

# CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU IN SWALE

Operating as  
Citizens Advice Swale

## ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

A company limited by guarantee  
Company Registration No: 5052691  
Charity Registration No: 1103010



**citizens  
advice**

**Swale**

# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
Trustees' report (incorporating directors' report)	3 - 13
Independent examiner's report	14
Statement of financial activities	15
Balance sheet	16
Notes to the financial statements	17 - 26
Administrative Information	27

# Trustees' report (incorporating directors' report)

## We're here for everyone

We can all face problems that seem complicated or intimidating. At Citizens Advice Swale we believe no one should have to face these problems without good quality, independent advice. We provide high quality, seamless and responsive services that meet our clients' diverse needs, helping them to act early to avoid issues escalating or to address the things that have negative effects on their lives.

We're part of a national network of over 330 independent local Citizens Advice charities in England and Wales, affiliated to the national Citizens Advice organisation. We deliver free, confidential advice online, over the phone and in person.

## A message from our Chair

It is a cliché perhaps to say that this has been a year of unprecedented change but this was certainly the case for us in 2023/4, with several changes in our leadership and management arrangements. In July 2023, our Chair and long standing Trustee David Walker stood down. Mark Hinton who had served as Chief Officer for seven years left us in October to lead a new initiative - the Swale Voluntary Alliance. Mark had successfully chaired that group from its early stages and we know it will go from strength to strength with him at the helm. Fiona Spall and Jude Lee took over as joint Chief Officers on an interim basis until the end of the financial year. Sarah Harvey took over as Chair on an interim basis and Pam Kenworthy was appointed from August 2024. At the end of the year the Trustees had to make difficult decisions to reduce our staffing in line with the funding available for our infrastructure and running costs. We were delighted to confirm Jude Lee as our Chief Officer on a substantive basis.

Despite these changes we sailed through the rigorous quality assurance process conducted by an independent assessor from National Citizens Advice, achieving all required standards. The process helped us strengthen our policies, risk management and cybersecurity arrangements as well as refreshing our governance arrangements.

Through these many changes we maintained high standards of support and advice with the dedication and skills of our staff and volunteers - they're truly exceptional.

We're particularly grateful to Swale Borough Council (SBC) for their ongoing support. We do not take this funding for granted as we know that local government budgets are being severely squeezed. SBC's grant has provided us with a valuable foundation on which to build our future sustainability.

## Report from our Chief Officer



It's been another busy year for us in Citizens Advice Swale, and while the cost of living crisis may no longer be making headlines, it's fair to say that it remains an issue for many of our service users. We've seen a steady rise in clients needing support with debt, benefits and housing issues, particularly rising rents and mortgages, as well as an increase in those living with negative budgets. Cases have become increasingly complex and clients are needing more and more time and support to resolve their issues.

This has prompted a shift in how we are delivering services in terms of advice and accessibility. Through our energy project there is a much bigger emphasis on reducing client expenditure, as well as the general advice we already offer around income maximisation and budgeting. We're also working hard to form a collaborative approach to advice giving by working with other agencies to improve the client experience and also with marginalised groups so we can develop a better understanding of the services they'd like to see. Our outreach sessions on the Isle of Sheppey have been extended to cover some of the more deprived wards in the borough. These have proved popular and we have already seen a rise in demand.

Funding has been a key priority during the last year and we have been successful in securing funding from various sources to help us to continue to deliver vital services to the community. As we look forward to 2024/25 we're committed to making our advice service a service fit for the future. We want it to be as accessible and comprehensive as possible, targeting those groups that need us the most, whilst working with the community to understand how we can make further improvements. Our goal is to diversify our funding streams in order to create financial resilience and long-term financial sustainability. By becoming more innovative in how we use our resources we hope to reach sections of the community that have struggled to find a way forward. We're acutely aware that there are many people who have been unable to access Citizens Advice either through ill-health or digital exclusion. With that in mind we're committed to delivering a well supported Adviceline that can help those living in rural areas or those simply unable to access us via other means.

None of this work is of course possible without the ongoing time and commitment of our amazing staff and volunteers. Their dedication to the service has been unwavering, which is testament to the incredibly rewarding nature of the work we do, and the fantastic team of people we have at Citizens Advice Swale. Without them, none of this would be possible.

## What we've done during the year

Our impact 2023/24		
<b>2,627</b> clients helped	<b>15,343</b> issues handled	We issued 364 foodbank vouchers & 458 fuel vouchers 
<b>£1,133,321</b> income gained for clients	<b>£325,002</b> debts written off	<b>£87,183</b> reimbursements and loans
<b>84%</b> clients say we helped them find a way forward 	<b>84%</b> clients would recommend our service	<b>70%</b> clients say their issues were fully resolved

## **Making a difference to local people**

We helped thousands of people in 2023/4, whether dealing with a single issue or a complex set of problems that required more specialist support. Nearly two-thirds of clients were disabled or registered as having a long-term health condition. In addition to this direct support thousands more viewed our online advice pages.

## **Why we're needed**

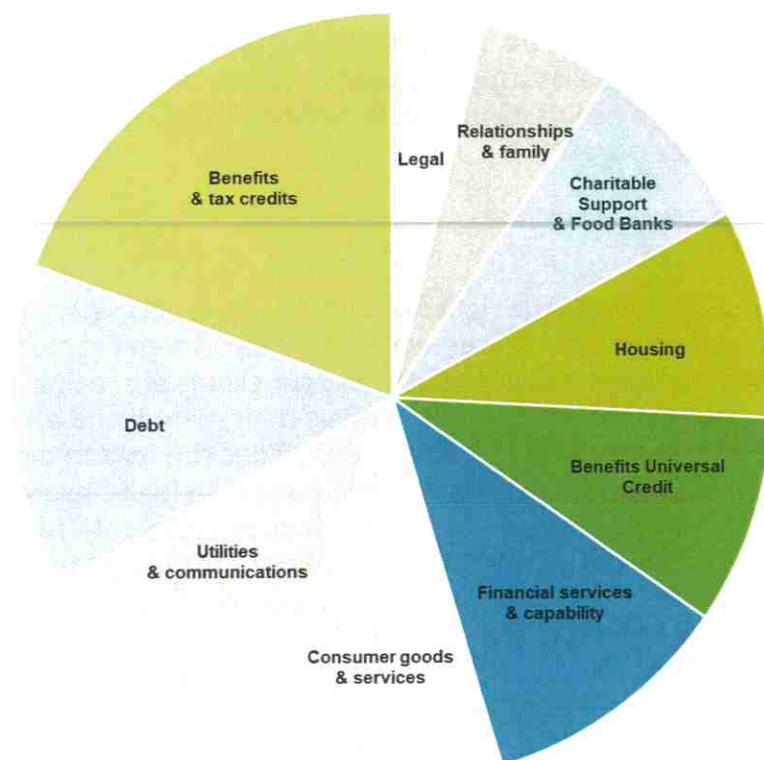
Our data helps us make sure we have the right knowledge and expertise to support people whatever their problem and however they come to us for help. A significant trend that we experienced last year was the complexity of issues that our clients are facing. Employment problems can lead people into debt which in turn affects their mental and physical health. Relationships can suffer and in some cases financial difficulties can lead to people losing their homes. Citizens Advice Swale provides people with the tools to help themselves and help them keep their heads above water. We keep people in their homes, we ensure basic needs are met, we encourage self help and educate people about how to better manage money and pay liabilities. We increase residents' incomes, we support people to stay in work. The combined impact of our advice services on health and wellbeing is palpable.

People come to us with difficult situations that they might never have faced before. 84% of the people we helped said we helped them find a way forward. The majority of people we help experience a big life change before coming to us. Knowing how to take action isn't always obvious. Many of the people we see say they had difficulty knowing who to contact or how systems work. Many report needing help to use online services, forms and tools. If left unsolved, these problems don't just affect the individual - they impact on families and their local communities.

## **Working in partnership to provide better support**

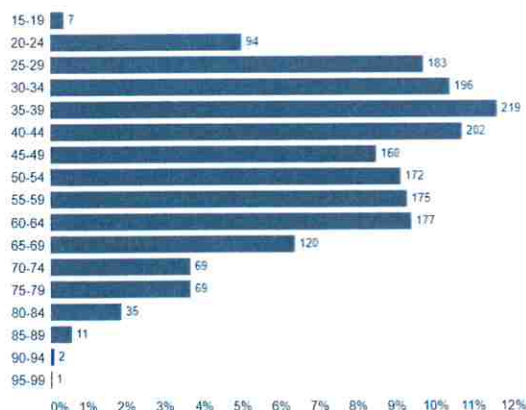
We work closely with a range of specialist voluntary and community groups so that we can refer people on to the right help that they might need. In turn we also receive referrals from them. Working in this way means we can benefit from each others' expertise, reputation and reach and provide better support to Swale residents. As well as supporting individuals we are involved in a range of collaborative groups, such as the Faversham Community Network, the Swale Voluntary Alliance and the Swale Cost of Living Working Group which help ensure that charities work to share expertise, improve information sharing and reduce duplication.

## The top 10 issues we helped clients with in 2023/4:

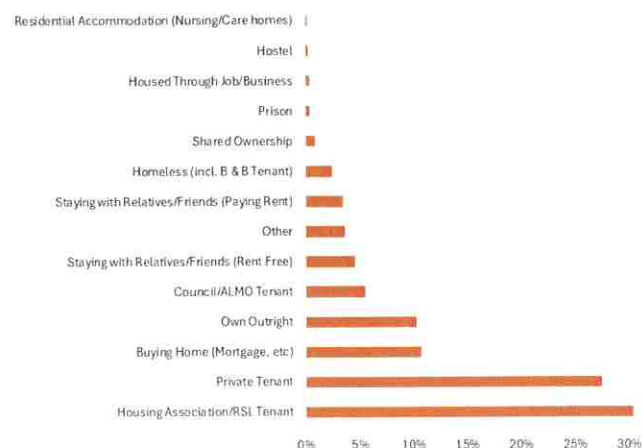


## The people we support

### Age



### Housing Tenure



### Disability / Long-term health



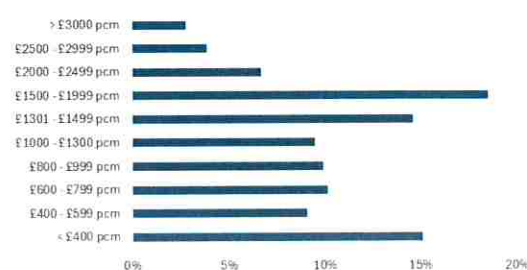
### Ethnicity



### Gender



### Income Profile



## Case studies

### From financial worries to debt free

Debts totalling £37,000 had caused huge anxiety for one of our clients. They were struggling to deal with the huge amounts of paperwork, demands for payments and visits from bailiffs. They were living on benefits and had no available income to offer creditors other than their benefit payments.

Our Money Advisor discussed the options available, including applying for bankruptcy. This would write-off their debts, remove the stress and pressure of creditors facing them and allow them to make a fresh start. The difficulty was that the application fee for bankruptcy costs £680 - a fee our client couldn't afford. Having looked at different trust funds we were able to secure generous support from the British Gas Energy Trust to pay the fee. Our client is now debt free and focussed on moving forward with their life.



### Help with pension claims leads to back payment of over £6,000

Our client had never claimed their state or private pension and wasn't sure how to start.

Our adviser made contact with the Pension Service and our client's bank several times over two months and found that payments were not made due to a communications issue. Our client finally received over £6,000 of backdated pay and was delighted that their weekly payment was assured. Our adviser also called the client's private pension provider and they'll be posting a claim form to our client, which we can help them to complete.

In the process of helping our client, our adviser discovered a further private pension which our client could benefit from and helped them with that claim.



### Challenging benefits decisions help

Our client was struggling with money due to cost of living increases, and needed help with their Personal Independence Payment (PIP) which had been suspended. Following an appeal to the Tribunal from our generalist adviser, the DWP reversed their decision in the client's favour before it went to a hearing. The client will be receiving a backdated PIP payment of approx £3,000 and their PIP has also been reinstated. Our client was struggling without this money so it's great that they are now able to afford their living costs again.

### Our value to society

We know that we not only make a difference to individual clients, we also deliver wider benefits to the Swale community and public institutions. These figures are produced by our national body and are credible but also conservative. In 2023/4 every £1 invested into our organisation was worth £17.89 in public value and £3.17 in fiscal value. Our services save the NHS £172,879 per year by reducing use. We've saved the Department for Work and Pensions £488,375 by keeping people in work. The total value to the people we help is an astonishing £4,741,735 and the total public value is £7,511,790. Regarding the local authority's statutory duty Citizens Advice Swale has saved £180,356 in preventing homelessness, housing eviction and in council tax repayments.

### Our volunteers

Our volunteers come from all walks of life and choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons. They include students, people getting back into work after career breaks, people with part-time jobs, carers, and people who have retired.

Every volunteer gets something different from their volunteering experience, such as:

- the opportunity to make a positive difference to people's lives
- improving their self-esteem, confidence and wellbeing
- gaining invaluable work experience
- receiving receive high quality training and developing new skills
- using their existing skills and knowledge to benefit the local community
- meeting new people from a range of backgrounds
- feeling valued and part of a team.

In 2023/24 our wonderful volunteers gave 9,600 hours of service and support to Citizens Advice Swale. Volunteers remain at the heart of our client-facing work - we also have volunteers who contribute their time to administrative tasks, social media and research. A huge thank you to them all.

## How we're funded

Citizens Advice Swale is an independent charity reliant on funding from a variety of sources. Without the support of our funders and donors we couldn't help the thousands of people who seek our help and advice each year. On their behalf...a very big thank you!

Our main funders in 2023/4 were:

- Swale Borough Council and Swale Household Support Fund
- Faversham Town Council
- Minster Parish Council
- Sheppey Council
- John Swire
- British Gas Energy Project
- Money Advice and Pensions (via our national body)
- Energy Advice Project (via our national body)
- Colyer Fergusson
- The Philip and Connie Phillips Foundation

## Future Development

2023-24 was a challenging year, in terms of funding and service delivery. In the current economic climate 2024-25 will be no different. We were able to secure a continuation of our Money Advice and Pension Service (MAPS) funded debt advice project and secured a further two years of funding for our British Gas energy project. However our organisation remains stretched in key areas, particularly as the number of different projects, locations and advice channels increase. At the end of 2022-23 we were faced with a potentially life-threatening cut in our core funding. This was averted, but it reminded us of the insecure world we work within. One key message to our core funder was that we need sufficient infrastructure to bid for and secure other projects that bring services to the local community – and there are very few sources able and willing to pay for that resource. The context for our work is changing too, with the “cost of living crisis” biting through winter 2023-24, and showing little sign of abating, we are increasingly dealing with emergency measures and distribution of resources such as those via the Household Support Fund, providing food and fuel vouchers and similar temporary fixes. As an advice service, we will continue to provide holistic support and our revised Mission for the coming years reflects the view that our role is preventative as well as restorative, and we will continue to work with clients to address underpinning causes as well as responding to their immediate needs where we are able to.

On a positive note, our funders have continued to support us through 2023-24 and we are hopeful this will continue into the future. We have also secured some new funding which is always a positive sign of our success in what we do. We continue to be able to provide a wide range of complimentary services, which deal with all aspects of our clients needs and wellbeing. As a relatively small Charity, we are aware of the threats we face, both in financial and operational areas. We value our staff and volunteers and believe in training and developing this valuable resource. We continue to keep a weathered eye on our major risks and explore new funding sources to strengthen our income, while efficiently managing our resources and targeting resources where they are most needed.

## **Our structure, governance and management**

The Trustees (who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) present their annual report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. This report has been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 as updated through Update Bulletin 1 published on 1 January 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2019.

### *a) Constitution*

Citizens Advice Bureau in Swale (trading as Citizens Advice Swale) is a charitable company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum and Articles of Association on 23 February 2004 and amended on 23 October 2018. The Charity's objects are to promote through advice and practical support, 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 Swale and surrounding areas. The reference and administration information is set out on page 23 of the financial statements.

### *b) Method of appointment of election of Trustees*

The management of the charitable company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected under the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees are elected to serve a period of 3 years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting.

The Officers of the Trustee Board may not hold office for more than six consecutive years. After the end of this period, a further two years must pass before any person can hold another office. The Trustees are all drawn from the Swale community. There is a maximum of 15 trustees on the board with up to three nominated by Swale Borough Council and one by Faversham Town Council. We aim to ensure there is a balance in terms of the areas that the Trustees are from and the skills that they bring to the organisation. Our managers attend the trustee meetings along with up to two staff representatives and one from the volunteers: these people do not have voting rights but are encouraged to participate in the discussions.

### *c) Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees*

All new Trustees receive an induction pack and training which includes

- the obligations of Trustees
- the documents which set out the operational framework for the Charity including the purpose and use of the Memorandum & Articles
- the Aims, Principles & Policies Training Pack

### *d) Organisation structure and decision making*

Citizens Advice Bureau in Swale (trading as Citizens Advice Swale) is organised with a Board of Trustees comprising a minimum of 3 members up to a maximum of 15 to oversee policy and planning. Trustees meet at least 4 times a year: in this reporting period meetings were more frequent. During the year we changed our sub-committee arrangements:

- Finance and fundraising - meets quarterly to review the financial, governance and risk related matters

- People, equality and wellbeing
- Risk, information and governance
- Research and Campaigns

The Board delegates day to day responsibility to the Chief Officer who is required to attend Board meetings and to report on all operational and financial matters including staff matters and service delivery.

#### *e) Risk assessment*

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charitable company is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charitable company, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the health and safety of all staff, clients and visitors. The quality of advice given to clients is assured through adhering to the Citizens Advice Membership Scheme.

## **Objects of the Charity for Public Benefit**

The Charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the 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 Swale and surrounding areas.

In order to realise this public benefit, general and specialist advice is provided by telephone, email and (when possible) by face to face appointments at the Charity's locations in Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Faversham. Advice services are supplemented by training and support activities, particularly where related to the development of money management skills and financial capability. The Charity seeks to secure additional funding from time to time to support specific projects and programmes which enhance the breadth and sustain ability of the service for local residents.

We are a member of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, an independent registered charity providing advice materials, organisational support, training and quality assurance infrastructure. The national body also negotiates on the behalf of local offices with major funding providers and national Government to generate funding which is then allocated either directly or via a bidding process for local services.

## **Financial review**

We started the financial year with a deficit budget of over £66k as the management team felt they would be able to secure additional funding to improve the position by the end of the year. This situation was a repeat of the previous financial year which also started in deficit. The trustees were mindful that this is not sustainable. While our reserves were in line with good practice our aim in future years is to at least break even.

We strengthened the management team's skills in fundraising, developed a more systematic way of tracking and prioritising grant opportunities and developed a financial contingency plan. The board took decisive action to reduce core running costs through some necessary staffing reductions - some of these results are shown in the final year figures with a reduced end of year deficit of £28k but the majority of savings will be realised in the 2024/5 financial year.

Total income for the year was £434,487 (2023: 459,169) and total expenditure was £463,596 (2023: £459,119), which resulted in a deficit of £28,109 (2023: £50). At the year end the charitable company had reserves of £154,778 (2023- £182,887) of which £200 was restricted. It is our policy to have unrestricted reserves of approximately four months operating expenditure. Free reserves for the year was £154,578 which meets the requirements of the reserve policy, however, the trustees are working towards increasing their free reserves to meet future challenges. We were successful in securing ongoing funding from several of our funders, which has given us the momentum to work towards a healthier financial future.

## **Reserves policy**

The Trustees agree to maintain unrestricted reserves of approximately four months of operating expenditure. We maintain these reserves as a prudent measure in challenging financial times. The budget for 2022-23 showed a significant deficit however the management team were able to obtain additional funding to support our services. Again, the budget for 2023-24 showed a significant deficit which required drawing on the overall reserves in 2023-24 to maintain services and structure – although we will naturally seek alternative funding streams to offset anything we need to withdraw.

## **Going concern**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. We have received substantial additional income during the last few years, from various funds aimed at supporting the community during the pandemic and current periods of high inflation, to enable the public to access our services. However, these funds are becoming more difficult to access, we are in a period of high inflation and increased demand which will place considerable challenge on the Charity. Contingency arrangements are regularly reviewed by the Board, and we are continually exploring measures to create cost-saving efficiencies, and secure additional resources. We continue to work on one major national project, MAPS debt advice, although income is likely to decline, as stated previously. Because of this we are likely to see more collaborative projects similar to that funded by British Gas Energy Trust which allowed us to deliver advice in Swale Foodbanks. In the future, we will have to weather substantial insecurity, but robust discussion has already prepared us for various contingencies.

## **Trustees' responsibilities statement in relation to the financial statements**

The charity trustees (who are also directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the method and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

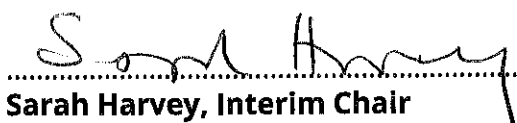
The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with Accounting the Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practices applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards applicable in UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 19 September 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



**Pam Kenworthy OBE, Chair of Trustees**



**Sarah Harvey, Interim Chair**

# Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Citizens Advice Bureau in Swale

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on pages 17 to 26.

## Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

## Independent examiner's statements

The Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, and I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

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.

## Use of Report

This report is made solely to the Company's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 145 of that Act. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Company's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's Trustees as a body, for my work or this report.



19/09/2024

**Andrew Collyer ACA**

**Burgess Hodgson LLP, Camburgh House, 27 New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 3DN**

# Statement of financial activities (Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income and Endowments</b>						
Donations	2	9,620	-	-	9,620	9,055
Investment income	3	1,112	-	-	1,112	368
Other income	4	2,505	-	-	2,505	3,285
Charitable activities	5	157,817	-	263,433	421,250	446,461
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>171,054</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>263,433</b>	<b>434,487</b>	<b>459,169</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>						
Charitable Activities	6	154,993	-	307,603	462,596	459,119
<b>Net Income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>16,061</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(44,170)</b>	<b>(28,109)</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	16	<b>(44,170)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>44,170</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(28,109)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(28,109)</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Funds brought forward at 01/04/2023	17	162,687	20,000	200	182,887	182,837
<b>Funds carried forward at 31/03/2024</b>	17	<b>134,578</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>154,778</b>	<b>182,887</b>

The notes on pages 15 to 26 form part of these financial statements.

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

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

# Balance sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>					
Tangible assets	12		10,000		15,000
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Debtors	13	9,720		16,939	
Cash at bank and in hand	14	174,348		209,474	
<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>184,068</u>		<u>226,413</u>	
Creditors: Amounts due within one year	15	(39,290)		(58,526)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>144,778</u>		<u>167,887</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>			<u>154,778</u>		<u>182,887</u>
<b>The Funds of the Charity</b>	17				
Unrestricted funds			134,578		162,687
Designated Fund			20,000		20,000
Restricted funds			200		200
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<u>154,778</u>		<u>182,887</u>

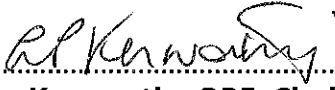
The notes on pages 15 to 24 form part of these financial statements.

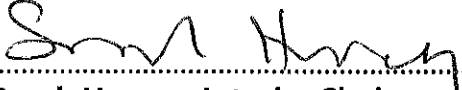
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provision applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 section 1A - small entities.

The Trustees consider that the Company is entitled to exemption from the requirement to have an audit under the provisions of section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 ("the Act") and members have not required the Company to obtain an audit for the year under review in accordance with section 476 of the Act.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 in respect to accounting records and the preparation of the financial statements.

These financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board and were signed on their behalf on 19 September 2024.

  
 Pam Kenworthy OBE, Chair of Trustees

  
 Sarah Harvey, Interim Chair

Company Registration No 5052691

# Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

## 1 Accounting policies

### a) General information and basis of preparation

Citizens Advice Bureau in Swale is a private company limited by guarantee in England. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 2 of these financial statements. The nature of the Charity's operations and principal activities are the provision of free, confidential, independent and impartial advice services to the people of Swale.

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16th July 2014 as updated through Update Bulletin 1 published on 1st January 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2019

The Charity has applied Update Bulletin 1 as published on 2 February 2016 and does not include a cash flow statement on the grounds that it is applying FRS 102 Section 1A.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under historical cost convention, modified to include certain items of fair value. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

### b) Incoming resources

Grants, including grants for the purchase of fixed assets, are recognised in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity has entitlement after any performance conditions are met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. Income is deferred only when the donor has specified that the income relates to a future period, or if entitlement is not met.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value of the Charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts in line with the SORP (FRS 102).

Rental income is recognised as the Charity's right to receive payment is established.

### c) Resources expended

Resources expended are recognised in the period in which they are incurred. Resources expended include VAT which cannot be recovered and is therefore reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly represent the charitable activities and include office, personnel, governance and administrative costs. These costs have been allocated to expenditure in charitable activities.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the Charity and include Independent Examiners' fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the Charity.

**d) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets of over £1,000 are capitalised and are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Leasehold improvements	20% straight line
Computers, software and equipment	25% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line

**e) Cash and Cash equivalents**

Cash is represented by cash in hand and financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours.

**f) Debtors and creditors receivable/payable within one year.**

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any loss arising from impairment is recognised in expenditure.

**g) Employee benefits**

The Charity operates a defined contribution plan for the benefit of employees. Contributions are expensed as they become payable.

**h) Operating leases**

Lease payments under operating lease, where substantially all of the risk and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the period in which they are incurred.

**i) Going concern**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. We have sought to maximise income in recent times, and all expenditure is closely monitored for value-for-money and impact on the provision of services. Following the pandemic we are in a good position to offer the best of the "old" and "new" methodologies, and staff and volunteers are clearly able to work from a variety of locations and using a range of tools. This puts us in a good position to be a modern, forward-thinking service.

Based on these assessments and having regard to the resources available to the entity, the Trustees have concluded that there is no material uncertainty and that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

**j) Fund Accounting**

Funds held by the Charity are either:

Unrestricted general funds - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the trustees.

Designated funds - these are funds set aside by the Trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific projects or future purposes.

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

**k) Judgements and key sources of estimated uncertainties**

No judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have been made in the process of applying the above accounting policies that have had any significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements, except for those detailed in the above accounting policies.

There are no key assumptions concerning the future and other key sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
		£	£	£	£
<b>2 Donations</b>					
Other Local Parishes		1,550	-	1,550	1,065
Friends of CAB, other donations		2,070	-	2,070	903
The Philip and Connie Phillips Foundation		5,000	-	5,000	-
The Swire Trust		1,000	-	1,000	-
The Charities Trust		-	-	-	1,000
Swale Borough Council members grants		-	-	-	3,662
Groundwork - Tesco		-	-	-	500
Faversham		-	-	-	425
Corporate Donations		-	-	-	1,500
		<u>9,620</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,620</u>	<u>9,055</u>
<b>3 Investment income</b>					
Bank interest received		1,112	-	1,112	368
		<u>1,112</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,112</u>	<u>368</u>
<b>4 Other income</b>					
Sundry income and fundraising		2,505	-	2,505	3,285
		<u>2,505</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,505</u>	<u>3,285</u>
<b>5 Charitable activities</b>					
Swale Borough Council		135,317	-	135,317	133,430
Faversham Town Council	restated	6,000	-	6,000	6,000
Minster Parish Council	restated	-	-	-	5,000
Sheerness Borough Council	restated	-	-	-	750
Sheppey Town Council		1,500	-	1,500	-
Swale B Council - Household Support Fund		-	20,000	20,000	20,000
Southern Water		-	-	-	5,000
Money and Mental Health		-	12,707	12,707	13,129
Colyer Fergusson CT - Investing in Families	restated		14,987	14,987	11,013
Colyer Fergusson CT - Communities Fund	restated		10,000	10,000	10,000
National Association of Citizens Advice -					
Money Advice Programme		-	81,675	81,675	105,918
Energy Advice Project		-	36,750	36,750	16,300
Adviceline		15,000	-	15,000	-
Help to Claim	clawback	-	(4,536)	(4,536)	75,568
British Gas Energy Trust		-	91,850	91,850	43,268
Kickstart		-	-	-	1,085
		<u>157,817</u>	<u>263,433</u>	<u>421,250</u>	<u>446,461</u>
<b>Total Income for year</b>		<u>171,054</u>	<u>263,433</u>	<u>434,487</u>	<u>459,169</u>

**6 Resources expended**

Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
£	£	£	£

**Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities**

Direct staff costs		119,511	227,894	347,405	295,602
Indirect Staff costs		4,385	7,978	12,363	4,448
Office	restated	6,732	14,865	21,597	-
Premises	restated	4,032	11,759	15,791	-
Governance (see note 6 (b))		-	-	-	-
Other	restated	35	6,129	6,164	-
Swale food bank - Contribution to costs		-	-	-	900
Support costs (see note 6 (a))	restated	20,298	38,978	59,276	158,169
		<u>154,993</u>	<u>307,603</u>	<u>462,596</u>	<u>459,119</u>

**6 (a) Support costs allocated to activities**

		2024	2023
		£	£
Direct staff costs	restated	39,913	98,160
Indirect Staff costs	restated	-	27,813
Office	restated	8,948	24,679
Premises	restated	6,768	-
Governance		3,355	7,517
Other		292	-
		<u>59,276</u>	<u>158,169</u>

**6 (b) Governance costs**

		2024	2023
		£	£
Staff costs		-	4,352
Independent Examiners' fees		1,940	1,900
Trustee Insurance		307	307
AGM and Trustees meeting costs		1,108	958
		<u>3,355</u>	<u>7,517</u>

**7 Net Income/(expenditure) for the year**

	2024	2023
	£	£
This is stated after charging:		
Depreciation of Tangible assets	5,000	5,000
Operating lease rentals	1,665	1,665
Independent examiners fees	1,940	1,900

**8 Independent examiners remuneration**

The Independent examiners remuneration amounts to an independent examiners fee of £1940 (2023: £1900)

## 9 Staff costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	359,801	369,654
Social security costs	21,357	22,389
Defined contribution pension costs	6,160	6,071
	<u>387,318</u>	<u>398,114</u>

No employee received total employee benefits (excluding employers pension costs) amounting to more than £60,000 in the period.

The average monthly number of employees and full time equivalents (FTE) during the year was as follows:

	2024 Number	2024 FTE	2023 Number	2023 FTE
Provision of services	<u>19</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>13</u>

## 10 Trustees' and key management personnel remuneration and expenses

None of the Trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year, (2023: Nil) neither were they reimbursed expenses during the year (2023: Nil).

The total amount of remuneration received by key management personnel is £67,964 (2022: £63,912). The Trustees consider key management personnel to be comprised of M Hinton, F Spall, J. Lee and the Trustees.

## 11 Taxation

The Company is a registered Charity and is not subject to Corporation Tax.

## 12 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold improvements £	Computers software & equipment £	Fixtures & fittings £	Total £
Cost				
As at 1 April 2023	55,321	26,284	4,018	85,623
Additions	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-
As at 31 March 2024	<u>55,321</u>	<u>26,284</u>	<u>4,018</u>	<u>85,623</u>
Depreciation				
As at 1 April 2023	40,321	26,284	4,018	70,623
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Charge for the year	5,000	-	-	5,000
As at 31 March 2024	<u>45,321</u>	<u>26,284</u>	<u>4,018</u>	<u>75,623</u>
Net book values				
As at 31 March 2024	<u>10,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,000</u>
As at 31 March 2023	<u>15,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,000</u>

<b>13 Debtors</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Prepayments	533	16,300
Accrued Income	9,187	639
	<u>9,720</u>	<u>16,939</u>
<b>14 Cash at Bank and in Hand</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Lloyds TSB Deposit account	61,870	41,348
Lloyds TSB Current account	25,602	81,858
Metro Bank	86,876	86,268
	<u>174,348</u>	<u>209,474</u>
<b>15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Taxes and social security	6,015	-
Other creditors and accruals	8,504	11,833
Provision and Clawback	11,780	25,206
Deferred income	12,991	21,487
	<u>39,290</u>	<u>58,526</u>

**16 Funds Reconciliation - STATEMENT OF FUNDS - CURRENT YEAR**

	<b>Balance at 1/4/2023 £</b>	<b>Incoming resources £</b>	<b>Resources Expended £</b>	<b>Transfers £</b>	<b>Balance at 31/3/2024 £</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>					
General Funds	<u>162,687</u>	<u>171,054</u>	<u>(154,993)</u>	<u>(44,170)</u>	<u>134,578</u>
Designated fund					
Staffing Contingencies fund	<u>20,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,000</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Business Gas Energy Trust	-	91,850	(94,131)	(2,281)	-
Swale BC Household Support Fund	-	20,000	(19,885)	115	-
William Barrows Charity	200	-	-	-	200
Colyer Fergusson C T - Investing in Families	-	14,987	(15,873)	(886)	-
Colyer Fergusson C T - Community Fund	-	10,000	(10,592)	(592)	-
National Citizens Advice					
Energy Advice Project	-	36,750	(36,374)	376	-
Money Advice and Pensions service	-	81,675	(116,569)	(34,894)	-
Swale BC - collaborative grant for Faversham	-	-	-	-	-
Money and Mental Health	-	12,707	(13,706)	(999)	-
Community Fund	-	-	(473)	(473)	-
Southern water	-	-	-	-	-
Help to Claim - net clawback	-	(4,536)	-	(4,536)	-
Kickstart	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>263,433</u>	<u>(307,603)</u>	<u>44,170</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total Resources received and expended</b>	<u>182,687</u>	<u>434,487</u>	<u>(462,596)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>154,578</u>

**16 Funds Reconciliation - continued**  
**STATEMENT OF FUNDS - PRIOR YEAR**

	Balance at 1/4/2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31/3/2023 £
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>					
General Funds	162,637	145,713	(153,585)	7,922	162,687
Designated fund					
Staffing Contingencies fund	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Business Gas Energy Trust	-	43,268	(43,049)	219	-
Swale BC Household Support	-	20,000	(18,000)	2,000	-
Faversham Town Council - restated	-	6,000	(5,500)	500	-
Minster Parish Council - restated	-	5,000	(4,400)	600	-
Sheerness Town Council	-	750	(600)	150	-
William Barrows Charity	200	-	-	-	200
Colyer Fergusson C T - Communities Fund	-	11,013	(11,013)	-	-
Colyer Fergusson C T - Investing in Families	-	10,000	(10,717)	(717)	-
National Citizens Advice					
Energy Advice Project	-	16,300	(15,800)	500	-
Money Advice and Pensions service	-	105,918	(112,616)	(6,698)	-
Help to Claim	-	75,568	(64,700)	10,868	-
Swale BC - Collaborative grant for Faversham	-	425	(425)	-	-
Money and Mental Health	-	13,129	(13,129)	-	-
Southern water	-	5,000	(4,500)	500	-
Kickstart	-	1,085	(1,085)	-	-
	200	313,456	(305,534)	(7,922)	200
<b>Total resources received and expended</b>	<b>182,837</b>	<b>459,169</b>	<b>(459,119)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>182,887</b>

**Purpose of funds:**

Unrestricted Funds: These funds can be used in accordance with the Charity's objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

**Designated Fund:**

**Staffing Contingencies Fund**

A fund created by the Trustees to provide a contingency reserve to cover recruitment, training and potential redundancy costs should funding sources reduce.

**Restricted Funds:**

**Money Advice and Pensions Service**

The Money Advice and Pensions Service, in partnership with Citizens Advice, funds the Debt Advice Project. The Charity received a number of grants for increased capacity. Unspent funds have been transferred to unrestricted general funds in accordance with the agreement.

## **16 Purpose of Funds - continued**

### British Gas Energy Trust

A project that supports clients with energy advice and money management support in partnership with Swale Foodbank.

### Swale Borough Council Household Support Fund

One of a number of delivery partners providing support for community particularly food and fuel vouchers and financial capability and income maximisation.

### Faversham Town Council

This grant contributes to the cost of providing casework for Faversham Clients.

### Minster Parish Council & Sheerness Town Council

These are grants that contribute to the cost of providing advice services for Sheppey clients.

### William Barrows Charity

This grant has been provided for use in cases of extreme hardship of residents of the parish of Borden.

### Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust - Investing in Families

A grant to support staff cost particularly to support supervision.

### Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust - Communities Fund

Acquiring new IT equipment and reviewing new approach to service delivery.

### Swale Borough Council. collaborative grant for Faversham

Collaborative bid from Faversham community network to increase our opening hours in Faversham administered by Faversham Umbrella.

### Money and Mental Health

A fund provided by Kent County Council tailored for Mental Health clients, to provide long term support and assist with financial capability and maximise income. The Fund is managed by North West Kent Citizens Advice.

### Energy Advice Project

National Citizens Advice funding to provide support for clients with high energy usage, to reduce bills through efficient savings.

### Southern Water

A grant to provide financial capability and in particular to help clients manage finances and avoid the need for further debt support.

### Help to Claim

Funding given by the National Citizens Advice to provide assistance for clients making a Universal Credit claim. This project ceased in 2023.

### Kickstart

A grant to assist with employment costs, to enable those first leaving school to get work experience for a period of 6 months. This project ceased in 2023.

### Business Energy and Industrial Strategy

Funding received via Citizens Advice to provide additional resources during Covid times, in particular advice to assist clients to manage their debts, the grant was paid in 2020/21 but the service is for two years.

### Swale Borough Council Members Grants

Various members grants for specific costs as set out above and general office running costs.

**17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS -****CURRENT YEAR**

	<b>General funds £</b>	<b>Designated funds £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>
Tangible fixed assets	10,000	-	-	10,000
Current assets	533	-	9,187	9,720
Creditors: Amounts falling due	(7,137)	-	(32,153)	(39,290)
Cash at Bank and In Hand	131,182	20,000	23,166	174,348
Total net assets	134,578	20,000	200	154,778

**ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS -****PRIOR YEAR**

	<b>General funds £</b>	<b>Designated funds £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Tangible fixed assets	15,000	-	-	15,000
Current assets	16,939	-	-	16,939
Creditors: Amounts falling due	(58,526)	-	-	(58,526)
Cash at Bank and In Hand	189,274	20,000	200	209,474
Total net assets	162,687	20,000	200	182,887

**18 Financial Commitments**

At 31 March 2024 the charity had total future minimum base payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
Not later than one year	7,110	7,666
Later than one and not later than five years	24,000	19,111
	31,110	26,777

**Pensions and other post retirement benefits**

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension plan for its employees. The amount recognised as an expense in the period was £6,160 (2023: £6,071). There were no liabilities outstanding (2023: Nil) in relation to this pension plan commitment.

**Related party transactions**

There were no related party transactions during the year (2023: nil).

**19 COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2023**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Designated Fund £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
<b>Income and Endowments</b>					
<b>Donations</b>	8,630	-	33,188	41,818	29,036
<b>Investment income</b>	368	-	-	368	33
<b>Other Income</b>	3,285	-	-	3,285	1,724
<b>Charitable Activities</b>	133,430	-	280,268	413,698	373,348
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	145,713	-	313,456	459,169	404,141
<b>Expenditure on Charitable Activities</b>	153,585	-	305,534	459,119	431,492
<b>Net Income/(expenditure)</b>	(7,872)	-	7,922	50	(27,351)
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	7,922	-	(7,922)	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	50	-	-	50	(27,351)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	162,637	20,000	200	182,837	210,188
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	162,687	20,000	200	182,887	182,837

# Administrative information

	Name	Appointed	Retired
<b>Trustees</b>	Richard Calvert		25 July 2023
	David Walker (Former Chair)		25 July 2023
	Michael Moore		25 July 2023
	Paul Miller		28 July 2024
	Ethan Dighton		23 October 2023
	Safiya Nelson - Treasurer		02 June 2024
	Hannah Edwards - Treasurer	02 July 2024	
	Sean Grace		23 January 2024
	Sarah Harvey (Interim Chair)	26 April 2022	
	Pam Kenworthy (Chair)	25 April 2023	
	Amanda Tennant	24 January 2023	19 January 2024
	Barrie Neaves	24 January 2023	
	Brett Appleton	30 April 2024	
<b>Representative Members</b>	Paul Stephen Swale BC		06 June 2023
	Tim Gibson Swale BC		06 June 2023
	Hannah Perkin Swale BC	17 September 2019	
	Kieran Golding Swale BC	25 July 2023	
	Elliott Jayes Swale BC	25 July 2023	
<b>Company secretary</b>	Mark Hinton	02 November 2023	
	Jude Lee	02 November 2023	
<b>Management Team</b>	Fiona Spall (Manager)	16 October 2023	24 May 2024
	Mark Hinton (Manager/Chief Officer)		02 November 2023
	Jude Lee	16 October 2023	

## Registered office

Swale House  
East Street  
Sittingbourne  
ME10 3HT

**Company registered number** 5052691

**Charity registered number** 1103010

**Citizens Advice Registered Number** 75/0016

## Independent Examiner

Andrew Collyer ACA  
Burgess Hodgson LLP  
Camburgh House  
27 New Dover Road  
Canterbury  
CT1 3DN

