

CITIZENS ADVICE SERVICE IN THREE RIVERS
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report and Financial Statements

Year ending 31 March 2024

Charity number 1104392

Company number 5082066

**Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

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Report of the Directors and Trustees for the year ending 31 March 2024

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are pleased to present their annual directors' report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ending 31 March 2024 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the memorandum and articles of association, and the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice ("Charities SORP") applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland; FRS 102 issued in October 2019.

Objectives and activities**a) Objectives and aims**

The Charity's objectives are to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of primarily, but not exclusively, the community in Three Rivers by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress.

Our service provides free, confidential, impartial and independent advice and information. It also aims to exercise a responsible influence on the development of social policies locally and nationally and attempts to ensure individuals do not suffer through lack of knowledge or an inability to express their needs effectively. We value diversity, promote equality and inclusion, and challenge discrimination.

Our aims are focused on providing the advice people need for the problems they face and to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives 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.

b) Strategies and activities for the year

The main areas of charitable activity are the provision of generalist advice and information, specialist help with debt advice and family law matters, scams and tribunal representation for sickness and disability benefit appeals.

The range of generalist advice we offer spans:

- full advice offered on virtually any issue from our comprehensive information system, with further specialist advice available from our extensive bank of reference books and consultancy helplines;
- negotiation with third parties outside Citizens Advice to secure the best and fairest outcome for our clients;
- a sympathetic listening ear to encourage a client to tell us the full extent of the problem so that our advice is holistic; and
- signposting and/or referral to an area beyond our expertise or remit.

Generalist advice and information is offered at each of our three offices. The service is open to everyone regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality. Individual advice is provided at drop-in times, face to face by appointment, over the telephone through our local offices and via Citizens Advice's Herts Adviceline, by email via our website and through national email and webchat services. We also hold advice outreaches at the South Oxhey Foodbank, the Mill End Foodbank (run by Rickmansworth Foodbank) and at the Foodbank at Emmanuel Church in Northwood. From the 1st February 2023 until the 31st March 2024 we ran a county wide partnership with Hertfordshire MIND Network and Citizens Advice Hertfordshire giving advice 2 days a week at The Wellbeing Centre in Watford. The external grant funding for the MIND project ended on the 31st January 2024 and the project was therefore funded by CASTR for the last two months.

Report of the Directors and Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**Objectives and activities (continued)**

We also offer specialist debt advice across each of our offices. This service consists of helping clients, usually those with multiple debts, to face a better future. Our money advisers will negotiate with creditors to encourage them to freeze interest on repayments until the client is in a position to start paying them. We also may negotiate with the creditor to write the debt off altogether if there is no realistic chance of repayment. Alternatively, our money advisers will calculate realistic repayments on a pro rata basis to all creditors, or assist clients with insolvency as appropriate.

We also represent our debt clients at possession hearings at the local county court. Two of our money advisers are trained as debt relief order intermediaries, providing a seamless service for clients eligible for this insolvency option. Our money advice service is part funded by the local authority with additional funding from Thrive Homes, The Henry Smith Charity and Hertfordshire County Council.

Our other main areas of specialist work are case work and tribunal representation for sickness and disability benefits, and family law casework.

Our sickness and disability casework is part funded by the Graham Rowlandson Foundation in partnership with Hertfordshire Community Foundation (HCF), and the National Lottery Community Fund. We also receive funding from Watford Rural Parish Council to provide casework at South Oxhey, and funding from Abbots Langley Parish Council to support a case worker at Abbots Langley.

Our family law casework team consists of a volunteer case worker and a paid case worker and the team is supported by our volunteer service. The delivery of this casework is supported by funding from Hertfordshire Community Fund, The David Laing Trust and our core local authority grant.

This year we have continued to distribute funds via our service to clients in need. Some of these funds were paid to us from the Government Household Support Funds (HSF) and were allocated by the local authority for us to distribute to Thrive Homes tenants in need living in Three Rivers. We also distributed, on behalf of Thrive Homes, hardship funds to Thrive Homes tenants in need as a result of the current cost of living crisis. Finally, we also distributed HSF funds in the form of supermarket vouchers purchased with funds provided by Hertfordshire County Council in partnership with the other nine local citizens advice services in Hertfordshire. The total of this money (£34,649 2024, £44,055 2023) is included in both grant income and direct expenses. This money does not represent underlying costs of the service although costs are incurred in its administration for which additional grants are received.

Achievements and performance

Our financial modelling tool (produced by national Citizens Advice) shows that in 2023/24 our service in Three Rivers returned a public value of almost £32 for every £1 invested in us. This tool also calculates that the annual financial value of our work to the public is £18,276,032 and the annual financial value to the people that we help is £8,866,198.

In the last year our Charity recorded over 19,000 client contacts in addition to all the administrative work that we do on behalf of our clients. We also helped our clients to gain additional income of at least £1.6 million and to write off debts of £383,729.

The mainstay of our service are our volunteers, who provide information, advice and generalist case work to our clients. In the year under review at least 27,456 volunteer hours were donated by our volunteers. We continue to have significant and multiple changes to our volunteer numbers and these numbers were still fluctuating throughout the year, with the count of 66 volunteers as of March 2024.

We are very proud of the significant value that our service is able to return to our community.

Report of the Directors and Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**Achievements and performance (continued)**

The twin aims of the Citizens Advice service require that whenever we encounter an issue of local social unfairness we campaign to raise awareness of the problem and seek to effect change for the better. At a national level, we can pass these social policy issues to Citizens Advice's social policy department for them to pursue further, and where possible influence Parliamentary Committees and ultimately legislation on the issue. The general low level of benefit income and increased indebtedness are of concern and exacerbated by the significant cost of living crisis that our community faces.

We continue to work locally to look at the accurateness of health assessments for sickness and disability benefits and the long waiting times for sickness and disability benefit appeals. We have had further government responses to our concerns and we have now completed our data reports and are in the process of using these to facilitate local and national discussion. We responded to the governments Green Paper and White Paper on Health and Disability Benefits. We have also raised the Cost of Living Crisis with our MPs and local government and shared both nationally and locally gathered data with our partners and funders. This data illustrates how price rises, such as energy, are affecting the local community.

Financial review

During the past year, total income was £572k and expenditure £585k. The unrestricted income was £289k and the unrestricted expenditure £285k producing a surplus on general funds of £4k. Our unrestricted funds carried forward have increased to £477k.

Report of the Directors and Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**Financial review (continued)****a) Principal funding sources**

Our principal funding source is Three Rivers District Council, in the form of a grant and accommodation at our Rickmansworth bureau. As a result of increasing constraints on local authority expenditure the Charity obtains funding and donations from other bodies. This totalled £279,350 and included:

- Abbots Langley Parish Council - £2,500 to fund a part time caseworker at Abbots Langley;
- Citizens Advice - £15,000 to help us grow the service;
- Citizens Advice - £31,125 to help us develop Remote Service Delivery;
- Citizens Advice - £1,050 to provide energy advice. These funds were originally provided by the electricity industry;
- Citizens Advice - £132 for debt relief orders;
- Dacorum Community Trust - £90 to fund Debt Relief Orders
- Graham Rowlandson Foundation and Hertfordshire Community Foundation - £10,000 to provide disability and benefits advice;
- The Henry Smith Charity - £39,500 to provide debt advice;
- Hertfordshire Community Fund - £3,000 to fund family law casework;
- Hertfordshire County Council - £29,673 for a crisis intervention fund;
- Hertfordshire County Council - £38,100 for providing case workers to support clients during the Cost of Living crisis;
- Hertfordshire County Council - £19,050 of Crisis Enhancement funds to deliver extra advice arising from distributing HSF funds;
- Hertfordshire County Council - £23,850, £22,500 to be distributed to clients and £1,350 to cover administration costs;
- Hertfordshire County Council – £5,000 in unrestricted grants to provide general advice while distributing Government Household Support Funds;
- Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board- £17,417 to support clients of Hertfordshire MIND Network;
- Mill End Community Trust - £1,248 to fund a caseworker at the Mill End Foodbank;
- The Parochial Church Council of Abbots Langley and the St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance - a rent subsidy of £9,192 for the premises at Abbots Langley;
- National Lottery Community Fund- £4,724 to provide disability and benefits advice;
- The David Laing Trust - £2,500 to fund family law casework;
- Three Rivers District Council - £1,000 for administration costs for distributing HSF funds;
- Thrive Homes - £20,035 to provide debt advice;
- Thrive Homes and Three Rivers District Council - £2,000 of Government Household Support Funds to be distributed to Thrive tenants in need;
- Watford Health Trust - £2,164 for clients in need in Three Rivers;
- Watford Rural Parish Council - £1,000 to be distributed to clients in need.

The trustees would like to thank all funders for their continuing support.

Report of the Directors and Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**Financial review (continued)****b) Investment policy**

The trustees, having regard to the liquidity requirements of our advice service, have kept available funds in an interest-bearing deposit account and seek to achieve a rate on deposit which matches or exceeds inflation as measured by the retail prices index. Due to wider economic circumstances deposit rates have been depressed and so this aim was not achieved in the year.

c) Reserves policy

The trustees have examined the Charity's requirement for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. As reported previously the policy is to hold unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets amounting to 9 months of the annual operating expenditure. Expenditure for 2023/24 is £585k. However this includes £35k of direct payments to clients. It is considered that these expenses should not be included in expenses for the purposes of calculating the reserve since they are not part of our controllable expenses. Expenses after deducting direct client payments for 23/24 is £550k. On that basis a target of £412k should be held in general funds. These reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the Charity, and the trustees are confident that at this level they would be able to continue the current activities of the Charity in the short term in the event of a significant drop in funding.

The unrestricted funds stand at £477k which exceeds the target level of reserves by £65k but this needs to take into account the designated funds of £41k to cover repairs at the Abbots Langley premises and the purchase of new IT equipment. Nevertheless, the reserves are comfortably in excess of the policy. The next few years will be financially challenging, and the trustees are well aware that future funding is not guaranteed.

Structure, governance and management**a) Governing document**

The company was set up as a company limited by guarantee under a memorandum of association which established the objects and power of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 each. At 31 March 2024 the company had 18 members.

b) Appointment of trustees

The trustees are appointed by the members of the company and are elected to serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next annual general meeting. The trustees can co-opt people to the board who must then be formally elected by the members at the next annual general meeting.

Business skills are well represented on the trustee board and members' skills are reviewed each year.

c) Trustee induction and training

All potential trustees undergo a thorough induction and training process. Initially, an interview is held with the chair of the board and chief officer. References are subsequently taken out if the candidate has been approved. The potential trustee is given a copy of a new trustee pack. There then follows an attachment to a service manager in the bureau, and attendance on a trustees' induction course, run by Citizens Advice. The potential trustee is subsequently proposed as a director at the next board meeting and stands for election at the next Annual General Meeting.

Report of the Directors and Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**Structure, governance and management (continued)****d) Organisation**

Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers is a 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. Operating policies are independently determined by the board of trustees in order to fulfil its charitable objects and comply with the national membership requirements. The board of trustees, which can have up to 15 members, normally meets quarterly and the meetings held this year have been held virtually in line with Government restrictions and recommendations.

A chief officer is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the Charity. 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 officer 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.

e) Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the Charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the Charity with a supplier or grant giving body must be disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. Related party transactions are reported in note 9 to the accounts.

f) Pay policy for senior staff

The directors consider the board of directors, who are the Charity's trustees, and the senior management team comprise the key management personnel of the charity. All directors give of their time freely and no director received remuneration in the year. Details of directors' expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in note 9 to the accounts.

The pay of the senior staff is reviewed annually and normally increases in accordance with average earnings. In view of the nature of the charity, the trustees benchmark against pay levels in other local citizens advice offices. The chief officer's salary is reviewed and approved by the trustee board separately but in line with the policy set out above.

g) Risk management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- A quarterly review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the Charity faces;
- The establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the Charity should those risks materialise.

Report of the Directors and Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**Reference and administrative information**

Registered name: Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers Other name used: CASTR
Charity number: 1104392 Company number: 5082066
Registered Office: Northway House, High Street, Rickmansworth WD3 1EH.

The directors of the charitable company (the Charity) are its trustees for the purpose of charity law. The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Key management personnel: Trustees and directors

Nominated chair: Paul Shaw
Elected trustees: Mary Alderson
Emily Dunbar
Suresh Gajjar
Andrew Pickford
Graham Sadler
Ronald Sweetman
Eluned Wallace

Key management personnel: Senior management team

Chief officer: Peta Mettam
Advice Service manager: Trish Lincoln

The following were advisers to the trustees:

<i>Principal Bankers</i>	<i>Auditors</i>
Lloyds Bank plc	Hillier Hopkins LLP
PO Box 1000	Radius House
Andover	51 Clarendon Road
BX1 1LT	Watford WD17 1HP

Report of the Directors and Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**Trustees' responsibilities statement - charitable company**

The trustees (who are also directors of Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

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

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume the the Charity will continue in business.

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

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.

Statement as to disclosure to our auditors

In so far as the trustees are aware at the time of approving our trustees' annual report:

- there is no relevant information, being information needed by the auditor in connection with preparing their report, of which the Charity's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustees, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the Charity's auditor that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that he/she is obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

Auditors

Hillier Hopkins LLP was appointed as the charitable company's auditors at the last annual general meeting and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

By order of the board of trustees

Paul Shaw
Chairman

Date: 25 October 2024

Independent Auditor's Report to The Members of Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is 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).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024
- , and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers (continued)**Other information**

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

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- the charitable company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on pages 7 and 8, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers (continued)**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with regulations made under section 154 of that Act.

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

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

- We have assessed the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance including the remuneration incentives and pressures of key management;
- The primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both those charged with governance of the entity and management. We consider the results of our enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- Any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the Charity's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- The matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override, including testing journals and evaluating whether there was evidence of bias by the directors that represented a risk of material misstatement due to fraud.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the Charity operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. We focused on laws and regulations that could give rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements, including, but not limited to, the Charities Act 2011 and relevant tax legislation.

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers (continued)**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)**

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

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Hillier Hopkins LLP

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Radius House
51 Clarendon Road
Watford
WD17 1HP
Date: 25 October 2024

Hillier Hopkins LLP are eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 20

**Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account
for year ended 31 March 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	2023 £
Income from:					
Donations	2	784	250	1,034	3,465
Charitable activities	2	280,290	282,350	562,640	518,528
Investment income	3	7,995	-	7,995	2,541
Other grant income	4	-	-	-	896
		289,069	282,600	571,669	525,430
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		15,488	-	15,488	15,800
Charitable activities	6	269,141	299,985	569,126	515,445
Total resources expended		284,629	299,985	584,614	531,245
Net income and movement in funds	8	4,440	(17,385)	(12,945)	(5,815)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		472,952	27,487	500,439	506,254
Total funds carried forward		£ 477,392	£ 10,102	£ 487,494	£ 500,439

The notes on pages 18 to 30 form part of the financial statements

Balance Sheet
as at 31 March 2024

	Notes	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	13		-		-
Investments	14		-		-
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			-		-
Current Assets					
Prepayments		465		-	
Trade debtors		2,099		33,400	
Short term deposits		164,536		254,879	
Cash at bank and in hand		351,990		343,133	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		519,090		631,412	
Creditors falling due within one year	15	31,596		130,973	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Net Current Assets			487,494		500,439
Total assets less current liabilities			<hr/>		<hr/>
			£ 487,494		£ 500,439
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Funds					
Unrestricted funds					
General fund		332,692		335,252	
Designated funds	16&17	144,700		137,700	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
			477,392		472,952
Restricted funds	16&17		10,102		27,487
Total funds			<hr/>		<hr/>
			£ 487,494		£ 500,439
			<hr/>		<hr/>

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

The trustees consider that the company is entitled to exemption from the requirement to have an audit under the provisions of section 477 Companies Act 2006 ("the Act") and members have not required the company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Act. However, an audit is required in accordance with section 144 Charities Act 2011.

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

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees on 28 August 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

J P Shaw
Chair

A G Sadler
Treasurer

The notes on pages 18 to 30
form part of the financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows
for year ending 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided/(absorbed) by operating activities	18	862	(57,328)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest income		7,995	2,541
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		8,857	(54,787)
Cash in hand at the beginning of the year		343,133	397,920
Total cash in hand at the end of the year		£ 351,990	£ 343,133

The notes on pages 18 to 30 form part of the financial statements.

Notes on the Accounts**1. Accounting policies**

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a) Basis of preparation

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

Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers 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.

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

b) Income

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the Charity is entitled to the funds and the amount can be measured with reasonable certainty. Income is deferred only when the Charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Income from Government and other grants, whether capital grants or revenue grants, is recognised when the Charity has entitlement, 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.

c) Donated services and facilities

Donated services and facilities are recognised as income when the Charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the Charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the time of the general volunteers is not recognised. The trustees' annual report provides more information about their contribution.

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 upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

e) Fund 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.

Notes on the Accounts (continued)**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.

Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Costs of raising funds comprise the salary costs associated with grant applications.

Expenditure on charitable activities includes all expenditure directly related to the objects of the Charity and comprises staff costs, training and travel analysed between the Charity's activities.

Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

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

g) Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include all the management, administration, central functions and governance costs which support the Charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in Note 6.

h) Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged against income on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

i) Fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £5,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

Computer equipment and furniture over 4 years

Fixtures and furnishings over 5 years

j) Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any discounts due.

k) 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.

l) Pensions

The Charity operates a money purchase scheme which is operated by Scottish Widows plc. Employees contract directly with the insurance company. The Charity makes a matching contribution of 6% of salary to the scheme and acts as agent in collecting and paying over employee pension contributions.

Notes on the Accounts (continued)**m) Creditors and provisions**

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

n) Legal status of the Charity

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. 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.

Notes on the Accounts (continued)

2. Income from Charitable Activities and Donations

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	2023 £
Charitable activities				
Three Rivers District Council	260,290	24,000	284,290	283,290
Abbots Langley Parochial Church Council	-	9,192	9,192	7,752
Abbots Langley Parish Council	-	2,500	2,500	2,500
Citizens Advice	15,000	32,307	47,307	469
The Henry Smith Charity	-	39,500	39,500	19,500
RL Glasspool	-	-	-	500
Graham Rowlandson Foundation & HCF	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
Hertfordshire County Council	5,000	110,673	115,673	86,082
Hertfordshire Community Fund	-	3,000	3,000	-
Stort Valley Rotary	-	-	-	11,842
Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board	-	17,417	17,417	3,483
National Lottery Community Fund	-	4,724	4,724	4,724
Buckinghamshire Council	-	-	-	-
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	-	-	-	-
Thrive Homes	-	20,035	20,035	55,333
Thrive Homes & Three Rivers District Council	-	2,000	2,000	23,500
Abbots Langley Tough Ten	-	-	-	1,000
Batchworth Community Council	-	-	-	2,095
Watford Health Trust	-	2,164	2,164	210
Watford Rural Parish Council	-	1,000	1,000	5,000
The David Laing Trust	-	2,500	2,500	-
Dacorum Community Trust	-	90	90	-
Mill End Community Trust	-	1,248	1,248	1,248
	£ 280,290	£ 282,350	£ 562,640	£ 518,528

Donations

Abbots Langley Good Neighbours Association	-	-	-	2,000
Watford Rural Parish Council	-	-	-	1,000
Various Anonymous Donors	784	250	1,034	465
	£ 784	£ 250	£ 1,034	£ 3,465

2023

Unrestricted grants	281,507
Restricted grants	237,021
	£ 518,528

Notes on the Accounts (continued)**3. Investment income**

All of the Charity's investment income of £7,995 (2022: £2,541) arises from money held in interest bearing deposit accounts.

4. Other grant income

The following Covid specific grants were received during the year:

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	2023
	£	£	£	£
Three Rivers District Council	-	-	-	896
	£	- £	- £	896

5. Statement of financial activities for 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Income from:				
Donations	2	3,465	-	3,465
Charitable activities	2	281,507	237,021	518,528
Investment income	3	2,541	-	2,541
Other grant income	4	896	-	896
		288,409	237,021	525,430
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		15,800	-	15,800
Charitable activities	6	267,328	248,117	515,445
Total resources expended		283,128	248,117	531,245
Surplus / (Deficit)		5,281	(11,096)	(5,815)
Amount due re closure of South Bucks	11	-	-	-
Net income and movement in funds	8	5,281	(11,096)	(5,815)
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward		467,671	38,583	506,254
Total funds carried forward		£ 472,952	£ 27,487	£ 500,439

Notes on the Accounts (continued)

6. Expenditure on charitable activities

Current year	General Advice £	Money Advice £	Case Work £	Total £
Costs directly associated to Activities				
Staff Costs	263,692	66,471	48,101	378,264
Direct charitable expenditure	34,649	-	-	34,649
Training and other costs	5,104	1,222	863	7,189
Travel	1,530	366	259	2,155
Citizens Advice charges	4,915	1,177	831	6,923
	309,890	69,236	50,054	429,180
Support Costs Allocated to Activities				
Premises costs	59,234	14,183	10,011	83,428
Computer and equipment costs	6,213	1,488	1,050	8,751
Insurance	3,170	759	536	4,465
Printing and stationery	4,172	999	705	5,876
Communications	4,348	1,041	735	6,124
Sundry	5,071	1,214	857	7,142
Governance costs	17,154	4,107	2,899	24,160
	99,362	23,791	16,793	139,946
	£ 409,252	£ 93,027	£ 66,847	£ 569,126

Support costs have been allocated to the three key charitable activities based on the amount of time advisers have spent on each activity during the year.

Notes on the Accounts (continued)

6. Expenditure on charitable activities (continued)

Previous year	General Advice £	Money Advice £	Case Work £	Total £
Costs directly associated to Activities				
Staff Costs	250,539	44,266	35,362	330,167
Direct charitable expenditure	44,056	-	-	44,056
Training and other costs	1,507	350	328	2,185
Travel	1,632	378	355	2,365
Citizens Advice charges	3,857	894	840	5,590
	301,591	45,888	36,885	384,363
Support Costs Allocated to Activities				
Premises costs	53,293	12,358	11,585	77,237
Computer and equipment costs	5,792	1,343	1,259	8,394
Insurance	2,821	654	613	4,088
Printing and stationery	3,605	836	784	5,225
Communications	3,445	799	749	4,993
Sundry	5,616	1,302	1,221	8,139
Governance costs	15,876	3,681	3,451	23,008
	90,448	20,973	19,662	131,083
	392,039	66,861	56,547	515,445

Support costs have been allocated to the three key charitable activities based on the amount of time advisers have spent on each activity during the year.

Notes on the Accounts (continued)**7. Governance costs**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries	7,744	11,693
Audit fee	7,620	7,620
Legal and professional fees	8,796	3,695
	<u>£ 24,160</u>	<u>£ 23,008</u>

8. Net Income

Net income for the year is stated after:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation	-	-
Auditors' remuneration	<u>£ 7,620</u>	<u>£ 7,620</u>

9. Analysis of staff costs and key management, trustee remuneration, and related party transactions

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries and wages	365,783	324,762
Social security costs	20,106	18,420
Pension costs	15,606	14,479
Total	<u>£ 401,495</u>	<u>£ 357,661</u>

No employees had employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2023: nil).

The trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the Charity (2023: nil). Paul Shaw was reimbursed expenses of nil during the year (2023: £26).

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the trustees, the company secretary, the Chief Officer and the Advice Service Manager. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £104,806. (2023: £101,771).

The average monthly head count was 23 staff (2023: 22) and the average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees, including casual and part-time staff, during the year was as follows:

Core bureau staff:	6.4 (2023: 7.5)
Non-core bureau staff:	4.8 (2023: 2.8)

Paul Shaw is a consultant with Myers Clark, Chartered Accountants. Myers Clark provide the Charity with payroll and accountancy advice. The services are provided to the Charity at commercial rates and the amount charged for the year totalled £3,366 (2023: £3,216).

Notes on the Accounts (continued)**10. Pension costs**

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all eligible employees. The pension charge for the year in respect of this scheme was £15,606 (2023: £14,479). At 31 March 2024, contributions of nil were due to be paid to the pension scheme (2023: £2,426).

11. Government grants

The Charity enjoys a close working relationship with Three Rivers District Council and Hertfordshire County Council. Together these Councils provide funding to enable the Charity to carry out its charitable activities. There are no unfulfilled conditions or other contingencies attaching to these grants. Total government grants received were £410,155 (2023 £353,074).

In accordance with subsection 37(4) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, all grants have been fully utilised in accordance with the terms under which they were originally granted and have been expended on revenue items in the normal course of the charitable company's activities.

12. Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

13. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and Fittings £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	8,819
Additions	-
At 31 March 2024	<u>8,819</u>
Accumulated depreciation	
At 1 April 2023	8,819
Provision for the year	-
At 31 March 2024	<u>8,819</u>
Net book value at 31 March 2024	<u><u>-</u></u>
Net book value at 31 March 2023	<u><u>-</u></u>

Notes on the Accounts (continued)

14. Fixed asset investment

The Charity is a member in Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service, a consortium company of the ten bureaux in Hertfordshire and each bureau is a member. The company is a company limited by guarantee and in the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 each.

15. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Creditors	18,447	48,650
Accruals	13,149	25,148
Grants in advance	-	57,175
	£	£
	31,596	130,973

Creditors for 2023 includes £36,383 due to Buckinghamshire Council following the closing of the South Bucks office (see Note 11). This was paid during the current year.

16. Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds

	Balance at 01-Apr 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31-Mar 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General fund	335,252	289,069	(284,629)	(7,000)	332,692
Designated employee fund	97,000	-	-	7,000	104,000
Designated premises fund	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Designated computer fund	20,700	-	-	0	20,700
	£ 472,952	£ 289,069	£ (284,629)	£ -	£ 477,392

	Balance at 01-Apr 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31-Mar 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
General fund	331,571	288,409	(283,128)	(1,600)	335,252
Designated employee fund	98,000	-	-	(1,000)	97,000
Designated premises fund	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Designated computer fund	18,100	-	-	2,600	20,700
	£ 467,671	£ 288,409	£ (283,128)	£ -	£ 472,952

Notes on the Accounts (continued)

Name of unrestricted fund

Description, nature and purpose of the fund

General fund

The “free reserves” after allowing for all designated funds.

Employee fund

To cover the costs the Charity would incur should funding from Three Rivers District Council cease or be substantially reduced, and is designed to cover the likely redundancy costs. In addition it includes an amount to provide cover in the case of maternity leave.

Premises fund

To cover the potential future repair costs of the Abbots Langley premises.

Computer fund

To cover the costs of replacing IT equipment on a rolling programme to keep the equipment up to date.

Analysis of movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 01-Apr 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31-Mar 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General advice	-	1,248	(1,248)	-	-
Debt advice	8,371	89,430	(100,167)	5,366	3,000
Case work	10,366	110,416	(110,416)	(5,366)	5,000
Accommodation	-	33,192	(33,192)	-	-
Charity donations	8,750	48,314	(54,962)	-	2,102
	£ 27,487	£ 282,600	£ (299,985)	-	£ 10,102

	Balance at 01-Apr 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31-Mar 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
General advice	156	6,003	(6,159)	-	-
Debt advice	13,566	68,205	(73,400)	-	8,371
Case work	22,276	41,882	(53,792)	-	10,366
Accommodation	-	31,752	(31,752)	-	-
Charity donations	2,585	89,179	(83,014)	-	8,750
	£ 38,583	£ 237,021	£ (248,117)	-	£ 27,487

Notes on the Accounts (continued)

16. Analysis of charitable funds (continued)

Name of restricted fund	Description, nature and purpose of the fund
General advice	To support our general advice work.
Debt advice	To support our money advice work.
Case work	To support our work on sickness and disability benefits, family law, and scams.
Accommodation	The premises provided by Three Rivers District Council rent free at South Oxhey and Rickmansworth.
Charity donations	Grants received to provide assistance to deserving clients.

17. Analysis of net assets between funds

Current Year	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Debtors and Prepayments	2,564	-	-	2,564
Short term deposits	19,836	144,700	-	164,536
Cash at bank and in hand	341,888	-	10,102	351,990
Creditors falling due within one year	(31,596)	-	-	(31,596)
	£ 332,692	£ 144,700	£ 10,102	£ 487,494

Previous Year	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Debtors	33,400	-	-	33,400
Short term deposits	117,179	137,700	-	254,879
Cash at bank and in hand	315,646	-	27,487	343,133
Creditors falling due within one year	(130,973)	-	-	(130,973)
	£ 335,252	£ 137,700	£ 27,487	£ 500,439

Notes on the Accounts (continued)

18. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net movement in funds	(12,945)	(5,815)
Interest income	(7,995)	(2,541)
Increase in debtors and prepayments	30,836	(5,871)
Increase in short term deposits	90,343	(1,819)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(99,377)	(41,282)
	<u>£ 862</u>	<u>£ (57,328)</u>