

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 05296023

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1107152

**Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited financial statements
31 March 2023**

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2023

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Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report)

Year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2006 and 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 published in October 2019.

Chair's report

As we all started to move on from the Covid Pandemic the country entered a cost-of-living crisis the like of which has not seen for many decades. The impact of the cost-of-living is being felt across many areas in society but disproportionately impacts on lower income households.

We are committed to helping everyone, whoever they are and whatever their problem; we mean it and we recognise that not everyone is the same. We treat everyone equally but also equitably. What we mean by that is that whilst everyone is equal there will be some who need more help than others to achieve the same outcomes. We are committed to provide the best possible service to all no matter what their circumstances and the team strive to achieve this day in and day out.

Over this year, Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk has again risen to the challenge of providing free and impartial advice to ever increasing numbers of clients who have ever increasingly complex issues. The client data from this year shows a 16% increase in unique clients but a 65% increase in client issues. Our telephone contacts increased by 49%, email contacts by 60% and face-to-face contacts by 162%. The amount of debt we managed for clients increased but we also managed to maximise income for clients by helping more of them to claim their entitlements.

We have a fantastic team of volunteers and paid staff. They work hard to provide an excellent service within often extremely challenging circumstances. Helping people to navigate a way through and address their issues is what we do best and we are very proud of what we deliver for our clients.

The organisation is led by a dedicated group of Trustees and Members. They are all volunteers who give their time freely to support the delivery of our advice services within our communities through ensuring that our organisation is governed correctly.

As a registered Charity Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk is dependent on donations to survive. We must thank our many donors who without financial support like this we would not be able to continue providing this critical support, to those most in need within our communities.

So, as last year, a huge thank you for the continued support of all volunteers and staff at Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk and to all those who support us as funders.

Marsha Hemingway
Chair of the Board of Trustees, Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau
Charity registration number	1107152
Company registration number	05296023
Principal office and registered office	5 Milton Road South Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 1EZ

The trustees

The trustees who served during the year and at the date of approval were as follows:

M Hemingway (Chair)
J Ramsay (Treasurer)
N Gowrley
R Mason
D Muller
G Nunn (Appointed 22/12/2022)
R Talbot
M Virgo
M Wangermann
J Crame (Resigned 08/02/2023)
M Narey (Resigned 25/04/2022)

Management team

S Clifton (Chief Officer)
K Roberts (Operations Manager)
P Roberts (Advice Session Supervisor)
E Robertshaw (Advice Session Manager)

Independent examiner

L Thurston FCCA
Lovewell Blake LLP
Chartered accountants
First Floor Suite
2 Hillside Business Park
Bury St Edmunds
IP32 7EA

Bankers

TSB
7 Market Street
Stowmarket
IP14 1DY

CAF Bank Limited
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
ME19 4JQ

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Objectives and activities

Aims and Principles

We can all face problems that seem complicated or intimidating. At Citizens Advice, we believe no one should have to face these problems without good quality, independent advice.

Our network of charities offers confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free.

When we say we're for everyone, we mean it. People rely on us because we're independent and totally impartial.

No one else sees so many people with so many different kinds of problems, and that gives us a unique insight into the challenges people are facing today. With the right evidence, we can show big organisations - from companies right up to the Government - how they can make things better for people.

That's why we're here: to give people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

Our Vision and Values

Our vision is to make a positive and lasting difference to the lives of people living and working in Mid Suffolk.

We want to offer an efficient and accessible advice and information service relating to people's legal rights and responsibilities.

We want to offer our services using a holistic approach and acting with our clients in a supportive, empowering, responsible and professional way.

We want to create a working environment that feels equally friendly, welcoming, and respectful to everyone using it.

We operate within an equality framework as agreed by Citizens Advice. This means that we respect equality and diversity and we work within several policies and procedures designed to support them, both in our service delivery and in our recruitment, selection and treatment of volunteers, paid staff and Trustees.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Objectives

The main objective was to continue to provide advice and guidance to the community of Mid Suffolk, and our activities for the year end 31st March 2023 were targeted to meet that goal. This work was carried out by a team of generalist advisers and specialist advisers using a drop-in, appointment, email, telephone and virtual advice service available for 30 hours a week. The charity records 14 key areas of advice: benefits, consumer, debt, education, employment, finance, health, housing, immigration, legal, relationship, tax, travel and utilities.

In addition to generalist advice, we provided specialist advisory services:

- The Energy Advice Programme (EAP) that provides one to one advice on: getting the best price for your fuel; repaying fuel debts; energy efficiency measures such as loft and cavity wall insulation; and grants for fuel;
- The MS Society Project to provide specialist support for families affected by Multiple Sclerosis;
- Specialist Welfare Benefit advice including form filling and representation at appeals;
- Specialist Employment advice including negotiations with employers and representation at Employment Tribunals;
- Specialist Debt advice to discuss debt management options available to clients including debt management plans, bankruptcy, Debt Relief Orders and IVA.

How our activities deliver Public Benefit

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

Contribution of Volunteers

The charity's success could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of volunteers and staff. The Trustee Board and senior management team recognise the tremendous contribution made by the charity's volunteers in advising the public and administering the service without which the service could not operate. Throughout 2022/23 the service employed 11 paid workers (7.65 FTEs) (2021/22: 12 paid workers, 6.92 FTEs), and was supported by 40 volunteers (2021/22: 35 volunteers).

Volunteers represent the indispensable core of the service for without them, there would not be a Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau service. Volunteers bring skills, experience, time and energy to the Citizens Advice service. Through information and advice-giving roles, fundraising, research and campaigns, admin, trusteeship and more, volunteers add huge value and increased capacity to the service. Through volunteering with Citizens Advice, volunteers benefit from gaining new skills and personal development, as well as better wellbeing, a sense of fulfilment from helping others, and community engagement. These positive effects on individuals' lives have additional value for society, through the advantages and savings associated with having happier, healthier and productive members of the community.

In 2022-23 the volunteers contributed 14,722 hours (2021/22: 14,180 hours). This may be expressed as an annualised value of £261,592 (2021/22: £251,962). However, their value is inadequately expressed in monetary terms.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Achievements and performance

During the 2022/2023 financial year, the service was predominantly delivered by telephone and email, face to face and virtually. The number of unique clients increased by 16% to 3551 (2021/22 3059) and client issues increased by 65% to 18,721 (2021/22 11,360).

The key achievements of the organisation in 2022-2023 were:

- 3,551 unique clients assisted, a 16% increase on 2021/22.
- 18,721 advice issues handled, a 65% increase on 2021/22.
- 20,852 individual activities, a 55% increase on 2021/22.
- Email contact increased 60%, telephone contact increased 49% and face to face appointments increased by 162%.
- £1,382,137 (2021/22: £594,601) debt managed, with average debt of £11,813 (2021/22: £9,910).
- £1,134,511 with 109 outcomes still to come (2021/22: £960,743.82) of Welfare Benefits generated by the Benefit and Income Maximisation Project.
- £257,135 with 30 outcomes still to come (2021/22: £233,835.20) awarded in Welfare Benefits through appeals and mandatory reconsiderations.
- £147,120 with 2 outcomes still to come (2021/22: £119,490) of income generated for clients affected by Multiple Sclerosis.
- 557 food parcels.
- 70 free legal advice sessions with a local solicitor.
- Maintained our Advice Quality Standard for quality advice and debt work.
- Maintained the Advice Quality Standard for telephone and welfare benefit advice.
- In a follow-up survey 85% of clients said they would be likely to recommend our service.
- A quarterly newsletter to funders.
- Energy advice provided to 230 (2021/22: 201) clients as part of the Energy Advice Programme and Carbon Monoxide and Energy Project.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Financial review

Incoming resources in the year were £339,630 (2022: £295,008). Of this £65,245 (2022: £46,829) related to project restricted activities. Expenditure in the year amounted to £319,616 (2022: £271,356) comprised in large part of salaries for our 11 employed staff (7.65 FTE) of £237,418 (2022: £194,788). A surplus of £20,014 (2022: £23,652) was made in the year.

Fundraising activities and Principal funding sources

Total income for the year was £339,630, an increase of £44,622 on 2021/2022. Our principal funding sources were:

- Mid Suffolk District Council (37% of total, 2022: 32%) £125,500.
- The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (22% of total, 2022: 25%) £74,211.
- Suffolk County Council (16% of total, 2022: 7%) £55,967.
- Town & Parish Councils (6% of total, 2022 4%) £20,185.
- Rope Trust (6% of total, 2022: 0%) £20,000.
- Hopstead (3% of total, 2022: 0%) £10,000.

The Trustees extend their gratitude to our principal funders, Mid Suffolk District Council, and Suffolk County Council, bodies with whom we share many strategic objectives and who continued to support the core operating capacity of the charity. In addition, project-specific funding was received from Needham Market & Barking Welfare Charities and the Geoffrey Burton Trust. Stowmarket Town Council provides Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau with premises to operate from as well as a grant to subsidise part of the rent. Our work with Citizens Advice nationally includes projects involving Energy Advice and specialist Debt Advice.

The charity did not have any borrowings from either a provider of funding or other sources at the Balance Sheet date.

Reserves policy

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau is acutely aware of the need to ensure that free monies are available in each financial year to smooth the cash flow and to meet any reasonably foreseeable contingency. Cash flow trends and reserves levels are constantly monitored, and in their planning Trustees and staff try to ensure that income continues to be derived from as wide a variety of sources possible.

We are also aware of the financial pressures experienced by our major funders and our dependence on them and have included this situation in establishing our Reserves policy. Trustees reviewed the potential expenditure that could arise should a significant reduction in income be incurred and determined that a Reserve equivalent to nine to twelve month's unrestricted expenditure should be held.

At 31st March 2023, total unrestricted reserves were £313,726 (2022: £296,977). Of this, £195,000 (2022: £125,000) is designated for specific purposes as outlined below.

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Year ended 31 March 2023

Designated reserves

A proportion of unrestricted funds have been designated with the aim of ensuring the charity's sustainability by making provisions for the replacement of equipment in due course, for fulfilling our contractual commitments, for maintaining our premises and moving if necessary, for the development of new and innovative ideas, and for underpinning longer-term strategic investments. These currently amount to £195,000, as detailed in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment activities

Aside from retaining an amount required to maintain a prudent level of reserves each year, the charity's funds are spent on delivering and developing the free advice service to the community of Mid Suffolk. The reserves were held during the year in a Charities Aid Foundation bank current account, a COIF Charities Deposit Account; a Cambridge and Counties 95-day notice account; a CAF Platinum 30-day notice account a TSB savings account, and a Shawbrook 100-day notice account.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Year ended 31 March 2023

Plans for the future

Developing a sustainable service during the cost-of-living crisis and preparing for the anticipated large increase in client numbers was a priority for the Trustee Board in 2022/23. This included the continued development of alternative client contact channels and increased advice services being delivered within our local communities.

The funding landscape remains extremely competitive and the charity continues to build on the work completed in the previous financial years, developing diversified funding streams to increase our sustainability and enable us to build a service that is responsive to client needs.

The charity will continue to work to ensure that it delivers a cost-effective service, meaning that we are not only offering value for money to our existing funders but that we have a viable offer, whilst never compromising on the high-quality service that our clients expect and deserve.

There is a three-year Strategic Business and Development Plan with detailed emphasis on the current year. The content of the plan is subject to review by the Trustees and is an agenda item at Trustee Board meetings.

The specific focus this year will be to:

- deliver our advice services within the cost-of-living crisis.
- work with the Local Authorities, Citizens Advice, and partners to deliver the best possible service to our clients whilst protecting the health and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers.
- work with the other Suffolk Citizens Advice offices, Suffolk County Council and the Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group to develop long-term sustainable funding.
- Exploring with the other Suffolk Citizens Advice offices a proposal to form a Suffolk Citizens Advice Consortium.
- Working with the other Suffolk Citizens Advice offices to develop a countywide website.
- Continue our recruitment campaign for additional volunteers to replace those who have left the organisation and allow for the expansion of all advice services.
- continue the quarterly email newsletter to key stakeholders.
- use the evidence provided by our clients through Lived Experience groups to influence and change practices and laws at both a local and national level.
- develop the skills and knowledge of the existing volunteers and staff.

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Year ended 31 March 2023

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 24 November 2004: Company No. 05296023, Charity No. 1107152. The Company is governed under its Articles of Association adopted by an Extraordinary General Meeting on 23rd July 2014. In the event of the company being wound up every member (including members who ceased to be members within one year prior to such winding up) would be required to contribute to the company's assets an amount not exceeding £1.

At 31 March 2023, the company had 23 individual and 7 organisation members (2022: 23 individual and 7 organisations).

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau is also known and referred to as Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk with either term being used throughout these accounts.

Trustee Recruitment and Appointment

New trustee board member leads are generated via referrals, advertising and direct approach to Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk. A formal interview process is followed for all applicants with an interview panel comprising of three Trustees or Chief Officer. References are taken for all new Trustees. A separate process agreed by the Trustee Board is followed for the election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer.

Trustees are either initially co-opted by the Trustee Board and then elected to the Board at an Annual General Meeting within three years of co-option or, alternatively, elected directly at an Annual General Meeting. Any election lasts for three years by which time the Trustee can be re-elected.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making processes, the strategic business development plan and recent financial performance of the charity. They also meet key employees, volunteers and other Trustees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the understanding of their role. Training will be organised dependent on the trustee role and previous experience. Attendance at Citizens Advice events and relevant trainings will be encouraged. A date will be arranged for the new trustee to "sit-in" and observe an advice session including observing some Adviser interviews.

Appraisal of the Trustee Board

The Trustees conduct an annual performance appraisal using a Citizens Advice template. Action is taken on any areas under performing to ensure the Trustee Board conforms to best practice.

Organisational Structure

The Trustee Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation and the policy of the charity. The Trustees carry the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau and for ensuring that the charity satisfies its legal and contractual obligations. Trustees meet quarterly as a minimum, and delegate the day-to-day operation of the organisation to a paid Chief Officer. The Trustee Board has assigned 'portfolio leadership' responsibilities amongst the Trustee group to allow workload to be shared and to give a clear point of contact for senior Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau staff. The Trustee Board is independent from management.

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Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

A register of members' interests is maintained at the registered office and is available to the public. All Trustees and key employees are required annually to declare they are a "fit and proper person" to be involved in the running of a charity.

The Trustee Board has one committee and an Overview & Scrutiny group, who report to the Chair of the Trustee Board. The Chair, Company Secretary, Treasurer and Chief Officer are entitled to attend the meetings.

- **Appeals Committee**

The Appeals Committee meets as required.

Responsible for:

- To consider appeals according to the organisations disciplinary policy.

Membership - Two Trustees not previously involved in the case. Chair to be reserved for final stage appeal.

- **Overview & Scrutiny Group**

Responsible for:

To provide detailed review of key strategic and governance issues, including:

- Scrutiny of key reports (especially the Chief Officer and Treasurer reports), discussion of issues arising, specification of further work to be carried out by the management group, and development of recommendation for the Trustee Board.
- Scrutiny of key policies and procedures and development of recommendations for the Trustee Board.
- Decision making on topics or issues specifically mandated by the Trustee Board.
- Decisions and recommendations from the O&S to be noted and discussed / approved by the Trustee Board.

Frequency of meetings: Meets six times per annum, usually some 14 days before the TB meetings.

Membership - Membership to be The Chair, Treasurer, Chief Officer and two other trustees.

Related Parties

Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk is a member of Citizens Advice, the national association for the Citizens Advice service. With effect from April 2015 Citizens Advice Bureaux became known as Local Citizens Advice (LCA) and Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau became known as Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk (CAMS). The charity also cooperates and liaises with many other advisory services, local charities, trusts and social services departments on behalf of clients.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Audit process

The charitable company is annually audited by Citizens Advice using a Performance and Quality Framework. Every three years the LCA receives a full audit to ensure compliance with the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) and the Money Advice Service Debt Advice Quality Framework (MASDAQF).

The Red/Amber/Yellow and Green (RAYG) scoring system is used to mark each of the five key areas:

- Quality of Advice Assessment;
- Client Experience;
- People Management;
- Leadership;
- Financial Health Monitoring

Quality of Advice Assessment - every quarter the LCA self-assesses a selection of cases which are then checked by a Citizens Advice auditor for the quality of the self-assessment and quality of advice.

Client Experience - a selection of clients is contacted by email or text after the advice process to assess their satisfaction with the service and the advice provided.

People Management - an annual survey is sent to all staff and volunteers to ask people about their experiences, identify what's working well and see where improvements can be made.

Leadership - the Trustees annually self-assess how well the charity is run and whether it is delivering good quality services. The self-assessment is checked by an auditor from Citizens Advice.

Financial Health Monitoring - quarterly financial reports are provided to Citizens Advice which are assessed against the budget and the Reserves Policy. A comparison is provided against LCA in the family group.

In September 2022, the charity year 1 (3 year cycle) audit scored green in all five areas.

Risk management

The Trustees have reviewed their procedures considering corporate governance guidance contained within the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities'. A risk assessment report is contained within the strategic business development plan. The report considers potential changes to the environment in which the charity is working and highlights how these would impact on its services. The organisation faces a range of operational risks and the key to successful risk management is to identify potential risks, the likelihood of them occurring and then mitigate their impact. The Risk Register is a formal statement of the charity's risk management strategy and how the impact of potential risks can be minimised. Identifying the risks is an important element of risk management and has been given detailed and careful consideration.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau's objectives, its internal organisation and the environment in which it operates are continually evolving and as a result, the risks it faces are not constant. The organisation is mindful that it needs to operate under Government guidelines during the pandemic. Organisational success derives, in part, from successful risk taking and so the purpose of internal control is to help manage and control risk appropriately rather than to eliminate it.

The following measures will help minimise the risks:

- Trustee Board recognises its role as the ultimate authority about the governance of the organisation and the management team and staff recognise that they operate with delegated authority;

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Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

- Effective appraisal of the Chief Officer and management team;
- Staff awareness of sources of funding and the consequences arising from any failure to deliver services in line with grant agreements and contracts;
- The effective use of probationary periods; staff and volunteer supervision and appraisal; and policies to promptly identify and deal with issues of concern;
- Regular case sheet checking; Independent File Reviews and training to ensure quality;
- Regular review and analysis of statistics to ensure targets are met;
- Maintaining good relationships with funders to identify potential future funding problems and potential funding opportunities;
- Ensuring adequate financial reserves;
- Monthly financial monitoring against annual budget;
- Good communication between volunteers, staff, the management team and the Trustee Board;
- Maintaining independence and political neutrality to avoid conflict of interests.

Statement of Internal Control

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

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared taking advantage of the small companies' exemption of section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 08/11/2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



M Hemingway (Chair)
Trustee

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
	Note				
Income and endowments					
Grants and donations	5	270,760	65,245	336,005	292,029
Charitable activities	7	849	—	849	1,782
Investment income	8	2,776	—	2,776	1,197
Total income		<u>274,385</u>	<u>65,245</u>	<u>339,630</u>	<u>295,008</u>
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	9	257,636	61,980	319,616	271,356
Total expenditure		<u>257,636</u>	<u>61,980</u>	<u>319,616</u>	<u>271,356</u>
Net income and net movement in funds		<u>16,749</u>	<u>3,265</u>	<u>20,014</u>	<u>23,652</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		296,977	5,968	302,945	279,293
Total funds carried forward		<u>313,726</u>	<u>9,233</u>	<u>322,959</u>	<u>302,945</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 16 to 25 form part of these financial statements.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

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Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Year ended 31 March 2023

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), balance sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements 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 company's financial statements as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe 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 financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements 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 financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



L Thurston FCCA
Independent Examiner

Lovewell Blake LLP
Chartered accountants
First Floor Suite
2 Hillside Business Park
Bury St Edmunds
IP32 7EA

13 November 2023

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance sheet

31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	14		5,107		—
Current assets					
Debtors	15	300		14,048	
Cash at bank and in hand		378,493		313,968	
		378,793		328,016	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	16	(60,941)		(25,071)	
Net current assets			317,852		302,945
Total assets less current liabilities			322,959		302,945
Net assets			322,959		302,945
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds			9,233		5,968
Unrestricted funds			313,726		296,977
Total charity funds	17		322,959		302,945

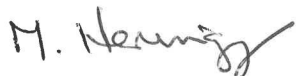
For the year ending 31 March 2023 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 08/11/2023, and are signed on behalf of the board by:



M Hemingway (Chair)
Trustee

Company registration number: 05296023

The notes on pages 16 to 25 form part of these financial statements.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2023

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is 5 Milton Road South, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 1EZ.

2. Statement of compliance

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 issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis and the Trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The Trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected income and expenditure for the next 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure are sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

Income tax

As a registered charity, the activities are exempt from United Kingdom Income and Corporation taxation, provided that the income is applied to charitable purposes.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Income

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity, it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.

- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.

- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.

Operating leases

Lease payments are recognised as an expense over the lease term on a straight-line basis. The aggregate benefit of lease incentives is recognised as a reduction to expense over the lease term, on a straight-line basis.

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Office equipment	- 25% - 33% Straight line
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Impairment of fixed assets

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

4. Limited by guarantee

The charity is a company limited by guarantee. None of the Trustees have a beneficial interest in the company. All of the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

5. Grants and donations

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations			
Donations	29,277	3,000	32,277
Grants			
Grants	241,483	62,245	303,728
	<u>270,760</u>	<u>65,245</u>	<u>336,005</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Donations			
Donations	30,144	2,850	32,994
Grants			
Grants	215,056	43,979	259,035
	<u>245,200</u>	<u>46,829</u>	<u>292,029</u>

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

6. Grants and donations

	2023 £	2022 £
Grants Receivable		
Mid Suffolk District Council	125,500	95,500
The National Association of Citizen Advice Bureaux	74,211	72,994
Suffolk County Council	55,967	19,431
Rope Trust	20,000	—
Hopestead	10,000	—
Stowmarket Town Council	7,600	7,600
East Suffolk Council	6,250	—
M S Society	4,000	4,333
Stowmarket Relief Trust	200	5,500
Ipswich & East Suffolk CCG	—	24,926
Ipswich & District CAB - Suffolk Advice & Support Service	—	11,700
Suffolk Community Foundation	—	8,718
Innovation Community	—	8,333
	<u>303,728</u>	<u>259,035</u>
Donations		
Private Donations	10,787	5,564
Parish Councils	7,085	7,059
Needham Market Town Council	5,500	4,500
Alfred Williams Charitable Trust	3,000	3,000
CAMs Mayor	2,900	—
Geoffrey Burton Charitable Trust	2,000	1,850
Needham Market & Barking Welfare Charities	1,000	1,000
Other donations	5	19
Margaret Wright Birketts LLP	—	10,002
	<u>32,277</u>	<u>32,994</u>

7. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Other income	<u>849</u>	<u>849</u>	<u>1,782</u>	<u>1,782</u>

8. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Bank interest receivable	<u>2,776</u>	<u>2,776</u>	<u>1,197</u>	<u>1,197</u>

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

9. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Subsistence and refreshments	762	—	762
Staff travel	336	—	336
Surviving winter grants	—	—	—
Staff recruitment	834	—	834
Staff training	408	388	796
Volunteer training	1,100	—	1,100
Volunteer expenses	3,173	—	3,173
Volunteer other	363	—	363
Wages and salaries	181,373	56,045	237,418
Support costs	69,287	5,547	74,834
	<u>257,636</u>	<u>61,980</u>	<u>319,616</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Subsistence and refreshments	414	—	414
Staff travel	637	7	644
Surviving winter grants	9,207	—	9,207
Staff recruitment	75	—	75
Staff training	1,403	—	1,403
Volunteer training	500	—	500
Volunteer expenses	1,150	211	1,361
Volunteer other	385	—	385
Wages and salaries	148,208	46,580	194,788
Support costs	48,515	14,064	62,579
	<u>210,494</u>	<u>60,862</u>	<u>271,356</u>

Analysis of support costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Offices costs	40,704	28,740
Premises costs	29,207	29,489
Legal and professional fees	2,173	1,867
Depreciation	1,703	—
Other costs	1,047	2,483
	<u>74,834</u>	<u>62,579</u>

10. Net income

Net income is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Operating lease rentals	23,757	21,629

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

11. Independent examination fees

	2023 £	2022 £
Fees payable to the independent examiner for: Independent examination of the financial statements	<u>2,136</u>	<u>1,854</u>

12. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	213,836	176,991
Social security costs	9,583	6,458
Pension costs	13,999	11,339
	<u>237,418</u>	<u>194,788</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 11 (2022: 14).

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £122,914 (2022: £106,738)

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2022: Nil).

13. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No trustees received any remuneration or reimbursed expenses during this or the prior year.

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Office equipment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2022	33,988
Additions	<u>6,810</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>40,798</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 April 2022	33,988
Charge for the year	<u>1,703</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>35,691</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	<u>5,107</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>—</u>

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

15. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	300	14,048

16. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	60,941	24,871
Other creditors	—	200
	<u>60,941</u>	<u>25,071</u>

Included in creditor amounts falling due within one year is conditional deferred income of £56,060 (2022: £15,507) for future periods.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

17. Analysis of charitable funds

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
General Funds	171,977	274,385	(257,636)	(70,000)	118,726
Equipment Reserve	20,000	—	—	—	20,000
Contractual Commitment Reserve	55,000	—	—	—	55,000
Development Reserve	10,000	—	—	70,000	80,000
Property Reserve	40,000	—	—	—	40,000
	<u>296,977</u>	<u>274,385</u>	<u>(257,636)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>313,726</u>
Restricted funds					
BIM Project	—	3,000	(3,000)	—	—
M S Society	—	4,000	(4,000)	—	—
EAP	5,968	38,245	(34,980)	—	9,233
Rope Trust	—	20,000	(20,000)	—	—
	<u>5,968</u>	<u>65,245</u>	<u>(61,980)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>9,233</u>
	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted funds					
General Funds	124,203	248,179	(209,287)	(38,704)	171,977
Equipment Reserve	20,000	—	—	—	20,000
Contractual Commitment Reserve	55,000	—	—	—	55,000
Development Reserve	10,000	—	—	—	10,000
Property Reserve	40,000	—	—	—	40,000
Covid 19 Reserve	25,000	—	(1,207)	23,793	—
	<u>274,203</u>	<u>248,179</u>	<u>(210,494)</u>	<u>(14,911)</u>	<u>296,977</u>
Restricted funds					
BIM Project	—	2,850	(12,895)	10,045	—
Employment Advice	4,669	—	(5,772)	1,103	—
Help to Claim	—	18,463	(21,513)	3,050	—
M S Society	421	4,333	(5,467)	713	—
EAP	—	13,583	(7,615)	—	5,968
Rent	—	7,600	(7,600)	—	—
	<u>5,090</u>	<u>46,829</u>	<u>(60,862)</u>	<u>14,911</u>	<u>5,968</u>

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Designated funds

Equipment Reserve - a reserve to ensure there is enough capital to upgrade or replace IT and communications as required and to replace office equipment when it becomes obsolete or beyond economic repair. Funds are also required from time-to-time to purchase new equipment for new projects. The Trustees consider a sum of £20,000 held in reserve will permit replacement of these items when they fail or require upgrading and the purchase of additional equipment.

Contractual Commitment Reserve - a reserve to ensure that the charity can cover contracted payments to staff such as redundancy, provision of maternity, paternity and long-term sickness cover, payment of pension funds and the costs of any disciplinary and/or grievance procedures that may arise. This category of Reserve also covers the costs of curtailing on-going contracts (for instance IT and communications contracts) where necessary. The Trustees consider a sum of £55,000 to be applicable for this purpose.

Development Reserve - a reserve to allow the charity to undertake the development of new projects and areas of work and to conduct full feasibility studies on the advisability of such projects. The estimated costing of any proposed projects will be contained within the charity's strategic business and development plan and will be self-supporting once established. An initial project start-up reserve limit of £10,000 will be applicable.

In March 2023, the Trustees adopted a new resourcing strategy designed to improve accessibility, flexibility, quality and fundraising. It is recognised that this strategy involves investment in resources that should bring a pay-back in future years, but may require MSCAB to run a deficit for one or two years. To recognise this investment, the Trustees have approved an extra designated reserve of £70,000 to cover a possible funding shortfall in the coming year.

Property Reserve - a reserve to cover the potential costs of a move to alternative premises. These costs would include legal fees; costs for moving the paperwork, furniture and equipment, installation of IT and telecoms equipment and adaptation of the premises to allow for the provision of a confidential advice service to required standards. Added to this is an amount for Dilapidations, i.e the replacement of carpets and re-decoration and general repairs to existing premises. The total Property Reserve has been set by Trustees at £40,000.

Restricted funds

Benefit & Income Maximisation ("BIM") Project - a community project aimed at ensuring full entitlement for appropriate benefits and grants for persons within Mid Suffolk.

MS Society Project - funding to provide advice to families affected by Multiple Sclerosis.

Energy Advice Project (EAP) - provides one to one advice on: getting the best price for your fuel; repaying fuel debts; energy efficiency measures such as loft and cavity wall insulation; and grants for fuel.

Rope Trust - funding to provide a dedicated Financial Capability worker.

Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

18. Analysis of net assets between funds

As at 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023
Current assets	118,726	195,000	9,233	322,959
Net Assets	<u>118,726</u>	<u>195,000</u>	<u>9,233</u>	<u>322,959</u>

As at 31 March 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022
Current assets	171,977	125,000	5,968	302,945
Net Assets	<u>171,977</u>	<u>125,000</u>	<u>5,968</u>	<u>302,945</u>

19. Financial commitments

Total commitments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts due within one year	20,048	18,607
Amounts due between one and 5 years	<u>16,706</u>	<u>—</u>
	<u>36,754</u>	<u>18,607</u>

20. Related parties

There have been no related party transactions in this or the previous reporting year.

