and a maximum of twenty-one Trustees.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

The voluntary Board of Trustees governs the charity and defines overall policy and future strategy. It also monitors performance, risk and the quality of service. The Board is ultimately responsible for the financial control of the organisation and for financial reporting to its members and others. All Trustees have a responsibility to safeguard the resources of the organisation, and to use them in an economical and effective way furthering the work of the charity. The Trustee Board meets every two months at least, in addition to holding its Annual General Meeting.

The Board has two sub-committees, the Finance and Risk sub-committee and the HR sub-committee which meet regularly throughout the year. These discuss and work on issues in more detail and make recommendations to the Board. Only the full Board can make decisions, but the Board can delegate authority to a sub-committee to make a decision on a specific issue. The Finance and Risk sub-committee of the Board has delegated responsibility for receiving and scrutinising the quarterly financial reports, annual budget, all other financial issues and the organisational risk log, and making recommendations to the full Board.

The Trustee Board discusses the finances on a quarterly basis. Financial Reports are circulated in advance of Board meetings and are scrutinised in detail by the Finance and Risk sub-committee. Day to day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer. In addition, there is an experienced team of paid staff and volunteers who are key to the service offered by the charity. Decisions are made by the Trustee Board in line with the Business Development Plan and are reviewed at least annually.

The Senior Leadership Team meet to review progress against targets and the Charity's financial position and to discuss issues referred to them by the Trustee Board. Reports and recommendations are then taken to the full Board for approval, and their implementation is organised by the Chief Executive Officer and the staff team. There are regular staff, volunteer and Senior Leadership Team meetings which ensure that progress is being made against targets. There is an Annual General Meeting, which involves the staff team, Trustee Board, members, and other stakeholders.

The day to day service is delivered by a team of 56 volunteers assisted by a small team of paid staff. In addition, the service is supported by a number of volunteer fundraisers and dedicated research and campaign group members. In the Cotswold District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Cotswold District from its main office in Cirencester. Pre-Covid, the charity operated from outreach advice outlets in Tetbury and Moreton-in-March and these have now reopened. In the Stroud District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Stroud District from its main office in Stroud. Pre-pandemic, there were outreach advice outlets in Berkeley, Dursley, Nailsworth, Stonehouse and Wotton-under-Edge. Post-Covid, the following outreaches have now opened: Dursley; Stonehouse APT; Wotton-under-Edge (in a new venue at the Keepers Community Hub) and Paganhill Community Hub.

Key risks and uncertainties

The organisation actively monitors its risk profile by way of a risk register, which identifies the principal risks, the likelihood of occurrence and their potential impact on the work of the charity. The register, together with the wider risk landscape and environment is regularly considered by the Finance and Risk sub-committee, which meets at every two months, and thereafter by the Board.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Key risks and issues currently being actively managed are:

- The continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic upon colleagues, operational service provision and funding opportunities;
- The recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers;
- The financial landscape and need to secure funding for the service in the longer term, especially for our core service;
- The year ahead is likely to be even more challenging, as the cost of living crisis continues, with an anticipated increase in demand for debt, energy and welfare benefits advice alongside a difficult funding climate; and
- Managing demand for our face to face service as people expect offices to be open alongside telephone and email advice.

Objectives and activities

Objects

The Charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in the Districts of Stroud, Cotswold, Gloucestershire and surrounding areas.

In furtherance of these objectives, the company provides advice and information via a variety of communication channels. Our aims are focused on:

- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face; and
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

Our service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

The charity has developed its own vision statement to reflect its ambition to become the leading advice service across Stroud and Cotswold Districts:

A caring, dynamic and skilful organisation reaching out to every corner of the community to supply quality advice and support.... The advice service of choice!

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

A robust and forward-thinking review of the organisation took place when the 2021/24 Business Plan was produced. The 2021/24 plan provided an opportunity to reset and refocus the organisation and build solid and lasting foundations, after a particularly challenging year.

The business plan for 2022/25 seeks to embed the progress made in 2021/22 and reinforce our ambition to become the leading advice service across Stroud and Cotswold Districts, providing accessible, high-quality advice, advocacy and information services, which meet the changing needs of our geographically dispersed communities.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and who we try to help are described below. All our charitable activities focus on providing the advice people need for the problems they face and are undertaken specifically to provide public benefit. The Board of Trustees has had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Achievements and performance

Advice and information services

The main areas of charitable activity are:

- the provision of general advice and information services;
- the provision of specialist advice and casework services in the debt and welfare benefits categories of social welfare law;
- the provisions of specialist advice and employment services in employment issues; and
- the provision of advice in relation to the EU Settlement Scheme.

During 2021-22, we offered advice and information in the following ways:

- Telephone – we continued to offer our freephone telephone helplines. The lines were covered on a rota basis between the hours of 10am and 4pm from Monday to Friday.
- Clients were given a diagnostic assessment first where we aimed to resolve their issue if possible. Should full advice be needed clients could be given telephone appointments. Clients who needed debt or benefit casework services have been dealt with remotely via telephone and email advice as well as face to face where needed.
- Email advice – clients can ask for email advice via our website.
- Face to face – we saw some clients face to face at appointment when they could not access telephone or email advice due to one or more of the following:
 - A lack of telephone or email access including mobile phone reception and capability issues;
 - A vulnerability that made remote advice difficult;
 - The client's case was so complex that telephone advice would lead to a slower resolution of the case or a potential negative impact on the outcome for client; and
 - The client needed to be seen face to face for an adviser to assess capability or give full advice.

We also endeavoured to advise clients who come to the offices with an urgent issue on the day – either in person, via telephone or via Teams video link on a dedicated PC.

In addition to general advice, the following specialist services were provided in 2021-22:

- Specialist debt advice funded by the Money Advice and Pensions Service and St James's Place;
- Specialist mental health casework funded by Nationwide;
- We were funded for homelessness prevention money advice for Stroud residents by Stroud District Council;
- We received funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to support clients experiencing domestic abuse;
- Specialist welfare benefits advice was funded through the Good Things Foundation and a generous donation from an anonymous donor;
- Specialist advice on the EU Settlement Scheme was funded by the Home Office through a partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and GARAS;
- Energy advice (we had two specialist energy advisers during this year) was funded by national Citizens Advice energy projects and a Smart Meter GB project with North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice;
- We also had volunteer employment specialists who continued to be busy; and
- We had 3 dedicated foodbank advisers who gave generalist advice to clients referred by the Stroud, North Cotswold and Cirencester Foodbanks. These advisers are funded by the Foodbanks themselves.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Whilst we aim to empower clients to resolve their problems using the advice we give, many of our clients need additional support in order to achieve a solution. This may be due to the vulnerability of the client, the complexity of the problems or a combination of the two.

Whilst we endeavour to resolve a client's issue as quickly as possible, we do not limit clients to a set number of appointments or to a limited timescale that they can access our help. Where needed and with the appropriate consent, we contact third parties on behalf of clients by making telephone calls or writing letters.

Some clients will need appointments over several weeks or months with multiple specialists within the organisation. For example a client with debt issues may need not only debt advice, but specialist benefits advice and support as well as specialist energy advice to maximise their income and ensure that their income will be sufficient to avoid further debt issues in the future.

Contribution of Volunteers and Paid Staff

The charity's success could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of volunteers and staff. The Trustee Board and senior leadership team recognise the tremendous contribution made by the charity's volunteers in advising the public and administering the service without which the service could not operate. Throughout 2021/22 the service employed 29 paid workers and 90 volunteers (including fundraisers) together delivering projects in addition to the core service.

Volunteers represent the indispensable core of the service for without them there would not be a Citizens Advice service.

We have been fortunate that during the pandemic a high percentage of volunteers were prepared to work remotely and that many volunteers continued with volunteering with us at the same time as managing increased caring responsibilities for friends, neighbours and family members.

In pre pandemic times, the volunteer advisers and receptionists contributed, on average, 7 hours per week each. However, during the last two years, we are very aware that many volunteers and staff members worked for many more hours than they did when we were in the offices. We are very grateful to everyone for their commitment to our clients and the running of our service.

Volunteers also bring many other skills to the service. Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts has continued to recruit and train staff and volunteers throughout the pandemic. However, along with other local Citizens Advice, we are aware that training remotely could be difficult and this limited the number of new advisers that were recruited and retained. We consistently review our training offer to ensure that we provide an accessible and welcoming place to volunteer.

Who used and benefited from our services?

During the reporting year the organisation:

- Supported 5,067 clients across 18,464 issues.
The number of clients supported and the number of issues in 2021-22 are higher than in 2020-21. The number of issues rises each year and may be indicative of more complex problems being dealt with. This is representative of the experience of our advisers who manage a high number of complex cases, which cannot be resolved through our advice alone;
- Generated a total of £572,321 in additional income for clients, primarily through tax credits, benefits or salaries. Welfare benefits and tax credits made up a total of 31.5% of the issues we have supported on;

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

- Helped 761 households with debt advice making people's lives more sustainable;
- Assisted 313 households with utilities and communications issues, including energy issues. 179 clients were giving advice on managing fuel debts;
- £312,354 of debt was written off by negotiating with creditors, obtaining Debt Relief Orders and giving advice on budgeting and £10,184 worth of repayments were rescheduled. In partnership with Cotswold District Council, we distributed £60,000 of funds to clear priority debts for Cotswold households who had incurred priority debts as a result of Covid and referred such households to CDC for further financial support with their Council Tax arrears;
- We delivered the Household Support Fund for Families for Cotswold District Council – distributing over £30,000 of support with energy and wider essentials and over £10,000 in supermarket vouchers for support with the cost of food;
- Assisted 394 households with utilities and communications issues, including energy issues. 294 clients were given advice on managing fuel debts;
- Advised 553 clients on employment issues, including rights under the schemes introduced due to Covid (furlough and the Self Employment Income Support Scheme), disputes, redundancy and dismissal;
- Advised 158 clients who had experienced discrimination, hate and/or gender violence and abuse; and
- Was a partner agency with Gloucestershire County Council, North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and GARAS delivering advice to clients who needed to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Our staff and volunteers assist a wide range of clients:

- 46% of clients reported that they were disabled or had a long term health condition; and
- We helped clients across a wide age range – with clients in all age categories from 15-19 to 95-99.

Factors affecting the achievement of objectives

The year ending 31st March 2022 continued to be a challenging year for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold District as the Covid-19 pandemic continued. The guidance to work from home was not lifted until July 2021 and was reintroduced in December 2021 until 19 January 2022. Balancing remote working with the need to open the offices to ensure vulnerable and disadvantaged clients can access advice proved to be a challenge.

Financial review

The Trustees have continued to focus on delivering a cost-effective service that meets the needs of our clients. The Charity was fortunate to receive funding above that expected from a number of sources in 2021/22 resulting in a surplus for the year. The EUSS project that was scheduled to end on 30 September 2021 was extended for a further six months, we agreed a grant with Stroud District Foodbank for a dedicated adviser and received funding for the full year from Cotswold District Council. We were successful in our applications for several Covid related grants.

The reserves of the Charity have grown in recent years with additional funding and unexpected salary savings due to vacant posts. The Trustees have reviewed our reserves policy and aim to only hold reserves sufficient to cover expected funding gaps for the next 3 years. This allows us to consider a funding programme in 2022/23 that will allow us to replace outdated IT infrastructure and improve services to our clients.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Income for the year was £730,808. We spent £591,780 giving a surplus of £139,028. The surplus will be used to support the charity in 2022-23. The charity has total reserves of £576,653 – please see the breakdown on page 14 for further details.

We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed to the organisation, be that from donations, legacies, grants and voluntary effort. During the year we received funding from Citizens Advice, Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the Home Office, Good Things Foundation, the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust, Nationwide, Police Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire, St James's Place, North Cotswolds Foodbank, Cirencester Foodbank, Stroud District Foodbank, Stroud Town Council and other Town and Parish Councils.

We continue to receive core funding from Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council and thank them for their ongoing support. We are also grateful to those local town and parish councils who have been able to make grants available to us, during the last two difficult years.

We received a grant from the Good Things Foundation to support clients using HMRC's online services. We continue to receive a grant from Stroud District Council for preventing homelessness through debt advice. We also received funding from national Citizens Advice for energy advice, the Help to Claim project and funding for a debt trainee under the Money Advice and Pensions Service Increasing Capacity project. We received a grant from the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner to support clients experiencing domestic abuse. We also received funding from the Home Office for the EU Settlement Scheme project with partner agencies in Gloucestershire. The North Cotswold Foodbank, the Cirencester Foodbank and the Stroud District Foodbank have each funded a dedicated foodbank adviser for foodbank clients in their respective areas.

We are grateful to our two district-based, volunteer led, fundraising groups. Whilst Covid -19 has had an impact on their ability to raise money through street collections and fundraising activity, they have continued to find innovative ways to raise funds, increase our profile and promoted the organisation.

In addition, we are grateful to the local businesses who have supported our work, whether indirectly through the provision of reduced-rate services or premises, or through donations.

At the meeting in May 2022, the Trustee Board approved the funding and expenditure budgets for 2022/23.

Stroud PR and Fundraising Committee

Due to Covid restrictions, our Committee has again been restricted in the amount we have been able to do over the last year.

However, we managed to have a Street Collection in Stroud in October 2021 where we handed out leaflets to inform as many as possible that our service was still available, at least by phone and email and also raised around £250.

As a charity, we were heartened by the continued financial support given over this time. In particular, we requested help to equip our outreach offices with computers so they could start to reopen. Many computers had been used so that volunteers could work from home but this meant there was a need to re-equip the outreach offices. The response was much appreciated.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Plans for 2022/23:

- We planned to hold a piano concert which was offered to us. We are grateful to Clare Hammond and the Gloucestershire Youth Orchestra for the concert that was held on 21st May 2022;
- Continue our Street Collections;
- Maintain our quarterly informative articles to Village Magazines and local newspapers; and
- Seek to find new donors as we recognise that some, who have so faithfully supported us for so many years, are no longer with us.

With the help of our supporters we have continued to raise, with gift aid, £24,000.

Friends of Cotswold Citizens Advice

In December the Friends changed their charity registered name from Friends of Cirencester CAB to Friends of Cotswold Citizens Advice, to accord more closely with the current Citizens Advice branding. There was no change to the charity's main purpose, which is to support the Citizens Advice service in Cirencester and the surrounding Cotswold District.

Due to Covid, it was not possible to arrange any fundraising events during the year, and, as the Phoenix Festival was cancelled, we were unable to have our promotional stand there. Despite this, and thanks to the generosity of donors, the Friends were able to assist Cotswold Citizens Advice with grants totalling some £27,500. Payments were made to help with the cost of the Money Advice service; to assist with the cost of an adviser at the Cirencester foodbank; to provide a small "crisis fund", and towards IT equipment and other expenses.

The Friends organised a street collection in Cirencester for Cotswold Citizens Advice in December. Unfortunately, it was a cold, windy day, and although there was a market, footfall in town was low. Further street collections are planned, to raise funds and to promote the service.

We do need more volunteers to help on occasion with our events and activities. Anyone interested is asked to contact us at FOCCAB@gmail.com.

Reserves policy

The reserves policy for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts is reviewed annually by the Board. We maintain free reserves at such a level as: (i) to provide adequate working capital in the event of potential changes of funding from major funders, (ii) to meet staff redundancy costs and premises costs should the organisation have to severely reduce in size, (iii) Provision for settlement of The Pension Trust Employer Debt, in the event that the organisation is forced to close and has no active employees in The Pension Trust, (iv) to mitigate some key risks facing the charity. In particular, the target level for free reserves aims to give a reasonable chance of survival should one of these risks occur: it is recognised that it is not possible, nor it is intended, to protect against every risk. The Board assesses the Charity's target and actual reserves annually. When the level of reserves is materially different from the target level, the Board will determine what action should be taken.

Our reserves target is £182,672. We measure free reserves as total assets less endowments, restricted funds, designated reserves, undepreciated fixed assets and any approved budget deficits. Our free reserves at 31 March 2022 were £100,786.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Future plans

The Trustee Board approved the Business Plan for 2022-25 in March 2022. The Business Plan seeks to embed and build on the progress made in 2021/22.

The Action plan continues to be based on the five areas of focus in Citizens Advice "Future of Advice Strategic Framework" (2019-2022/3): Advice, Advocacy, Technology, Sustainability and Culture. Key aims for the next 12 months include:

- To ensure that we deliver clear, consistent, empathetic, empowering, tailored and seamless good quality advice;
- To review how we deliver our services post pandemic, with a focus on reaching more people through visible and accessible advice services, embedded in communities across Stroud and Cotswold districts;
- To stabilise and embed the staffing structure so that everyone is clear on roles, line management, accountability and delivery;
- To foster an increased sense of individual and collective responsibility, ownership and accountability at all levels of organisation;
- To invest more in our people, so that they feel valued and supported and see CASCD as a great place to work and volunteer;
- The streamlining of our Support Services (back-office functions) to make best use of existing resources, skills and expertise as well as technological efficiencies; and
- The review of our financial sustainability, seeking alternative sources of funding to help us to meet the evolving future needs of our clients and communities.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (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 charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting 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; and
- 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 proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees 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.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

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 trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 14 October 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Claire Feehily - Chair

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2022, which are set out on pages 13 to 32.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charitable 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 charitable 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 the charitable company'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 charitable 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 Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable 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.

Date: 17 October 2022

Alison Godfrey FCA

Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

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

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	36,000	30,928	66,928	84,042
Charitable activities	4	343,568	319,842	663,410	529,736
Other trading activities		-	399	399	196
Investments		-	71	71	70
Total income		<u>379,568</u>	<u>351,240</u>	<u>730,808</u>	<u>614,044</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	38,758	38,758	68,849
Charitable activities		<u>358,824</u>	<u>194,198</u>	<u>553,022</u>	<u>434,010</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>358,824</u>	<u>232,956</u>	<u>591,780</u>	<u>502,859</u>
Net income		20,744	118,284	139,028	111,185
Transfers between funds		3,122	(3,122)	-	-
Other recognised gains:					
Gains on remeasurement of defined benefit pension scheme		<u>-</u>	<u>13,554</u>	<u>13,554</u>	<u>3,108</u>
Net movement in funds	7	23,866	128,716	152,582	114,293
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>113,204</u>	<u>310,867</u>	<u>424,071</u>	<u>309,778</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>137,070</u></u>	<u><u>439,583</u></u>	<u><u>576,653</u></u>	<u><u>424,071</u></u>

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 15 to the accounts.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	10		6,477	13,513
Current assets				
Debtors	11	39,019		40,169
Cash at bank and in hand		573,648		440,034
		612,667		480,203
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	12	(39,232)		(52,832)
Net current assets			573,435	427,371
Total assets less current liabilities			579,912	440,884
Provisions for liabilities	13		(3,259)	(16,813)
Net assets	14		576,653	424,071
Funds	15			
Restricted funds			137,070	113,204
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds			282,835	167,673
General funds			156,748	143,194
Total charity funds			576,653	424,071

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477(2), and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2022

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the Company keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act; and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on 14 October 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Claire Feehily - Chair

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net movement in funds	152,582	114,293
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation	7,036	7,329
Interest received	(71)	(70)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	1,150	(21,690)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(13,600)	20,695
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	(13,554)	(3,108)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	<u>133,543</u>	<u>117,449</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	<u>71</u>	<u>70</u>
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	<u>71</u>	<u>70</u>
Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year	133,614	117,519
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	<u>440,034</u>	<u>322,515</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	<u><u>573,648</u></u>	<u><u>440,034</u></u>

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern. The charity has been able to increase its reserves over recent years and we recently changed our reserves policy to aim to hold enough reserves to cover expected shortfalls for the next 3 years. This leaves us in the fortunate position to have additional funds that we are aiming to spend this year to improve our services. On this basis the trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved.

c) Income

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

Income from the 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 Trust 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.

d) 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.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

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

g) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the following basis, which is an estimate of staff time:

	2022	2021
Raising funds	7.3%	11.6%
Charitable activities	92.7%	88.4%

h) Tangible fixed assets

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:

Computer equipment	3 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	20% reducing balance

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000.

i) 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.

j) 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.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

k) Creditors

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.

l) Financial instruments

The charitable company 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 recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

m) Conduit funding

Conduit funds are monies received for third parties and do not belong to the charity. The incoming funds and outgoing payments are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities. Any conduit funds in hand at the year end are shown as creditors in the accounts.

n) Pension costs (defined contribution)

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions.

o) Pension costs (defined benefit)

The charitable company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. It is not possible for the charitable company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. The scheme is therefore accounted for as a defined contribution scheme. A provision is recognised in these accounts for the net present value of future contributions payable under the scheme (see note 13). The valuation is determined with reference to the charity's pension provider, TPT Retirement Solutions.

p) Finance and operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the SOFA over the period in which the cost is incurred. The charity has no finance leases.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

q) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are depreciation as described in note 1 (h) and the pension provision as per note 1 (o).

2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	-	84,042	84,042
Charitable activities	256,682	273,054	529,736
Other trading activities	-	196	196
Investments	-	70	70
Total income	256,682	357,362	614,044
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	68,849	68,849
Charitable activities	259,999	174,011	434,010
Total expenditure	259,999	242,860	502,859
Net income / (expenditure)	(3,317)	114,502	111,185
Transfers between funds	39,152	(39,152)	-
Other recognised gains / (losses):			
Gains / (losses) on remeasurement of defined benefit pension scheme	-	3,108	3,108
Net movement in funds	35,835	78,458	114,293

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Donations	36,000	30,031	66,031	30,909
Legacies	-	-	-	50,000
Fundraising	-	897	897	3,133
Total income from donations	36,000	30,928	66,928	84,042

All income from donations in the prior year was unrestricted.

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Stroud District Council - core funding	-	125,000	125,000
Cotswold District Council - core funding	-	70,920	70,920
Help 2 Claim	28,235	-	28,235
St James Place Foundation	12,000	-	12,000
Stroud District Council - housing related debt	25,274	-	25,274
Gloucestershire County Council - EU settlement scheme and core funding	51,821	52,935	104,756
Covid grants	-	23,577	23,577
Citizens Advice - money advice service	41,893	-	41,893
North Cotswold Foodbank	10,659	-	10,659
Cirencester Foodbank	9,750	-	9,750
Stroud Foodbank	21,252	-	21,252
Citizens Advice - energy advice program	14,952	-	14,952
Town and Parish Councils	-	15,660	15,660
Citizens Advice - BESN / BESW - energy project	5,063	-	5,063
Good Things Foundation	4,800	-	4,800
Other grants	-	11,250	11,250
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	15,000	15,000
Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucester	5,000	-	5,000
Cotswold District Council - household support fund	36,869	5,500	42,369
Gloucester County Council for benefits	20,000	-	20,000
Cotswold District Council - covid hardship fund	50,000	-	50,000
North Cotswold Foodbank	6,000	-	6,000
Total income from charitable activities	343,568	319,842	663,410

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

4. Income from charitable activities (continued)

Prior period comparative:

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £
Stroud District Council - core funding	-	125,000	125,000
Help Through Crisis	85,175	-	85,175
Cotswold District Council - core funding	-	66,420	66,420
Help 2 Claim	31,013	-	31,013
St James Place Foundation	30,925	10,000	40,925
Stroud District Council - housing related debt	25,260	-	25,260
Gloucestershire County Council - EU settlement scheme and core funding	11,800	25,000	36,800
Covid grants	-	24,909	24,909
Citizens Advice - money advice service	19,858	-	19,858
North Cotswold Foodbank	11,991	-	11,991
Cirencester Foodbank	7,250	-	7,250
Citizens Advice - energy advice program	12,390	-	12,390
Town and Parish Councils	-	9,325	9,325
Citizens Advice - BESN / BESW - energy project	9,000	-	9,000
Good Things Foundation	7,020	-	7,020
Other grants	-	6,900	6,900
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	5,500	5,500
Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucester	5,000	-	5,000
Total income from charitable activities	256,682	273,054	529,736

Government grants

The charitable company receives government grants, defined as funding from local, town and parish Councils, and the Police & Crime Commissioner to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the period ending 31 March 2022 was £314,789 (2021: £280,914). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2022 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	21,334	272,205	71,376	364,915
Grants paid (note 6)	-	85,853	-	85,853
Staff and volunteer expenses	-	2,227	-	2,227
Staff and volunteer training	-	875	-	875
Staff recruitment expenses	-	1,135	-	1,135
Premises costs	-	-	47,262	47,262
Communications & IT	-	-	18,927	18,927
General office	-	-	22,053	22,053
Finance costs	-	-	21,570	21,570
Consultancy costs	3,078	7,695	4,617	15,390
Governance costs	-	-	4,537	4,537
Depreciation costs	-	-	7,036	7,036
Sub-total	24,412	369,990	197,378	591,780
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>14,346</u>	<u>183,032</u>	<u>(197,378)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>38,758</u>	<u>553,022</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>591,780</u>

Total governance costs were £4,537 (2021: £4,147).

Prior period comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2021 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	26,867	205,655	89,231	321,753
Grants paid (note 6)	-	20,836	-	20,836
Staff and volunteer expenses	-	1,792	-	1,792
Staff and volunteer training	-	1,182	-	1,182
Staff recruitment expenses	-	1,505	-	1,505
Premises costs	-	-	41,553	41,553
Communications & IT	-	-	14,238	14,238
General office	299	-	22,729	23,028
Finance costs	-	-	21,013	21,013
Consultancy costs	15,205	364	28,914	44,483
Governance costs	-	-	4,147	4,147
Depreciation costs	-	-	7,329	7,329
Sub-total	42,371	231,334	229,154	502,859
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>26,478</u>	<u>202,676</u>	<u>(229,154)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>68,849</u>	<u>434,010</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>502,859</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

6. Grants payable

	2022	2021
	£	£
Grants payable to institutions:		
Chum Neighbourhood Project	-	8,376
GL11 Community	-	8,000
Stroud Bereford Group	2,100	4,460
Total grants payable to institutions	2,100	20,836
Grants payable to individuals:	83,753	-
Total grants payable	85,853	20,836

All grants are paid to fund charitable activities. The grants shown above do not include any contribution to core costs.

7. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Depreciation	7,036	7,329
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (including VAT)	3,480	3,000

8. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Salaries and wages	325,564	288,200
Social security costs	22,574	17,894
Pension costs	16,777	15,659
	364,915	321,753

Included within the prior year salaries and wages above are termination and redundancy payments of £12.9k. No equivalent costs were incurred in the current year.

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

8. Staff costs and numbers (continued)

The key management personnel of the charitable company comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Advice Service Managers. The total emoluments paid to key management personnel, including termination payments and invoiced costs paid to the interim Chief Executive, for the year was £102,878 (2021: £144,812).

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
Average head count	<u>19.4</u>	<u>15.3</u>

9. Taxation

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

10. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2021	29,352	27,361	56,713
Additions in year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>29,352</u>	<u>27,361</u>	<u>56,713</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2021	20,817	22,383	43,200
Charge for the year	<u>6,040</u>	<u>996</u>	<u>7,036</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>26,857</u>	<u>23,379</u>	<u>50,236</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2022	<u>2,495</u>	<u>3,982</u>	<u>6,477</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>8,535</u>	<u>4,978</u>	<u>13,513</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

11. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade debtors	4,250	-
Prepayments	8,307	9,513
Accrued income	26,462	30,656
	<u>39,019</u>	<u>40,169</u>

12. Creditors : amounts due within 1 year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,323	6,021
Accruals	29,799	44,431
Other taxation and social security	5,460	585
Other creditors	2,650	1,795
	<u>39,232</u>	<u>52,832</u>

13. Pension provision

The charitable company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. Provision has been made for the net present value of future contributions payable by the charity. The provision is valued based on information provided by TPT Retirement Solutions (dated 31 March 2022). The latest full actuarial valuation of the scheme was dated 30 September 2017 and required participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme. The movement on the provision is recognised on the SoFA as an other recognised (gain) / loss.

	2022	2021
	£	£
Provision at the start of the year	16,813	19,921
Movement in the year	<u>(13,554)</u>	<u>(3,108)</u>
Provision at the end of the year	<u>3,259</u>	<u>16,813</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

14. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	6,477	6,477
Current assets	137,070	282,835	192,762	612,667
Current liabilities	-	-	(39,232)	(39,232)
Provisions	-	-	(3,259)	(3,259)
Net assets at 31 March 2022	<u>137,070</u>	<u>282,835</u>	<u>156,748</u>	<u>576,653</u>
Prior period comparative				
	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	13,513	13,513
Current assets	113,204	167,673	199,326	480,203
Current liabilities	-	-	(52,832)	(52,832)
Provisions	-	-	(16,813)	(16,813)
Net assets at 31 March 2021	<u>113,204</u>	<u>167,673</u>	<u>143,194</u>	<u>424,071</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

15. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and other gains £	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds					
Housing related debt advice	-	25,274	(23,915)	-	1,359
Stroud benefits	34,068	40,800	(19,317)	-	55,551
Cotswold money advice	-	24,000	(17,469)	-	6,531
Mental health debt	43,589	-	(30,281)	-	13,308
Universal credit help to claim	13,781	28,235	(28,534)	-	13,482
Money advice service	1,150	41,893	(44,660)	1,617	-
Energy advice program	4,898	14,952	(15,138)	-	4,712
European Union settlement scheme	-	51,821	(53,298)	1,477	-
Foodbanks	8,935	49,661	(34,200)	-	24,396
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	-	5,000	(5,028)	28	-
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	6,783	5,063	(1,131)	-	10,715
Household support fund	-	36,869	(36,869)	-	-
Covid Hardship fund	-	50,000	(48,984)	-	1,016
North Cotswold Foodbank fund	-	6,000	-	-	6,000
Total restricted funds	113,204	379,568	(358,824)	3,122	137,070
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Stroud IT fund	6,675	-	(6,040)	-	635
Stroud advice	160,998	214,942	(128,797)	(2,061)	245,082
Cotswolds advice	-	136,298	(98,119)	(1,061)	37,118
<i>Total designated funds</i>	167,673	351,240	(232,956)	(3,122)	282,835
General funds	143,194	-	-	13,554	156,748
Total unrestricted funds	310,867	351,240	(232,956)	10,432	439,583
Total funds	424,071	730,808	(591,780)	13,554	576,653

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Housing related debt advice	To provide advice and support on housing related debt to clients in Stroud and district and in the Cotswold district.
Stroud benefits	Funding from the Good Things Foundation to support people to get the information and advice they need from HMRC including helping them to use new online systems.
Cotswolds money advice	Specialist casework advice to people in the Cotswolds with money problems to help them to maximise their income, reduce their debts and increase their confidence and competence in managing their financial affairs.
Mental health debt	To provide funding to improve access to finance related advice for people with mental ill health.
Universal credit help to claim	The Citizens Advice Help to Claim service provides clients with advice and support in the early stages of a Universal Credit claim up until the first full payment is made.
Money advice service	Funding for trainee debt adviser to increase the capacity of debt advice in order to meet predicted increased demand for debt advice as a result of Covid-19.
Energy advice program	Funding to provide one-to-one advice to clients in fuel poverty, or in a fuel poverty risk group.
European Union settlement scheme	Funding to provide advice and practical support to vulnerable EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in Gloucestershire to help them make their EU Settlement Scheme application.
Foodbanks	Funding to provide advice to clients of Cirencester and North Cotswolds Foodbanks.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	Funding to support victims of domestic abuse.
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Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	Funding to help vulnerable consumers to reduce their energy costs, and to run a campaign to raise awareness of energy issues.
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Household support fund	Funds allocated from Cotswold District Council of the Household Support Fund to distribute to eligible families with children.
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Covid Hardship fund	Funds allocated from Cotswold District Council to enable the write off of priority debts for clients affected by the Covid-19 pandemic
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North Cotswold Foodbank fund	An emergency grants fund transferred from the North Cotswold Foodbank to assist clients with emergency financial aid e.g. for fuel, transport and utilities.
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Purposes of designated funds

Stroud IT fund	For the purchase of new computer equipment for the Stroud district.
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Stroud advice	Funds raised are designated for the use by the Bureau in the Stroud and District local government area.
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Cotswold advice	Funds raised are designated for the use by the Bureau in the Cotswold and District local government area.
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Purpose of transfers between funds

The transfers from the Stroud advice and Cotswold advice designated funds to the three restricted funds are to top up overspends on these projects.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior period comparative

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and other gains £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds					
Housing related debt advice	422	25,260	(36,475)	10,793	-
Help through crises	14,731	85,175	(99,906)	-	-
Stroud benefits	10,543	25,945	(2,420)	-	34,068
Cotswold money advice	-	12,000	(28,532)	16,532	-
Mental health debt	51,673	-	(8,084)	-	43,589
Universal credit help to claim	-	31,013	(17,232)	-	13,781
Money advice service	-	19,858	(18,708)	-	1,150
Energy advice program	-	12,390	(7,492)	-	4,898
European Union settlement scheme	-	11,800	(20,586)	8,786	-
Foodbanks	-	19,241	(10,306)	-	8,935
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	-	5,000	(8,041)	3,041	-
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	-	9,000	(2,217)	-	6,783
Total restricted funds	77,369	256,682	(259,999)	39,152	113,204
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Stroud IT fund	12,715	-	(6,040)	-	6,675
Stroud advice	78,318	253,924	(129,766)	(41,478)	160,998
Cotswolds advice	1,290	103,438	(107,054)	2,326	-
EBDX project	21,700	-	-	(21,700)	-
<i>Total designated funds</i>	114,023	357,362	(242,860)	(60,852)	167,673
General funds	118,386	-	-	24,808	143,194
Total unrestricted funds	232,409	357,362	(242,860)	(36,044)	310,867
Total funds	309,778	614,044	(502,859)	3,108	424,071

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

16. Operating lease commitments

The charity had operating leases at the year end with total future minimum lease payments as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Amount falling due:		
Within 1 year	27,959	30,687
Within 1 - 5 years	<u>35,740</u>	<u>56,616</u>
	<u>63,699</u>	<u>87,303</u>

17. Conduit funding

	2022 £	2021 £
Balance at start of year	1,795	1,265
Funding received during year	6,526	4,326
Funding distributed during year	<u>(5,709)</u>	<u>(3,796)</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>2,612</u>	<u>1,795</u>

Conduit funds are monies received for third parties and do not belong to the charity. The charity passes them through the accounts under a unique project code as a service to other charities to help their charitable purposes, but does not claim gift aid nor has control over their use. The receipts and payments referred to above have been excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities. The balance held at the end of the year is included in other creditors (note 12).

18. Contingent liability

The charity is party to a multi-employer pension scheme with The Pension Trust. The estimated debt on withdrawal (s75 debt) for CAB Stroud & District has been calculated to be £31,902. This figure has an effective date of 30 September 2021. In the prior year the contingent liability was estimated to be £48,930 (effective 30 September 2020). The charity currently has no intention of withdrawing from the scheme.

19. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current or prior year.

CITIZENS ADVICE STROUD & COTSWOLD DISTRICTS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1096398

Accounts

Company no. 4389411
Charity no. 1096398

**Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold
Districts Limited**

**Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements**

31 March 2021

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Company number	4389411	
Charity number	1096398	
Registered office and operational address	Unit 8 1st Floor Brunel Mall London Road Stroud Gloucestershire GL5 2BP	
Trustees	Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:	
	Gordon Craig Claire Feehily John Hammond Peter Inglesham Jane Kerr-Rettie Juliet Kilty Elaine McCarthy Sarah Quinn Alan Wheeler	resigned on 24 March 2021 resigned on 30 September 2020 appointed on 24 June 2020 appointed on 22 April 2020 resigned on 21 December 2020
Chief executive officer and company secretary	Sarah Telford Elizabeth Hall	resigned on 1 October 2020 appointed on 22 March 2021
Interim chief executive	Alison Gibbon	appointed on 2 October 2020, resigned on 21 March 2021
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank PO Box 7193 Planetary Road Willenhall WV1 9DG Scottish Widows Bank PO Box 883 Leeds LS1 9TY	NatWest Bank Buildings, George Street Stroud Gloucester GL5 3DT
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD	

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 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 (effective from January 2019).

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The organisation is a registered charity. It became incorporated on 7 March 2002 as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The name of the organisation was changed, on 13 September 2016, to Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited and the Articles of Association were amended accordingly.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Trustees are recruited from the local community, with particular individuals and communities targeted depending on the skills or knowledge gaps identified by serving trustees. Interested individuals are required to submit a statement of their experience and qualifications and go through a selection process operated by the Chair of trustees and then elected by the charity's membership at the annual general meeting. Additional trustees may be co-opted by the board of trustees during the year.

During 2021, the trustees reviewed the present structure and diversity of the board and commenced a recruitment drive for new trustees from the local area; local community groups and stakeholders. A new trustee information pack was developed alongside a comprehensive application pack. Despite a reported national shortage of individuals willing to act as trustees, there was a very positive response to widespread advertising that resulted in a number of new trustees being selected and who will be invited to join the board at the AGM. In addition, further trustees may be co-opted after the Annual General Meeting.

The board has been most impressed by the interest, experience and quality of the prospective new trustees and are confident that the new board will be able to develop and continue to meet the challenges that face Citizens Advice in these uncertain times.

Trustee induction and training

There are induction procedures for new trustees to make them aware of their role and training is offered throughout their term of office.

Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the understanding of their role.

Organisational structure

Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts Limited is an independent member of Citizens Advice, the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management as well as monitoring progress against these standards. Citizens Advice appoints a representative who is invited to attend the board as a non-voting member.

The charity is governed through a trustee board. Trustees who have held office during the year are listed on page 1. The Articles of Association provide for a minimum of three and a maximum of twenty-one trustees.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

The voluntary board of trustees governs the charity and defines overall policy and future strategy. It also monitors performance, risk and the quality of service. The board is ultimately responsible for the financial control of the organisation and for financial reporting to its members and others. All trustees have a responsibility to safeguard the resources of the organisation, and to use them in an economical and effective way furthering the work of the charity. The trustee board meets every two months at least, in addition to holding its Annual General Meeting.

The board has two sub-committees, the Finance and Risk sub committee and the HR sub committee which meet regularly throughout the year. These discuss and work on issues in more detail and make recommendations to the board. Only the full board can make decisions, but the board can delegate authority to a sub committee to make a decision on a specific issue. The Finance and Risk Sub Group of the board is delegated responsibility for receiving and scrutinising the quarterly financial reports, annual budget, all other financial issues and the organisational risk log, and making recommendations to the full board.

The trustee board discusses the finances on a quarterly basis. Financial reports are circulated in advance of board meetings and are scrutinised in detail by the Finance and Risk Sub Group. Day to day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer. In addition, there is an experienced team of paid staff and volunteers who are key to the service offered by the charity. Decisions are made by the trustee board in line with the business development plan and are reviewed at least annually.

The senior management team meet to review progress against targets and the charity's financial position and to discuss issues referred to them by the trustee board. Reports and recommendations are then taken to the full board for approval, and their implementation is organised by the chief executive and the staff team. There are regular staff, volunteer meetings and senior management team meetings which ensure that progress is being made against targets. There is an Annual General Meeting, which involves the staff team, trustee board, members, and other stakeholders.

The day to day service is delivered by a team of 127 volunteers assisted by a small team of paid staff. In the Cotswold District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Cotswold District from its main office in Cirencester. Pre-pandemic the charity also operated from outreach advice outlets in Tetbury and Moreton-in-Marsh. In the Stroud District, the charity operates under the name of Citizens Advice Stroud District from its main office in Stroud. Pre-pandemic, there were with outreach advice outlets in Berkeley, Dursley, Nailsworth, Stonehouse and Wotton-under-Edge.

Key risks and uncertainties

The organisation actively monitors its risk profile by way of a risk register, which identifies the principal risks, the likelihood of occurrence and their potential impact on the work of the charity. The register, together with the wider risk landscape and environment is regularly considered by the Finance and Risk Sub Group, which meets monthly, and thereafter by the board.

Key risks and issues currently being managed and expected are:

- The continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic upon colleagues, operational service provision and funding opportunities;
- The financial landscape and need to secure funding for the service in the longer term, especially for our core service;
- The year ahead is likely to be even more challenging, as society moves out of the pandemic restrictions, with an anticipated increase in demand for debt, employment, housing and welfare benefits advice alongside a difficult funding climate;

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

- We anticipate an increase in demand for our face to face service as Covid-19 restrictions ease and people are more confident to access face to face advice again. We need to ensure that we have sufficient staff and volunteers in place, together with effective signposting and referral process to ensure that we can manage this increased workload; and
- IT. Whilst we have effectively transitioned to remote working using Microsoft Teams, we need to ensure that our IT provision works across remote and in person sessions and that we utilise IT effectively to meet client demand.

Objectives and activities

Objects

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in the Districts of Stroud, Cotswold, Gloucestershire and surrounding areas.

In furtherance of these objectives, the company provides advice and information via a variety of communication channels. Our aims are focused on:

- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face; and
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

Our service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

The charity has developed its own vision statement to reflect its ambition to become the leading advice service across Stroud and Cotswold Districts:

A caring, dynamic and skilful organisation reaching out to every corner of the community to supply quality advice and support.... The advice service of choice!

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We have carried out a robust and forward thinking review of the past year as part of our business planning for 2021-24.

The current year plan contains a detailed action plan for 2021-22 along with an outline of potential activities for 2022-23 and 2023-24. The plan will be monitored and reviewed by the board on a quarterly basis. In carrying out the reviews we are ensuring that that our aims, objectives and activities are in line with our stated purpose.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and who we try to help are described below. All our charitable activities focus on providing the advice people need for the problems they face and are undertaken specifically to provide public benefit. The board of trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Achievements and performance

Advice and information services

The main areas of charitable activity are:

- the provision of general advice and information services;
- the provision of specialist advice and casework services in the debt and welfare benefits categories of social welfare law; and
- the provision of advice in relation to the EU Settlement Scheme.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the ways we have continued to offer advice and information. We have continued to offer advice and information in the following ways:

- Telephone – we have continued to offer our freephone telephone helplines. The lines are covered on a rota basis between the hours of 10am and 4pm from Monday to Friday. Outside of these times there is an automated message asking callers to call back during opening hours. We have continued to answer over 85% of calls that come into us.

Clients are given a diagnostic assessment first where we aim to resolve their issue if possible. Should full advice be needed clients can be given telephone appointments.

Clients who need debt or benefit casework services have been dealt with remotely via telephone and email advice.

- Email advice – clients can ask for email advice via our website.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we have been unable to see clients face to face, either at appointment or via drop in.

In addition to general advice, the following specialist services were provided:

- Specialist debt advice funded by the Money Advice & Pensions Service and St James's Place;
- We have a specialist mental health debt caseworker who is funded by Nationwide;
- We are funded for Homelessness prevention money advice for Stroud residents by Stroud District Council;
- We receive funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for support clients experiencing domestic abuse;
- Specialist welfare benefits advice was funded through our Help through Crisis partnership and the Good Things Foundation;
- Specialist advice on the EU Settlement Scheme was funded by the Home Office through a partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and GARAS;
- Energy advice (we have two specialist energy advisers) has been funded by national Citizens Advice energy projects;
- We also have volunteer employment specialists who have been extremely busy during the pandemic; and
- We have 2 dedicated foodbank advisers who give generalist advice to clients referred by the North Cotswold and Cirencester Foodbanks. These advisers are funded by the Foodbanks themselves.

Whilst we aim to empower clients to resolve their problems using the advice we give, many of our clients need additional support in order to achieve a solution. This may be due to the vulnerability of the client, the complexity of the problems or a combination of the two.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

We do not limit clients to a set number of appointments or to a limited timescale that they can access our help. Where needed and with the appropriate consent, we contact third parties on behalf of clients by making telephone calls or writing letters.

Some clients will need appointments over several weeks or months with multiple specialists within the organisation. For example a client with debt issues may need not only debt advice, but specialist benefits advice and support as well as specialist energy advice to maximise their income and ensure that their income will be sufficient to avoid further debt issues in the future.

Contribution of Volunteers and Paid Staff

The charity's success could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of volunteers and staff. The trustee board and senior management team recognise the tremendous contribution made by the charity's volunteers in advising the public and administering the service without which the service could not operate. Throughout 2020/21 the service employed 22 paid workers and 127 volunteers together delivering projects in addition to the core service.

Volunteers represent the indispensable core of the service for without them there would not be a Citizens Advice service.

We were fortunate during the pandemic to have a high percentage of volunteers prepared to work remotely and that many volunteers continued with volunteering with us at the same time as managing increased caring responsibilities for friends, neighbours and family members.

In pre pandemic times, the volunteer advisers and receptionists contributed, on average, 7 hours per week each. However, during 2020-21, we are very aware that many volunteers (and indeed staff) worked for many more hours than they did when we were in the offices. We are very grateful to everyone for their commitment to our clients and the running of our service.

One impact of remote working has been the reduction in volunteer expenses down from £33,205 in 2019-20 to £1,792 in 2020-21. Volunteers are unable to claim the tax relief for additional household costs for expenses incurred volunteering. The trustees were pleased to approve a working from home allowance for volunteers, to reflect the costs that may be incurred. Expenses over and above this allowance can still be claimed.

Volunteers also bring many other skills to the service. Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts has continued to recruit and train staff and volunteers throughout the pandemic. We consistently review our training offer to ensure that we provide an accessible and welcoming place to volunteer.

Who used and benefited from our services?

During the reporting year the organisation:

- Supported 4,714 clients across 17,490 issues: Whilst the number of households we have supported in the last year has fallen, the number of issues has not fallen proportionately. This may well be indicative of more complex problems being dealt with. This is representative of the experience of our advisers who manage a high number of complex cases, which cannot be resolved through our advice alone. Our Help through Crisis Partnership, Mental Health Money Advice Project have provided advice to people with complex needs;
- Generated a total of £639,946 in additional income for clients, primarily through tax credits, benefits or salaries: Welfare benefits and tax credits made up a total of 21% of the issues we have supported on. We advised 1,339 clients on benefits and tax credits issues and 898 clients on universal credit claims. Our top benefit issue was Personal Independence Payment;

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

- Helped 639 households with debt advice making peoples' lives more sustainable: £412,027 of debt was written off by negotiating with creditors, obtaining Debt Relief Orders and giving advice on budgeting and £5.088 worth of repayments were rescheduled;
- Assisted 313 households with utilities and communications issues, including energy issues. 179 clients were giving advice on managing fuel debts;
- Advised 900 clients on employment issues, including rights under the schemes introduced due to Covid (furlough and the Self Employment Income Support Scheme; disputes; redundancy and dismissal;
- Advised 158 clients who had experienced discrimination, hate and/or gender violence and abuse; and
- Issued foodbank vouchers to 275 clients and obtained further charitable support for 95 clients.

Our staff and volunteers assist a wide range of clients:

- 39% of clients reported that they were disabled or had a long term health condition; and
- We helped clients across a wide age range – with clients in all age categories from 15-19 to 95-99.

Other successful initiatives include:

- During 2020/21 we participated in the Help to Claim Initiative led by national Citizens Advice. This supports clients to claim Universal Credit and supports them with issues until their first payment is made. The programme started in April 2019 and has been extended for 2021-22;
- Our work supporting clients with mental health issues has continued. We recruited a specialist mental health debt Caseworker using the funding received from the Nationwide Foundation; and
- We are a partner agency with Gloucestershire County Council, North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice and GARAS delivering advice to clients who need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Factors affecting the achievement of objectives

The year ending 31 March 2021 was an immensely challenging year for Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts with the issues of lockdown and remote working.

There have been significant staffing changes at senior management level, including the departure of the previous CEO. An interim CEO was appointed in September 2020 and a new CEO started in March 2021. These changes had a significant impact on the organisation's ability to deliver on its strategic and operational objectives. This resulted in the deferment of a number of activities during the year.

The organisation moved quickly over to remote working in March 2020 and staff and volunteers have continued to adapt and adjust the way we work, as a temporary situation became the new normal. The move to Microsoft Teams and cloud based technology has brought with it significant organisational benefits which we plan to retain as we return to the offices and face to face services.

Whilst we have been working remotely throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we are aware that some vulnerable and disadvantage clients have found it hard to access our services via telephone and email. Ensuring that those clients can access our advice is one of the key priorities for 2021-22.

Financial review

The trustees have continued to focus on delivering a cost-effective service that meets the needs of our clients.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Income for the year was £614,044. We spent £502,859 giving a surplus of £111,185. The surplus will be used to support the charity in 2021-22. The charity has total reserves of £424,071 – please see the breakdown on page 14 for further details.

We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed to the organisation, be that from donations, legacies, grants and voluntary effort. During the year we received funding from Citizens Advice, Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the Home Office, Good Things Foundation, the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust, the National Lottery, Nationwide, Police Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire, St James's Place, North Cotswolds Foodbank, Cirencester Foodbank, and Town and Parish Councils.

We continue to receive core funding from Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council and thank them for their ongoing support. We are also grateful to those local town and parish councils who have been able to make grants available to us, during this difficult year.

The reporting year was the final year of the five year Big Lottery's Help through Crisis Project. We received a grant from the Good Things Foundation to support clients using HMRC's online services. We continue to receive a grant from Stroud District Council for preventing homelessness through debt advice. We also received funding from national Citizens Advice for energy advice, the Help to Claim project and funding for a debt trainee under the Money Advice and Pensions Service Increasing Capacity project. We received a grant from the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner to support clients experiencing domestic abuse. We also received funding from the Home Office for the EU Settlement Scheme project with partner agencies in Gloucestershire. The North Cotswold Foodbank and the Cirencester Foodbank have each funded a dedicated foodbank adviser for foodbank clients in their respective areas.

We are grateful to our two district-based, volunteer led, fundraising groups. Whilst Covid -19 has had an impact on their ability to raise money through street collections and fundraising activity, they have continued to find innovative ways to raise funds, increase our profile and promoted the organisation.

In addition we are grateful to the local businesses who have supported our work, whether indirectly through the provision of reduced-rate services or premises, or through donations.

The trustees have considered the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the charity's current and future financial position. We were successful with applications for emergency funding and ended the financial year in a stronger position than originally expected.

We continue to review our expenditure and reduce costs where it is prudent to do so.

The trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved for the following reasons:

- The charity holds reserves in excess of £100,000; and
- Our key funders have confirmed that they are stabilising our funding for 12 months.

The trustees therefore consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis for the preparation of the accounts, as detailed in note 1(b) to the financial statements.

At the meeting in May 2021, the trustee board approved the funding and expenditure budgets for 2021/22.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Stroud PR and Fundraising Committee

The Covid pandemic has made it a very difficult year for all aspects of work at Citizens Advice. It has obviously affected fundraising as we have been unable to arrange any outside events. Fortunately, the comprehensive list of local papers and village magazines we have assembled has enabled us to regularly send out information on benefits, scams and other matters; it has also helped to let people know how to contact us.

However, the year has not been without encouragement; we were delighted to receive some unsolicited donations from people who realised how essential it was to maintain an organisation which can provide advice and help for those in need - this included individuals as well as a local charity.

We continue to be enormously grateful to our regular donors who enable the organisation to be able to plan and keep essential expert advisors in post. As always, we are seeking ways to encourage more people to consider regular giving, however small the amount. We also ask if people would consider remembering us in their will.

Last year our group raised nearly £30,000. The majority of this is from standing orders and donations (plus gift aid reclaimed from HMRC) amounting to some £24,000 and there was one legacy of £5,000.

The group envisages that a total amount of about £23,000 will be raised in the current financial year. The generosity of donors plays a vital part in helping to maintain the present service in the Stroud District.

We would greatly appreciate any help that can be given to increase our donors group.

The future:

- We will continue to send articles to the local magazines and papers;
- We hope to be able to hold our usual Street Collection in Stroud later this year;
- Christmas cards will be available to buy this year; and
- Other events may be possible as we come out of these uncertain times.

Friends of Cirencester CAB

Owing to the lockdowns and Covid restrictions, it was not possible to organise any fundraising events, and a proposed street collection in Cirencester had to be cancelled twice. The Friends' trustees are still meeting regularly and are intending to arrange fundraising and publicity activities as soon as circumstances permit.

Reserves policy

The reserves policy for Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts is reviewed annually by the board. We maintain free reserves at such a level as: (i) to provide adequate working capital in the event of potential changes of funding from major funders, (ii) to meet staff redundancy costs and premises costs should the organisation have to severely reduce in size, (iii) Provision for settlement of The Pension Trust Employer Debt, in the event that the organisation is forced to close and has no active employees in The Pension Trust, (iv) to mitigate some key risks facing the charity. In particular, the target level for free reserves aims to give a reasonable chance of survival should one of these risks occur: it is recognised that it is not possible, nor it is intended, to protect against every risk. The board assesses the charity's target and actual reserves annually. When the level of reserves is materially different from the target level, the board will determine what action should be taken.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Our reserves target is £96,222. We measure free reserves as general unrestricted funds less undepreciated fixed assets, less the budget deficit. Our free reserves at 31 March 2021 were £50,823.

By September 2021 we had raised £43k of the £46k deficit and are confident of raising more funds by the end of the financial year.

Plans for future periods

The trustee board approved the business plan for 2021-24 in July 2022. A robust and forward thinking review took place as part of the business plan process. This plan is an opportunity to reset and refocus the organisation and build solid and lasting foundations, after a particularly challenging year. Covid-19 has had a huge impact on our organisation, our services and our clients but there have also been opportunities, as well as challenges.

The action plan is based on the five areas of focus in Citizens Advice "Future of Advice Strategic Framework" (2019-2022/3): Advice, Advocacy, Technology, Sustainability and Culture. Key aims for the next 12 months include:

- To review how we deliver our services post pandemic, keeping what has worked well for the past 12 months and making best use of our premises;
- To ensure that we deliver clear, consistent, empathetic, empowering, tailored and seamless good quality advice;
- To promote Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts as the go to place for advice;
- To utilise all forms of publicity and media to reach out to all parts of our communities;
- Making sure our IT systems are up to date and continue the modernisation of our back office as well as frontline services, as part of our post COVID recovery plan;
- To review our financial sustainability and seek longer term funding to help us meet the future needs of our clients;
- To become an agile and eco-friendly organisation, efficiently run and adequately resourced;
- To create an environment and working culture which supports the health and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and ensures that staff and volunteers can thrive and reach their potential;
- Build a workforce which is representative of the world we live in, both locally and nationally.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (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 charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting 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; and
- 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 proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees 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.

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 trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were appointed as independent examiners to the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 6 October 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Juliet Kilty - Chair

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2021, which are set out on pages 13 to 31.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charitable 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 charitable 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 the charitable company'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 charitable 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 Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable 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.

Alison Godfrey

Date: 7 October 2021

Alison Godfrey FCA

Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

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

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	-	84,042	84,042	50,757
Charitable activities	4	256,682	273,054	529,736	526,780
Other trading activities		-	196	196	275
Investments		-	70	70	72
Total income		<u>256,682</u>	<u>357,362</u>	<u>614,044</u>	<u>577,884</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	68,849	68,849	25,320
Charitable activities		<u>259,999</u>	<u>174,011</u>	<u>434,010</u>	<u>443,811</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>259,999</u>	<u>242,860</u>	<u>502,859</u>	<u>469,131</u>
Net income / (expenditure)		(3,317)	114,502	111,185	108,753
Transfers between funds		39,152	(39,152)	-	-
Other recognised gains / (losses):					
Gains / (losses) on remeasurement of defined benefit pension scheme		<u>-</u>	<u>3,108</u>	<u>3,108</u>	<u>4,245</u>
Net movement in funds	7	35,835	78,458	114,293	112,998
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>77,369</u>	<u>232,409</u>	<u>309,778</u>	<u>196,780</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>113,204</u></u>	<u><u>310,867</u></u>	<u><u>424,071</u></u>	<u><u>309,778</u></u>

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 15 to the accounts.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2021

	Note	£	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	10		13,513	20,842
Current assets				
Debtors	11	40,169		18,479
Cash at bank and in hand		440,034		322,515
		480,203		340,994
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	12	(52,832)		(32,137)
Net current assets			427,371	308,857
Total assets less current liabilities			440,884	329,699
Provisions for liabilities	13		(16,813)	(19,921)
Net assets	14		424,071	309,778
Funds	15			
Restricted funds			113,204	77,369
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds			167,673	114,023
General funds			143,194	118,386
Total charity funds			424,071	309,778

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477(2), and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2021

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the Company keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act; and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on 6 October 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Juliet Kilty - Chair

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net movement in funds	114,293	112,998
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation	7,329	6,735
Interest received	(70)	(72)
Loss / (profit) on the sale of fixed assets	-	(275)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(21,690)	27,352
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	20,695	(3,819)
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	(3,108)	(4,245)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	<u>117,449</u>	<u>138,674</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	70	72
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	-	275
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	-	(18,283)
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	<u>70</u>	<u>(17,936)</u>
Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year	117,519	120,738
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	<u>322,515</u>	<u>201,777</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	<u><u>440,034</u></u>	<u><u>322,515</u></u>

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern. Despite the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the charity holds unrestricted general net current assets of £146k, designated funds that could be drawn down if necessary of £168k and a cash balance of £440k at 31 March 2021. The charity also has significant confirmed funding for 21/22, a positive cash flow forecast and reduced forecasted expenditure for the next 12 months. On this basis the trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved.

c) Income

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

Income from the 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 Trust 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.

d) 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.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

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

g) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the following basis, which is an estimate of staff time:

	2021	2020
Raising funds	11.6%	0.0%
Charitable activities	88.4%	100.0%

In the prior year, these costs were 100% allocated to charitable activities on the basis that the vast majority of support and governance costs were wholly attributable to charitable activities.

h) Tangible fixed assets

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:

Computer equipment	3 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	20% reducing balance

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000.

i) 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.

j) 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.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

k) Creditors

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.

l) Financial instruments

The charitable company 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 recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

m) Pension costs (defined contribution)

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions.

n) Pension costs (defined benefit)

The charitable company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. It is not possible for the charitable company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. The scheme is therefore accounted for as a defined contribution scheme. A provision is recognised in these accounts for the net present value of future contributions payable under the scheme (see note 13). The valuation is determined with reference to the charity's pension provider, TPT Retirement Solutions.

o) Finance and operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the SOFA over the period in which the cost is incurred. The charity has no finance leases.

p) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are depreciation as described in note 1 (h) and the pension provision as per note 1 (n).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2020 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	-	50,757	50,757
Charitable activities	204,733	322,047	526,780
Other trading activities	-	275	275
Investments	-	72	72
Total income	204,733	373,151	577,884
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	25,320	25,320
Charitable activities	135,443	308,368	443,811
Total expenditure	135,443	333,688	469,131
Net income / (expenditure)	69,290	39,463	108,753
Transfers between funds	(12,021)	12,021	-
Other recognised gains / (losses):			
Gains / (losses) on remeasurement of defined benefit pension scheme	-	4,245	4,245
Net movement in funds	57,269	55,729	112,998

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Donations	-	30,909	30,909	41,046
Legacies	-	50,000	50,000	-
Fundraising	-	3,133	3,133	9,711
Total income from donations	-	84,042	84,042	50,757

All income from donations in the prior year was unrestricted.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £
Stroud District Council - core funding	-	125,000	125,000
Help Through Crisis	85,175	-	85,175
Cotswold District Council - core funding	-	66,420	66,420
Help 2 Claim	31,013	-	31,013
St James Place Foundation	30,925	10,000	40,925
Stroud District Council - housing related debt	25,260	-	25,260
Gloucestershire County Council - EU settlement scheme and core funding	11,800	25,000	36,800
Covid grants	-	24,909	24,909
Citizens Advice - money advice service	19,858	-	19,858
North Cotswold Foodbank	11,991	-	11,991
Cirencester Foodbank	7,250	-	7,250
Citizens Advice - energy advice program	12,390	-	12,390
Town and Parish Councils	-	9,325	9,325
Citizens Advice - BESN / BESW - energy project	9,000	-	9,000
Good Things Foundation	7,020	-	7,020
Other grants	-	6,900	6,900
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	5,500	5,500
Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucester	5,000	-	5,000
Total income from charitable activities	256,682	273,054	529,736

Prior period comparative:

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2020 Total £
Stroud District Council - core funding	-	125,000	125,000
Help Through Crisis	84,944	-	84,944
Cotswold District Council - core funding	-	66,420	66,420
Nationwide Mental Health	50,000	-	50,000
Help 2 Claim	-	32,428	32,428
Citizens Advice - EBDX - energy project	-	30,605	30,605
Stroud District Council - housing related debt	25,185	-	25,185
Gloucestershire County Council - core funding	-	25,000	25,000
Town and Parish Councils	-	17,594	17,594
Other grants	16,000	-	16,000
St James Place Foundation	12,000	-	12,000
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	10,000	10,000
The Summerfield Trust	-	10,000	10,000
Gloucestershire County Council - mental health debt	9,104	-	9,104
Good Things Foundation	7,500	-	7,500
Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucester	-	5,000	5,000
Total income from charitable activities	204,733	322,047	526,780

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

4. Income from charitable activities (continued)

Government grants

The charitable company receives government grants, defined as funding from local, town and parish Councils, the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Big Lottery Fund to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the period ending 31 March 2021 was £280,914 (2020: £273,303). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2021 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	26,867	205,655	89,231	321,753
Grants paid (note 6)	-	20,836	-	20,836
Staff and volunteer expenses	-	1,792	-	1,792
Staff and volunteer training	-	1,182	-	1,182
Staff recruitment expenses	-	1,505	-	1,505
Premises costs	-	-	41,553	41,553
Communications & IT	-	-	14,238	14,238
General office	299	-	22,729	23,028
Finance costs	-	-	21,013	21,013
Consultancy costs	15,205	364	28,914	44,483
Governance costs	-	-	4,147	4,147
Depreciation costs	-	-	7,329	7,329
Sub-total	42,371	231,334	229,154	502,859
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>26,478</u>	<u>202,676</u>	<u>(229,154)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>68,849</u>	<u>434,010</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>502,859</u>

Total governance costs were £4,147 (2020: £2,893).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

5. Total expenditure (continued)
Prior period comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2020 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	25,020	182,877	83,465	291,362
Grants paid (note 6)	-	23,305	-	23,305
Staff and volunteer expenses	-	33,205	-	33,205
Staff and volunteer training	-	2,668	-	2,668
Staff recruitment expenses	-	1,522	-	1,522
Premises costs	-	-	53,192	53,192
Communications & IT	-	-	12,108	12,108
General office	300	-	25,081	25,381
Finance costs	-	-	16,760	16,760
Governance costs	-	-	2,893	2,893
Depreciation costs	-	-	6,735	6,735
Sub-total	25,320	243,577	200,234	469,131
Allocation of support and governance costs	-	200,234	(200,234)	-
Total expenditure	25,320	443,811	-	469,131

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

6. Grants payable to institutions

	2021 £	2020 £
Chum Neighbourhood Project	8,376	8,650
GL11 Community	8,000	8,000
Stroud Bereford Group	4,460	4,460
Stroud District Foodbank	-	1,042
Sundry grants	-	1,153
	20,836	23,305

All grants are paid to fund charitable activities. The grants shown above do not include any contribution to core costs.

7. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation	7,329	6,735
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (including VAT)	3,000	2,880

8. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Salaries and wages	288,200	255,997
Social security costs	17,894	17,282
Pension costs	15,659	18,083
	321,753	291,362

Included within salaries and wages above are termination and redundancy payments of £12.9k (2020: £nil).

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

The key management personnel of the charitable company comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Advice Service Managers. The total emoluments paid to key management personnel, including termination payments and invoiced costs paid to the interim Chief Executive, for the year was £144,812 (2020: £89,091).

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

8. Staff costs and numbers (continued)

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Average head count	<u>15.3</u>	<u>15.8</u>

9. Taxation

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

10. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2020	29,352	27,361	56,713
Additions in year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>29,352</u>	<u>27,361</u>	<u>56,713</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2020	14,732	21,139	35,871
Charge for the year	<u>6,085</u>	<u>1,244</u>	<u>7,329</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>20,817</u>	<u>22,383</u>	<u>43,200</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2021	<u>8,535</u>	<u>4,978</u>	<u>13,513</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>14,620</u>	<u>6,222</u>	<u>20,842</u>

11. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Prepayments	9,513	5,469
Accrued income	<u>30,656</u>	<u>13,010</u>
	<u>40,169</u>	<u>18,479</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

12. Creditors : amounts due within 1 year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	6,021	8,810
Accruals	44,431	13,427
Other taxation and social security	585	8,274
Other creditors	1,795	1,626
	<u>52,832</u>	<u>32,137</u>

13. Pension provision

The charitable company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. Provision has been made for the net present value of future contributions payable by the charity. The provision is valued based on information provided by TPT Retirement Solutions (dated 31 March 2021). The latest full actuarial valuation of the scheme was dated 30 September 2017 and required participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme. The movement on the provision is recognised on the SoFA as an other recognised (gain) / loss.

	2021	2020
	£	£
Provision at the start of the year	19,921	24,166
Movement in the year	<u>(3,108)</u>	<u>(4,245)</u>
Provision at the end of the year	<u>16,813</u>	<u>19,921</u>

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

14. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	13,513	13,513
Current assets	113,204	167,673	199,326	480,203
Current liabilities	-	-	(52,832)	(52,832)
Provisions	-	-	(16,813)	(16,813)
Net assets at 31 March 2021	113,204	167,673	143,194	424,071
Prior period comparative				
	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	20,842	20,842
Current assets	77,369	114,023	149,602	340,994
Current liabilities	-	-	(32,137)	(32,137)
Provisions	-	-	(19,921)	(19,921)
Net assets at 31 March 2020	77,369	114,023	118,386	309,778

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

15. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and other gains £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds					
Housing related debt advice	422	25,260	(36,475)	10,793	-
Help through crises	14,731	85,175	(99,906)	-	-
Stroud benefits	10,543	25,945	(2,420)	-	34,068
Cotswold money advice	-	12,000	(28,532)	16,532	-
Mental health debt	51,673	-	(8,084)	-	43,589
Universal credit help to claim	-	31,013	(17,232)	-	13,781
Money advice service	-	19,858	(18,708)	-	1,150
Energy advice program	-	12,390	(7,492)	-	4,898
European Union settlement scheme	-	11,800	(20,586)	8,786	-
Foodbanks	-	19,241	(10,306)	-	8,935
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	-	5,000	(8,041)	3,041	-
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	-	9,000	(2,217)	-	6,783
Total restricted funds	77,369	256,682	(259,999)	39,152	113,204
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Stroud IT fund	12,715	-	(6,040)	-	6,675
Stroud advice	78,318	253,924	(129,766)	(41,478)	160,998
Cotswolds advice	1,290	103,438	(107,054)	2,326	-
EBDX project	21,700	-	-	(21,700)	-
<i>Total designated funds</i>	114,023	357,362	(242,860)	(60,852)	167,673
General funds	118,386	-	-	24,808	143,194
Total unrestricted funds	232,409	357,362	(242,860)	(36,044)	310,867
Total funds	309,778	614,044	(502,859)	3,108	424,071

Purposes of restricted funds

Housing related debt advice	To provide advice and support on housing related debt to clients in Stroud and district and in the Cotswold district.
Help through crises	A five- year partnership project funded by the Big Lottery Fund and led by ca-scd, aiming to support people in hardship crises to get the immediate help and items they need and also to equip them with the skills to prevent future crises.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

Stroud benefits	Funding from the Good Things Foundation to support people to get the information and advice they need from HMRC including helping them to use new online systems.
Cotswolds money advice	Specialist casework advice to people in the Cotswolds with money problems to help them to maximise their income, reduce their debts and increase their confidence and competence in managing their financial affairs.
Mental health debt	To provide funding to improve access to finance related advice for people with mental ill health.
Universal credit help to claim	The Citizens Advice Help to Claim service provides clients with advice and support in the early stages of a Universal Credit claim up until the first full payment is made.
Money advice service	Funding for trainee debt adviser to increase the capacity of debt advice in order to meet predicted increased demand for debt advice as a result of Covid-19.
Energy advice program	Funding to provide one-to-one advice to clients in fuel poverty, or in a fuel poverty risk group.
European Union settlement scheme	Funding to provide advice and practical support to vulnerable EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in Gloucestershire to help them make their EU Settlement Scheme application.
Foodbanks	Funding to provide advice to clients of Cirencester and North Cotswolds Foodbanks.
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	Funding to support victims of domestic abuse.
Big Energy Saving Network / Big Energy Saving Winter	Funding to help vulnerable consumers to reduce their energy costs, and to run a campaign to raise awareness of energy issues.

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of designated funds

Stroud IT fund	For the purchase of new computer equipment for the Stroud district.
Stroud advice	Funds raised are designated for the use by the Bureau in the Stroud and District local government area.
Cotswold advice	Funds raised are designated for the use by the Bureau in the Cotswold and District local government area.
EBDX project	For the provision of advising consumers on energy related matters and activities which support the provision of energy advice. This fund has been amalgamated with general funds in 2021.

Purpose of transfers between funds

The transfers from the Stroud Advice designated fund to the four restricted funds; and from the general fund to the Cotswold Advice designated fund; are to top up overspends on these projects.

Prior period comparative

	At 1 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and other gains £	At 31 March 2020 £
Restricted funds					
Phone system	7,316	-	(1,475)	(5,841)	-
Housing related debt advice	-	25,185	(24,763)	-	422
Help through crises	9,157	84,944	(79,370)	-	14,731
Stroud benefits	1,238	12,860	(3,555)	-	10,543
Cotswold money advice	-	14,640	(16,460)	1,820	-
Mental health debt	2,389	59,104	(9,820)	-	51,673
Stroud IT fund	-	8,000	-	(8,000)	-
Total restricted funds	20,100	204,733	(135,443)	(12,021)	77,369
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Stroud IT fund	16,422	-	(3,707)	-	12,715
Stroud advice	59,958	220,225	(201,865)	-	78,318
Cotswolds advice	-	122,321	(119,211)	(1,820)	1,290
EBDX project	-	30,605	(8,905)	-	21,700
Total designated funds	76,380	373,151	(333,688)	(1,820)	114,023
General funds	100,300	-	-	18,086	118,386
Total unrestricted funds	176,680	373,151	(333,688)	16,266	232,409
Total funds	196,780	577,884	(469,131)	4,245	309,778

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

16. Operating lease commitments

The charity had operating leases at the year end with total future minimum lease payments as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Amount falling due:		
Within 1 year	30,687	26,292
Within 1 - 5 years	<u>56,616</u>	<u>76,159</u>
	<u>87,303</u>	<u>102,451</u>

17. Contingent liability

The charity is party to a multi-employer pension scheme with The Pension Trust. The estimated debt on withdrawal (s75 debt) for CAB Stroud & District has been calculated to be £48,930. This figure has an effective date of 30 September 2020. In the prior year the contingent liability was estimated to be £55,306 (effective 30 September 2019). The charity currently has no intention of withdrawing from the scheme.

18. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current or prior year.