

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

England & Wales · Charity number 1109872

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	05453262
Registered	2005-06-06
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Watford Advice Centre St. Marys Churchyard High Street Watford WD17 2BE
Phone	01923224531
Email	manager@watfordcab.cabnet.org.uk
Website	www.cawatford.org.uk

Activities

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

Activities: Advice & assistance with legal problems, debt and consumer issues, benefits, housing, legal matters, employment and immigration issues.

Classification

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

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** WATFORD.
- Hertfordshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£614,930	£591,687	£446,366	19
2024-03-31	£615,792	£576,095	£429,865	19
2023-03-31	£513,815	£483,401	£390,168	19
2022-03-31	£446,546	£441,821	-	-
2021-03-31	£559,663	£423,522	£326,626	14

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Berkiye Ozturk		2025-05-06
Christopher Stanley Constant		2024-08-09
Councillor Jennifer Pattinson		2022-08-10
Frank Neale		2025-02-04
KEITH DAVID HOLMES		2023-08-24
Kennedy Rodrigues		2022-08-10
Kirstie Caneparo		2025-05-06
Laurence Julian Blake		2019-02-09
Leena Nagrecha		2020-01-28
Richard Andrew Boulton		2021-04-06
Suzannah Claire Trivedi		2023-11-16

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

England & Wales - Charity number 1109872

Accounts

Charity registration number 1109872 (England and Wales)

Company registration number 05453262

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustee	Mr Abayomi Akisanya	(Resigned 20 September 2024)
	Mr Laurence Blake	
	Mr Richard Boulton	
	Ms Leena Nagrecha	
	Mr Mohammed Farrukh Siddiqi	(Resigned 4 March 2025)
	Mr Keith Holmes	
	Ms Suzannah Trivedi	
	Mr Christopher Constant	(Appointed 9 August 2024)
	Mr Frank Neale	(Appointed 4 February 2025)
	Mrs Kirstie Caneparo	(Appointed 6 May 2025)
	Mrs Berkiye Ozturk	(Appointed 6 May 2025)
	Cllr Kennedy Rodrigues	Representing Watford Borough Council
	Cllr Jennifer Pattinson	Representing Watford Borough Council

Honorary Officers

Chairman	Mr Frank Neale	(from 4 March 2025)
	Mr Mohammed Farrukh Siddiqi	(until 4 March 2025)
Treasurer	Mr Laurence Blake	
Company Secretary	Ms Leena Nagrecha	

Principal Staff

Chief Officer	Ms Emma Burgham
Advice Service Manager	Mr Duncan Burden
Projects Manager	Ms Kalpna Budhdeo

Charity number 1109872

Company number 05453262

Principal address St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

Registered office St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

Independent examiner Gary Howard FCA
Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Bankers

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

Flagstone
1st Floor
Clareville House
26-27 Oxenden Street
London
SW1Y 4EL

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

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WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Trustee Board of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau ("the Bureau" or "the Company") presents its report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

STRATEGIC REPORT

Objectives and activities

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a local charity funded by local grants and donations. Being a member of the National Citizens Advice we share its key missions:

- Provide advice fit for the future - Be there for people when they need us in the ways that make the biggest impact
- Close the gap - End the disparities in access and experience of marginalized people
- Take early action - Prevent more people from reaching crisis by addressing problems earlier.

We add value and relieve pressure on statutory providers by bringing benefits to the local Watford economy and reducing dependency on their services.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have given consideration to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission in respect of public benefit in respect of all its activities.

The Bureau's Activities

The Bureau provides free, confidential, independent and impartial advice to everybody regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality. The Bureau recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

The Bureau helps people in the Watford community to resolve their problems. As part of the UK's largest advice network, we are equipped to deal with many issues including debt, benefits, employment, housing, energy advice and many more. Our clients are at the heart of the service, and we are here to ensure that people who need help get the right support at the right time.

Expert, confidential and compassionate advice and advocacy is provided to help people move forward out of poverty or financial hardship, supporting at points of crisis, including preventing homelessness. Our intervention and advice contribute to breaking cycles of deprivation, relieving the pressure on statutory services and reducing the need for referral to other agencies. We help everyone when facing a significant challenge in their lives, reducing the need for further 'downstream' intensive and costly services as well as reducing the adverse impact on the individual and their family.

The main area of the charitable activity is providing advice. Generalist advice is offered by volunteers and paid staff. Paid caseworkers provide specialist advice on debt and benefits issues. Along with other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice offices, we have access to a British Sign Language (BSL) adviser funded via Hertfordshire County Council. The Bureau is a referral agency for the Free Representation Unit whereby solicitors represent clients at Tribunals and court hearings on a pro bono basis.

Face-to-face advice is provided to clients at the Bureau's Watford office situated in the Advice Centre. Telephone advice is provided by advisors in partnership with nine other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services. Watford residents can access information on the Citizens Advice website or contact Watford Citizens Advice via email. There is free internet access for clients from computers in the reception area, providing access to the Citizens Advice website, other key advice sites, and local information.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Bureau is involved in the community, works with local or community partners, and attends local events. Advisers, assessors, administrative workers, receptionists, and project workers make up the bulk of the Bureau's workforce. Our volunteers form the backbone of the service, and the Trustees are responsible for governing the organisation.

Major Risks

The Bureau maintains a risk register which is agreed by the Trustee Board. A comprehensive annual budgeting process is approved by the Board, during which a thorough assessment of our key external and internal risks is undertaken, together with how these risks are managed. In addition, the Board received regular reports from the Finance, Risk and Remuneration Committee, which reviews the risk register with the Chief Officer. Together, they assess the adequacy of internal control systems and risk management processes in place. The Board reviews the risk register quarterly including the key risks, the adequacy of the actions being taken to address them and the advent of any new risks.

The Bureau has a balanced approach to risk management and adopts an active process to the mitigation of risk. The most significant risks faced by the Bureau have been identified by the Trustee Board and relate to the following:

- Maintaining volunteer recruitment at a level that keeps pace with turnover and service requirements.
- Sustaining income in a highly competitive environment with the ongoing pressures on public funding.
- Servicing the anticipated increases to demand due to welfare reforms and ongoing cost of living crisis.

The Trustees remain satisfied that all insurable risks have been identified and adequately dealt with and that the Bureau's exposure to other risks is kept at a minimum by good working practice by the management team, paid staff and volunteers.

Achievements and performance 2024-25

In 2024/25, we worked at operational capacity, optimising resources across advice channels to maximise support to the community.

We continued to prioritise our drop-in service 4 mornings a week to meet the needs of our most vulnerable clients, including those in crisis and those facing language and/or digital barriers. Advice is also provided by phone and email. Support and useful information is available on the website for clients who are more able to help themselves.

2024/25 Service Highlights

- We advised 826 people every month - an increase of 23% on 2023/24
- Answered 239 phone calls every month
- Helped 180 people at drop-in every month
- Provided 167 follow-up advice appointments every month
- Through our debt advice, we wrote off or stabilised clients debts worth £958,318

The demand for our service increased again in 2024/25 and we remain limited by the available resources. Client issues requiring detailed casework and more than one appointment is common as clients come to us with complex, inter-related problems and often have language difficulties or struggle with their mental health.

We continued to provide advice to a large number of people who are disabled or have a long-term health condition. In 2024/25 they accounted for 53% of clients.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Four advice issue areas (debt, benefits, charitable support and housing) accounted for 75% of the issues we helped clients with during 2024/25.

There are marked changes in the client issues compared to the previous year, reflecting a community still struggling with the cost of living: year-on-year increases in food vouchers of 74%, benefits advice of 31%, debt advice of 30%, and housing advice of 25%. We report an increase of 63% with immigration enquiries much related to support with eVisas.

The impact of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and the Benefit Cap means the housing element of Universal Credit is insufficient to meet the high rent costs in Watford and affects many clients. This leaves residents short of money and dependent on charitable support.

We anticipate the high demand for crisis support and expert debt, benefits and housing advice to continue as:

- The Local Housing Allowance and the Benefit Cap remain unchanged
- Likely changes to disability benefits eligibility
- The number of people struggling on negative budgets (essential outgoings greater than income) is rising
- A lack of low-cost housing and high rent in Watford, plus the delay in banning no-fault evictions continue to create a high level of housing insecurity.

The Trustees are pleased to report that the Bureau has continued its volunteer recruitment and training program and the total number of volunteers is being maintained around 33.

Specialist legal advice is available for family and immigration issues. Expert advice is available for Benefits, Debt, Employment and Housing issues.

Projects

Projects undertaken by the Bureau during 2024/25 included:

Hertfordshire County Council funded projects:

- Crisis Intervention - support for Hertfordshire clients facing crisis, and
- HERT Debt - Specialist debt casework advice for Hertfordshire clients

Foodbank Trussell Trust – provision of voucher phone line & dedicated Money and benefits advice for Foodbank clients

Watford Primary Care Network – provision of a social prescriber in three GP practices

Watford Community Housing - debt and benefits advice to residents

Disability Benefits - Additional support for Disability Benefits claimants

National Lottery - Support for Cost of Living advice

Housing Support – housing advisor supporting WBC housing team

Achievements of the volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of the service provided by Watford Citizens Advice, providing advice and information to the clients. All the volunteers are very generous with their time either working in the office or remotely. During the 2024/25 period, volunteers contributed an average of 250 hours per week, which is estimated to be £309,448 in value.

The Bureau offers excellent training to staff and volunteers. Each volunteer adviser undergoes over 400 hours of training before becoming qualified to advise at a generalist level, and additional training is required for specialist advisers.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

2024/2025 Overall Impact

For every £1 invested in CA Watford in 2024/25, we generated:

£12.73 in financial value to the people we help
£20.63 in wider economic & economic benefits (public value)

Client Survey feedback

- 87% of clients said our advice service helped them to find a way forward
- 85% said they would recommend our service
- 66% said they felt less anxious and stressed after receiving our advice

Plans for Future Periods

The strategic priorities of the two-year Business Development Plan 2024-26 are:

- Sustainability - secure our organisation through funding, people retention, flexible workforce and innovation
- Culture - to be a collaborative, supportive and proactive service that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion
- Advice - improve our advice process to maintain quality and optimise client pathway
- Advocacy - to be a stronger voice on the issues that impact all those in need - particularly those in marginalised groups

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial review

The year ended 31 March 2025 saw income of £614,930 and expenditure of £591,687. Income is slightly down on last year, expenditure is higher than last year reflecting the new projects secured and additional associated resources.

The annual cost of the pension liabilities increased significantly from £2,649 to £6,802 based on the latest evaluation by the pension provider.

At the year end, £511,933 was held as cash at bank, of which £57,870 related to restricted funds.

Investment Policy

The Articles of Association gives the Trustees power to invest or deposit funds in any lawful manner. The WBC grant is paid quarterly, and the Bureau has placed any surplus funds on deposit mainly with the Flagstone platform. In order to mitigate any losses should there be another banking crisis, the Flagstone funds have been invested in a number of bank accounts, within the level of the financial compensation scheme.

Reserves policy

The Trustees believe that the Bureau should hold financial reserves in order to ensure that it can continue to operate and meet the needs of clients and creditors in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Unrestricted reserves

The Trustees consider that it would be prudent to set aside at least 6 months of operating expenditure; during the year ending 31 March 2025 this equates to £295,844, compared to actual unrestricted reserves of £388,496.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The Bureau is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association dated 9th December 2022. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. All directors are members of the Company and cease to be a member when they cease to be a director. Membership is also open to other individuals or organisations provided the individuals are over 16 years of age and not paid workers, employees or unpaid volunteers of the charity. There are currently 12 members, each of whom have agreed to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year are listed on the Legal and Administrative Information Page.

The directors of the Company are also trustees of the Bureau for the purposes of Charity law and under the Company's Articles are known as members of the Trustee Board. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association, elected Trustees serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting. Trustees nominated by WBC are also subject to the appointment processes of that body and the guidelines on appointment to public office as they apply to local government nominees.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees attend Induction Training, which gives them an outline of the Citizens Advice Services and its aims, principles and policies. Trustees are given introductory information, and the new Trustees also spend time in the Bureau and have meetings with the specialist advisers, the Chief Officer, the Treasurer and the Company Secretary. There are explanations of the role of a Trustee/Director, the Board, the development plan and issues including funding and client statistics. Trustees with interests in particular areas are encouraged to continue with further training. There are learning materials available for Trustees, and these range from recruitment & selection to health & safety. Trustees are able to attend regional training events and are updated on governance issues as necessary. Trustees are asked to complete on an annual basis online training in Information Assurance.

Organisation

The Trustee Board currently comprises eleven Trustees, including the Chair, Treasurer, Company Secretary, and two Trustees representing WBC. The Trustee Board meets at least four times a year and has collective responsibility for setting strategic objectives, ensuring sound governance and overall management of the Bureau, including risk management, direction and performance. The Trustee Board gives the Chief Officer duties and powers to represent and to manage the Bureau in accordance with the delegation of authorities and policies approved by the Trustee Board.

The Board has established two sub-committees, Governance and Finance, Risk and Remuneration, to assist the Trustee Board in the carrying out of its business by reviewing and analysing certain matters prior to being considered by the full Trustee Board. The scope of responsibilities for the Governance Committee includes governance and regulatory compliance matters as well as review of policies. The scope of responsibilities for the Finance, Risk and Remuneration Committee covers business, financial reporting and controls, risk and remuneration related matters.

Related Parties

The Bureau is a member of National Citizens Advice, which provides the Bureau with its Information System, Intranet and the case-recording system Casebook. Citizens Advice also provides specialist support and audits the Bureau for organisational performance and for quality of advice.

WBC provides the essential core funding for the Bureau and this includes premises costs. The Bureau also works closely with other Citizens Advice offices in Hertfordshire to make joint funding bids and delivery of associated services. The Bureau is a member of the local Voluntary Sector consortium Watford and Three Rivers Trust. The Bureau has links with local solicitors who offer pro-bono advice.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) ***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025***

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to every funder who has made our work possible this year and would like to thank the following:

Watford Borough Council (WBC), Hertfordshire County Council, Watford Community Housing Trust, Watford Foodbank, Bugler Foundation, NHS England (via Primary Care Network), Watford & Three Rivers Trust and the National Lottery.

We would also like to pay special thanks to all of our volunteers who continue to give freely of their time as well of course to our staff who are highly dedicated to helping people in difficulties, whoever they are.

The Trustees Report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

' 

Mr F. Neale

Chairman

Dated: 5 August 2025

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these accounts, 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; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts 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.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (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.

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000, the independent examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, 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 charity as required by section 386 of the Companies Act 2006.
- 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 Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the financial statements 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 financial statements 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 financial statements to be reached.



Gary Howard FCA

Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE
1 October 2025

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Current financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
	Notes				
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>					
Donations and legacies	3	269,640	-	269,640	249,252
Advisory services	4	550	325,844	326,394	350,236
Investments	5	18,888	-	18,888	16,179
Other income	6	-	8	8	125
Total income		289,078	325,852	614,930	615,792
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Raising funds	7	8,550	-	8,550	8,740
Advisory services	8	237,700	345,437	583,137	567,355
Total expenditure		246,250	345,437	591,687	576,095
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		42,828	(19,585)	23,243	39,697
<u>Other recognised gains and losses</u>					
Actuarial loss on defined benefit pension schemes		(6,742)	-	(6,742)	-
Net movement in funds		36,086	(19,585)	16,501	39,697
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		352,410	77,455	429,865	390,168
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		388,496	57,870	446,366	429,865

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

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

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Prior financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
	Notes			
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>				
Donations and legacies	3	249,252	-	249,252
Advisory services	4	948	349,288	350,236
Investments	5	16,179	-	16,179
Other income	6	-	125	125
Total income		266,379	349,413	615,792
<u>Expenditure on:</u>				
Raising funds	7	8,740	-	8,740
Advisory services	8	235,988	331,367	567,355
Total expenditure		244,728	331,367	576,095
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		21,651	18,046	39,697
<u>Other recognised gains and losses</u>				
Actuarial loss on defined benefit pension schemes		-	-	-
Net movement in funds		21,651	18,046	39,697
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		330,759	59,409	390,168
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		352,410	77,455	429,865

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Current assets					
Debtors	14	10,655		6,887	
Cash at bank and in hand		511,933		521,743	
		<u>522,588</u>		<u>528,630</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(69,420)		(96,116)	
Net current assets			453,168		432,514
Provisions for liabilities	15		(6,802)		(2,649)
Net assets			<u>446,366</u>		<u>429,865</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	19		57,870		77,455
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
Designated funds	20	4,000		-	
General unrestricted funds		391,298		355,059	
Pension reserve		(6,802)		(2,649)	
		<u></u>	388,496	<u></u>	352,410
			<u>446,366</u>		<u>429,865</u>

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 5 August 2025



Mr F. Neale
Chairman



Mr L. Blake
Treasurer

Company Registration No. 05453262

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	24		(28,698)		73,721
Investing activities					
Investment income received		18,888		16,179	
Net cash generated from investing activities			18,888		16,179
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents			(9,810)		89,900
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			521,743		431,843
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			511,933		521,743

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is St Mary's Churchyard, High Street, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 2BE.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual and performance related arrangements are recognised as goods or services are supplied. Expenditure includes any non-recoverable VAT.

Expenditure is allocated to activities as follows:

Charitable activities comprise costs which relate directly to delivering activities.

Governance comprises of costs which relate directly to governance arrangements and meeting statutory requirements.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and machinery	straight line over 3 years
---------------------	----------------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

It is the policy of the charity not to capitalise individual assets costing under £1,000.

1.7 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.8 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.9 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminating the employment of an employee or to providing termination benefits.

1.10 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

There are some employees who are members of the Pensions Trust's Growth Plan which is a multiemployer pension Plan. The charitable company is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. It is therefore accounted for on a defined contribution basis. The annual contributions payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities. Further information concerning the Plan is given at note 15.

The net interest element is determined by multiplying the net defined benefit liability by the discount rate, taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments. The net interest is recognised in income/(expenditure) for the year.

Remeasurement changes comprise actuarial gains and losses, the effect of the asset ceiling and the return on the net defined benefit liability excluding amounts included in net interest. These are recognised immediately in other recognised gains and losses in the period in which they occur and are not reclassified to income/(expenditure) in subsequent periods.

The net defined benefit pension asset or liability in the balance sheet comprises the total for each plan of the present value of the defined benefit obligation (using a discount rate based on high quality corporate bonds), less the fair value of plan assets out of which the obligations are to be settled directly. Fair value is based on market price information, and in the case of quoted securities it is the published bid price. The value of a net pension benefit asset is limited to the amount that may be recovered either through reduced contributions or agreed refunds from the scheme.

1.11 Creditors and provisions

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Donations and gifts	24,927	962
Grants	244,713	248,290
	<u>269,640</u>	<u>249,252</u>
Grants		
Watford Council Direct Grant	204,190	204,190
Watford Council Premises	39,500	39,500
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	-	600
Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service	-	4,000
Citizens Advice Bureau	1,023	-
	<u>244,713</u>	<u>248,290</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

4 Advisory services

	Advisory services 2025 £	Advisory services 2024 £
Income from services provided	550	4,448
Performance related grants	325,844	345,788
	<u>326,394</u>	<u>350,236</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	550	948
Restricted funds	325,844	349,288
	<u>326,394</u>	<u>350,236</u>
Performance related grants		
Watford Foodbank	70,839	34,393
Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service	23,544	20,850
Citizens Advice Bureau - National and Local	68,896	139,285
Watford Borough Council	37,764	28,323
Bugler Group Limited	5,000	3,000
The National Lottery Community Fund	19,972	19,693
Watford Community Housing Trust	30,815	30,815
Central Watford Primary Care Network	38,160	-
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	14,574	-
Watford Health Trust	5,095	6,063
Other	11,185	63,366
	<u>325,844</u>	<u>345,788</u>

5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Interest receivable	18,888	16,179
	<u>18,888</u>	<u>16,179</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

6 Other income

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2024 £
Other income	8	125
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

7 Expenditure on raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Costs of generating voluntary income		
Seeking donations, grants and legacies	8,100	8,394
Advertising	450	346
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	8,550	8,740
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

8 Advisory services

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs	459,313	419,565
Depreciation and impairment	-	2,316
Other staff costs	-	5,396
Training	10,195	3,083
Project costs	16,468	33,061
Premises costs	39,732	43,993
Insurance	3,363	3,187
Repairs and maintenance	187	168
Office costs	18,071	17,648
Computer costs	14,577	11,316
Travel expenses	9,940	13,375
General costs	125	319
Legal and professional costs	6,755	10,427
Bank charges and other finance costs	287	1,111
Governance costs	4,124	2,390
	<u>583,137</u>	<u>567,355</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	237,700	235,988
Restricted funds	345,437	331,367
	<u>583,137</u>	<u>567,355</u>

Governance costs comprise of independent examiner's fees £1,740 (2024: £1,620) and Team and Strategy Meetings and AGM costs £2,384 (2024: £770).

9 Net movement in funds

	2025 £	2024 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the independent examination of the charity's financial statements	1,740	1,620
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	-	2,316
	<u>1,740</u>	<u>1,620</u>

10 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or expenses during the year, but 1 of them was reimbursed a total of £95 for travel expenses incurred on behalf of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau in 2024.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

11 Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Advice services	17	17
Management and administration	2	2
	<u>19</u>	<u>19</u>

Employment costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	408,889	375,552
Social security costs	26,829	23,205
Other pension costs	23,595	20,808
	<u>459,313</u>	<u>419,565</u>

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and machinery £
Cost	
At 1 April 2024	<u>28,930</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>28,930</u>
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2024	<u>28,930</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>28,930</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2025	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

14 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	6,477	-
Other debtors	2,642	5,708
Prepayments and accrued income	1,536	1,179
	<u>10,655</u>	<u>6,887</u>

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Other taxation and social security		6,022	6,281
Deferred income	17	50,729	75,957
Trade creditors		1,148	1,230
Other creditors		5,311	5,333
Accruals		6,210	7,315
		<u>69,420</u>	<u>96,116</u>

15 Provisions for liabilities

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Retirement benefit obligations	18	6,802	2,649
		<u>6,802</u>	<u>2,649</u>

17 Deferred income

	2025 £	2024 £
Other deferred income	50,729	75,957
Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:		
	2025 £	2024 £
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	50,729	75,957
Deferred income at 1 April 2024	75,957	31,700
Released from previous periods	(75,957)	(31,700)
Resources deferred in the year	50,729	75,957
Deferred income at 31 March 2025	<u>50,729</u>	<u>75,957</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

18 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The company participates in the scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 521 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out at 30 September 2023. This valuation showed assets of £514.9m, liabilities of £531.0m and a deficit of £16.1m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee has asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028: (payable monthly)	£2,100,000 per annum
--	----------------------

The recovery plan contributions are allocated to each participating employer in line with their estimated share of the Series 1 and Series 2 scheme liabilities.

Where the scheme is in deficit and where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement the company recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The present value is calculated using the discount rate detailed in these disclosures. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

18 Retirement benefit schemes

(Continued)

	31 March 2025 (£s)	31 March 2024 (£s)	31 March 2023 (£s)
Present value of provision	6,802	2,649	5,673
Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions		Period Ended 31 March 2025 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2024 (£s)
Provision at start of period		2,649	5,673
Unwinding of the discount factor (interest expense)		70	217
Deficit contribution paid		(2,702)	(3,242)
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions		43	1
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule		6,742	.
Provision at end of period		6,802	2,649
Income and Expenditure Impact		Period Ended 31 March 2025 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2024 (£s)
Interest expense		70	217
Remeasurements – impact of any change in assumptions		43	1
Remeasurements – amendments to the contribution schedule		6,742	-
Assumptions	31 March 2025 % per annum	31 March 2024 % per annum	31 March 2023 % per annum
Rate of discount	4.84	5.31	5.52

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates which, when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results as using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.

The pension charge for the year was £23,595 (2024: £23,205).

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

19 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	Movement in funds			Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Client Funds	1,132	6,188	(5,935)	1,385	5,435	(4,749)	2,071
Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme	30,000	76,429	(68,938)	37,491	31,540	(51,336)	17,695
Primary Care Network GP Outreach	-	-	-	-	38,160	(27,769)	10,391
Watford Community Housing Trust	4,442	30,815	(35,257)	-	30,815	(27,351)	3,464
Disability Benefits Service	2,456	10,000	(4,477)	7,979	10,000	(14,783)	3,196
CitA Guardian- Cost of Living Grant	-	15,000	(15,000)	-	-	-	-
Housing Partnership	-	31,470	(26,689)	4,781	37,764	(40,456)	2,089
Client Emergency Fund	31	3,070	(2,626)	475	11,818	(11,719)	574
Cost of Living Project	-	53,975	(53,975)	-	-	-	-
Hertfordshire Community Training Project	4,312	3,500	(7,812)	-	-	-	-
Energy Advice Programme	2,211	16,800	(19,011)	-	18,949	(6,977)	11,972
Watford Foodbank	6,194	34,393	(33,742)	6,845	70,499	(76,140)	1,204
The HERT project	8,631	48,080	(38,212)	18,499	50,900	(65,447)	3,952
Community Fund Grant	-	19,693	(19,693)	-	19,972	(18,710)	1,262
	<u>59,409</u>	<u>349,413</u>	<u>(331,367)</u>	<u>77,455</u>	<u>325,852</u>	<u>(345,437)</u>	<u>57,870</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

19 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Client Funds is funding received to assist clients purchase items of household equipment.

Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme is funding to provide advice and guidance to clients in extreme hardship situations, to reduce debt and increase income.

Primary Care Network GP Outreach is funding from Central Watford Primary Care Network for link worker services.

Watford Community Housing Trust is funding to provide debt and benefits advice to Watford Community Housing tenants.

Disability Benefits Service is funding from Blandford Trust towards the cost of the service.

CitA Guardian is a Cost of Living Grant

The Housing Partnerships Grant is for the funding of a housing advisor

Client Emergency Funds is funding received from The Bugler Foundation to provide emergency funds for clients in financial crisis.

Cost of Living Project was funded by Hertfordshire County Council and Citizens Advice Stevenage.

Hertfordshire Community Training Project - We received funding from the National Lottery Fund to train staff and volunteers based across Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services.

Energy Advice Programme is funding for energy advice

Watford Foodbank is funding to provide debt and benefits advice to clients in receipt of multiple food vouchers.

The HERT project is funded by Hertfordshire County Council to provide benefits and debt advice to Primary Care Network (PCN) Link Workers, Community Navigators and Social Prescribers in Hertfordshire. The project is run by The Money Advice Unit (MAU) and Citizens Advice Hertfordshire (Hertsmere and Watford). MAU provide benefit advice with Citizens Advice Hertsmere and Watford providing debt advice.

Community Fund grant is National Lottery funding for generalist advice and training.

Other represents other smaller or completed restricted funds.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

20 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	At 31 March 2025 £
Building Maintenance Fund	-	-	-	4,000	-	4,000
General Funds	355,059	289,078	(246,250)	153	(6,742)	391,298
	<u>355,059</u>	<u>289,078</u>	<u>(246,250)</u>	<u>4,153</u>	<u>(6,742)</u>	<u>395,298</u>
Pension Fund	(2,649)	-	-	(4,153)	-	(6,802)
	<u>352,410</u>	<u>289,078</u>	<u>(246,250)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(6,742)</u>	<u>388,496</u>
Previous year:	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	At 31 March 2024 £
General Funds	336,431	266,379	(244,728)	(3,023)	-	355,059
Pension Fund	(5,672)	-	-	3,023	-	(2,649)
	<u>330,759</u>	<u>266,379</u>	<u>(244,728)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>352,410</u>

Building Maintenance Fund represents funds set aside to meet any maintenance costs.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:				
Current assets/(liabilities)	395,298	57,870	453,168	432,514
Provisions and pensions	(6,802)	-	(6,802)	(2,649)
	<u>388,496</u>	<u>57,870</u>	<u>446,366</u>	<u>429,865</u>

22 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024 - none).

23 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.

24 Cash generated from operations

	2025 £	2024 £
Surplus for the year	23,243	39,697
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(18,888)	(16,179)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	-	2,316
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions	(2,589)	(3,023)
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(3,768)	1,951
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(1,468)	4,702
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income	(25,228)	44,257
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	<u>(28,698)</u>	<u>73,721</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

England & Wales - Charity number 1109872

Accounts

Charity registration number 1109872

Company registration number 05453262 (England and Wales)

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustee	Mr Abayomi Akisanya	
	Mr Laurence Blake	
	Mr Richard Boulton	
	Ms Leena Nagrecha	
	Mr Mohammed Farrukh Siddiqi	
	Mr Keith Holmes	(Appointed 24 August 2023)
	Ms Suzannah Trivedi	(Appointed 16 November 2023)
	Cllr Kennedy Rodrigues	Representing Watford Borough Council
	Cllr Jennifer Pattinson	Representing Watford Borough Council
	Ms Danielle Sherman	(Resigned 4 August 2023)
	Mr Anthony Swabe	(Resigned 12 October 2023)
	Dr Pui Wah Carter	(Resigned 7 November 2023)

Honorary Officers

Chairman	Mr Mohammed Farrukh Siddiqi	
Treasurer	Mr Laurence Blake	
	Dr Pui Wah Carter	(Retired 1 September 2023)
Company Secretary	Ms Leena Nagrecha	

Principal Staff

Chief Officer	Ms Emma Burgham
Advice Service Manager	Mr Duncan Burden
Projects Manager	Ms Kalpna Budhdeo

Charity number 1109872

Company number 05453262

Principal address St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

Registered office St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

Independent examiner Gary Howard FCA
Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Bankers

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

United Trust Bank Limited
One Ropemaker Street
London
EC2Y 9AW

Flagstone
1st Floor
Clareville House
26-27 Oxenden Street
London
SW1Y 4EL

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

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WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustee Board of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau ("the Bureau" or "the Company") presents its report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a local charity funded by local grants and donations. Being a member of the National Citizens Advice we share its key missions:

- Provide advice fit for the future - Be there for people when they need us in the ways that make the biggest impact
- Close the gap - End the disparities in access and experience of marginalized people
- Take early action - Prevent more people from reaching crisis by addressing problems earlier

We add value and relieve pressure on statutory providers by bringing benefits to the Watford economy and reducing dependency on their services.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have given consideration to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission in respect of public benefit in respect of all its activities.

The Bureau's Activities

The Bureau provides free, confidential, independent and impartial advice to everybody regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality. The Bureau recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

The Bureau helps people in the Watford to resolve their problems. As part of the UK's largest advice network, we are equipped to deal with many issues including debt, benefits, employment, housing, energy advice and many more. Our clients are at the heart of the service, and we are here to ensure that people who need help get the right support at the right time.

Expert, confidential and compassionate advice and advocacy is provided to help people move forward out of poverty or financial hardship, supporting at points of crisis, including preventing homelessness. Our intervention and advice contribute to breaking cycles of deprivation, relieving the pressure on statutory services and reducing the need for referral to other agencies. We help everyone when facing a significant challenge in their lives, reducing the need for further 'downstream' intensive and costly services as well as reducing the adverse impact on the individual and their family.

The main area of the charitable activity is providing advice. Generalist advice is offered by volunteers and paid staff. Paid caseworkers provide specialist advice on debt and benefits issues. Along with other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice offices, we have access to a British Sign Language (BSL) adviser funded via Hertfordshire County Council. The Bureau is a referral agency for the Free Representation Unit whereby solicitors represent clients at Tribunals and court hearings on a pro bono basis.

Face-to-face advice is provided to clients at the Bureau's Watford office situated in the Advice Centre. Telephone advice is provided by advisors in partnership with nine other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services. Watford residents can access information on the Citizens Advice website or contact Watford Citizens Advice via email. There is free internet access for clients from computers in the reception area, providing access to the Citizens Advice website, other key advice sites and local information.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Bureau is involved in the community, works with local or community partners and attends local events. Advisers, assessors, administrative workers, receptionists, and project workers make up the bulk of the Bureau's workforce. Our volunteers form the backbone of the service and the Trustees are responsible for governing the organisation.

Major Risks

The Bureau maintains a risk register which is agreed by the Trustee Board. A comprehensive annual budgeting process is approved by the Board, during which a thorough assessment of our key external and internal risks is undertaken, together with how these risks are being managed. In addition, the Board received regular reports from the Finance Risk and Remuneration Committee which reviews the risk register with the Chief Officer. Together, they assess the adequacy of internal control systems and risk management processes in place. The Board reviews the risk register quarterly including the key risks, the adequacy of the actions being taken to address them and the advent of any new risks.

The Bureau has a balanced approach to risk management and adopts an active process to the mitigation of risk. The most significant risks faced by the Bureau have been identified by the Trustee Board and relate to the following:

- Maintaining volunteer recruitment at a level that keeps pace with turnover and service requirements.
- Sustaining income in a highly competitive environment with the ongoing pressures on public funding.
- Servicing the anticipated increases to demand due to welfare reforms and ongoing cost of living crisis.

The Trustees remain satisfied that all insurable risks have been identified and adequately dealt with and that the Bureau's exposure to other risks is kept at a minimum by good working practice by the management team, paid staff and volunteers.

Achievements and performance 2023-24

In 2023/24, we worked at operational capacity, optimising resources across service channels to maximise support to the community.

We continued to prioritise the maintenance of our drop-in service 4 mornings a week to meet the needs of our most vulnerable clients, including those in crisis and those facing language and/or digital barriers. Advice is provided by a number of channels including face-to-face, phones, and email. Support and useful information is also available via the website.

2023/24 Service Highlights

- Advised 670 people a month
- Helped clients with 14,252 issues
- Answered an average of 239 calls per month
- Approx. 180 people helped at drop-in every month
- Average of 190 advice appointments per month
- Increased income of clients with benefits & tax credit issues by an average of £5,530 per client
- Wrote off & stabilised debts of £797,297
- Regular newsletters with key communications for the community
- Publications of Housing Insecurity Report
- Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation

The demand for our service remains high and we are often limited by the available resources. Significant increase in client issues requiring detailed casework and more than one appointment, is directly impacting the available resources.

We continued to provide advice to a large number of people who are disabled or have a long-term health condition. In 2023/24 they accounted for 45% of the clients that disclosed this information. This number rises to 55% for clients helped with cost of living issues, underlining the impact of price rises on this vulnerable group.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Eight issues (Debt, Benefits & Tax Credits, Charitable Support & Foodbanks, Housing, Utilities, Universal Credit, Relationships & Family, and Employment) accounted for 85% of the total issues we helped clients with during 2023/24.

There are marked changes in the client issues compared to 2022/23, reflecting a community struggling with the cost of living. Benefits and Tax Credits remain the top issue for clients. Debt issues increase by 31% in the year compared to the previous year, with significant increases in Council Tax and Credit card debts.

The ongoing impact of cost of living pressures are evident. It is good news that benefits have been uprated in line with inflation from 1st April 2024, but this has not reduced the financial pressures on low-income households.

We anticipate the high demand for crisis support and expert debt and housing advice to continue as:

- Food and energy prices remain very high, hitting low-income families hard in particular.
- The number people of struggling on negative budgets (essential outgoings greater than income) is rising, exacerbated by bills having risen in April
- A lack of low cost housing and high rental rates in Watford, plus the delay in banning no-fault evictions continue to create a high level of housing insecurity

The Trustees are pleased to report that the Bureau has continued its volunteer recruitment and training program and the total number of volunteers is being maintained around 40.

Specialist legal advice is available for family and immigration issues. Expert advice is available for Benefits, Debt, Employment and Housing issues.

Projects

Projects undertaken by the Bureau during 2023/24 included:

Hertfordshire County Council funded projects:

- Crisis Intervention - support for Hertfordshire clients facing crisis
- Cost of Living Advisor - additional support for people facing cost of living difficulties
- HERT Debt - Specialist debt casework advice for Hertfordshire clients

National Citizens Advice – Energy advice project

Foodbank Trussell Trust – provision of voucher phone line & dedicated Money and benefits advice for Foodbank clients

Watford Community Housing - debt and benefits advice to WCH residents

Disability Benefits - Additional support for Disability Benefits claimants

National Lottery - Support for Cost of Living advice

Housing Support – housing advisor supporting WBC housing team

Achievements of the volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of the service provided by Watford Citizens Advice, providing advice and information to the clients. All the volunteers are very generous with their time either working in the office or remotely. During the 2023-24 period, volunteers contributed an average of 265 hours per week of time which is estimated as £306,105 in value.

The Bureau offers excellent training to staff and volunteers. Each volunteer adviser undergoes over 400 hours of training before becoming qualified to advise at a generalist level and additional training is required for specialist advisers.

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to every funder who has made our work possible this year and would like to thank the following:

Watford Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Watford Community Housing Trust, Watford Foodbank, National Citizens Advice, Bugler Foundation, Watford & Three Rivers Trust and the National Lottery.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Strategic report

The description under the headings "Achievements and Performance 2023- 24" and "Financial Review" meet the company law requirements for the Trustees to present a Strategic Report.

Financial review

The year ended 31 March 2024 saw income of £615,792 and expenditure of £576,095. Both the income and expenditure are higher than last year reflecting the new projects secured and additional associated resources.

The pension liabilities further decreased significantly from £5,672 to £2,649 based on the latest evaluation by the pension provider.

At the year end, £521,743 was held as cash at bank, of which £77,455 related to restricted funds.

Investment Policy

The Articles of Association gives the Trustees power to invest or deposit funds in any lawful manner. The WBC grant is paid quarterly, and the Bureau has placed any surplus funds on deposit mainly with the Flagstone platform. In order to mitigate any losses should there be another banking crisis, the Flagstone funds have been invested in a number of bank accounts, within the level of the financial compensation scheme.

Reserves policy

The Trustees believe that the Bureau should hold financial reserves in order to ensure that it can continue to operate and meet the needs of clients and creditors in the event of unforeseen circumstances. The pension fund deficit is considered to be an operating expense and as such the liability for the pension fund is met out of current income.

Unrestricted reserves

The Trustees consider that it would be prudent to set aside at least 6-9 months of operating expenditure; at 31 March 2024 this equates to between £288,157 and £432,235, compared to actual unrestricted reserves of £352,410.

Plans for Future Periods

The strategic priorities of the two-year Business Development Plan 2024-26 are:

- Sustainability - secure our organisation through funding, people retention, flexible workforce and innovation
- Culture - to be a collaborative, supportive and proactive service that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion
- Advice - improve our advice process to maintain quality and optimise client pathway
- Advocacy - to be a stronger voice on the issues that impact all those in need - particularly those in marginalised groups

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The Bureau is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association dated 9th December 2022. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. All directors are members of the Company and cease to be a member when he or she ceases to be a director. Membership is also open to other individuals or organisations provided the individuals are over 16 years of age and not paid workers, employees or unpaid volunteers of the charity. There are currently 12 members, each of whom have agreed to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year are listed on the Legal and Administrative Information Page.

The directors of the Company are also trustees of the Bureau for the purposes of Charity law and under the Company's Articles are known as members of the Trustee Board. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association, elected Trustees serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting. Trustees nominated by WBC are also subject to the appointment processes of that body and the guidelines on appointment to public office as they apply to local government nominees.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees attend Induction Training, which gives them an outline of the Citizens Advice Services and its aims, principles and policies. Trustees are given introductory information and the new Trustees also spend time in the Bureau and have meetings with the specialist advisers, the Chief Officer and the Company Secretary. There are explanations of the role of a Trustee/Director, the Board, the development plan and issues including funding and client statistics. Trustees with interests in particular areas are encouraged to go on with further training. There are learning materials available for Trustees and these range from recruitment & selection to health & safety. Trustees are able to attend regional training events and are updated on governance issues as necessary. Trustees are asked to complete on annual basis online training in Information Assurance.

Organisation

The Trustee Board currently comprises nine Trustees, including the Chairman, Treasurer, Company Secretary, and two Trustees representing WBC. The Trustee Board meets at least four times a year and has collective responsibility for setting strategic objectives, ensuring sound governance and overall management of the Bureau, including risk management, direction and performance of the Bureau. The Trustee Board gives the Chief Officer duties and powers to represent and to manage the Bureau in accordance with the delegation of authorities and policies approved by the Trustee Board.

The Board has established two sub-committees, Governance and Finance, Risk and Remuneration Committee to assist the Trustee Board in the carrying out of its business by reviewing and analysing certain matters prior to being considered by the full Trustee Board. The scope of responsibilities for the Governance Committee includes governance and regulatory compliance matters as well as review of policies. The scope of responsibilities for the Finance, Risk and Remuneration Committee covers business, financial reporting and controls, risk and remuneration related matters.

Related Parties

The Bureau is a member of National Citizens Advice, which provides the Bureau with its Information System, Intranet and the case-recording system Casebook. Citizens Advice also provides specialist support and audits the Bureau for organisational performance and for quality of advice.

WBC provides the essential core funding for the Bureau and this includes premises costs. The Bureau also works closely with other Citizens Advice offices in Hertfordshire to make joint funding bids and delivery of associated services. The Bureau is a member of the local Voluntary Sector consortium Watford and Three Rivers Trust. The Bureau has links with local solicitors who offer pro-bono advice.

The Trustees Report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mr M. F. Siddiqi

Chairman

Dated: 6 August 2024

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these accounts, 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; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts 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.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (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 charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable 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 Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity 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 financial statements to be reached.



Gary Howard FCA

Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE

Dated: 16 August 2024

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Current financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
	Notes				
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>					
Donations and legacies	3	249,252	-	249,252	269,110
Advisory services	4	948	349,288	350,236	239,179
Investments	5	16,179	-	16,179	5,154
Other income	6	-	125	125	372
Total income		266,379	349,413	615,792	513,815
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Raising funds	7	346	-	346	642
Advisory services	8	244,382	331,367	575,749	482,759
Total expenditure		244,728	331,367	576,095	483,401
Net income for the year/ Net incoming resources		21,651	18,046	39,697	30,414
<u>Other recognised gains and losses</u>					
Actuarial (loss)/gain on defined benefit pension schemes		-	-	-	152
Net movement in funds		21,651	18,046	39,697	30,566
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		330,759	59,409	390,168	359,602
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		352,410	77,455	429,865	390,168

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Prior financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
	Notes			
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>				
Donations and legacies	3	268,675	435	269,110
Advisory services	4	1,471	237,708	239,179
Investments	5	5,154	-	5,154
Other income	6	372	-	372
Total income		275,672	238,143	513,815
<u>Expenditure on:</u>				
Raising funds	7	642	-	642
Advisory services	8	268,546	214,213	482,759
Total expenditure		269,188	214,213	483,401
Net incoming resources before transfers		6,484	23,930	30,414
Net income for the year/ Net incoming resources		6,484	23,930	30,414
<u>Other recognised gains and losses</u>				
Actuarial (loss)/gain on defined benefit pension schemes		152	-	152
Net movement in funds		6,636	23,930	30,566
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		324,123	35,479	359,602
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		330,759	59,409	390,168

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12		-		2,316
Current assets					
Debtors	13	6,887		8,838	
Cash at bank and in hand		521,743		431,843	
		<u>528,630</u>		<u>440,681</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(96,116)		(47,157)	
Net current assets			432,514		393,524
Total assets less current liabilities			432,514		395,840
Provisions for liabilities	15		(2,649)		(5,672)
Net assets			<u>429,865</u>		<u>390,168</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	18		77,455		59,409
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
General unrestricted funds		355,059		336,431	
Pension reserve		<u>(2,649)</u>		<u>(5,672)</u>	
			352,410		330,759
			<u>429,865</u>		<u>390,168</u>

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 6 August 2024

M F Siddiqi

Mr M. F. Siddiqi
Chairman

Laurence Blake

Mr L. Blake
Treasurer

Company Registration No. 05453262

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	21		73,721		19,145
Investing activities					
Investment income received		16,179		5,154	
		<u>16,179</u>		<u>5,154</u>	
Net cash generated from investing activities			16,179		5,154
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
			<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			89,900		24,299
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			431,843		407,544
			<u>431,843</u>		<u>407,544</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			<u>521,743</u>		<u>431,843</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is St Mary's Churchyard, High Street, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 2BE.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual and performance related arrangements are recognised as goods or services are supplied. Expenditure includes any non-recoverable VAT.

Expenditure is allocated to activities as follows:

Charitable activities comprise costs which relate directly to delivering activities.

Governance comprises of costs which relate directly to governance arrangements and meeting statutory requirements.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and machinery	straight line over 3 years
---------------------	----------------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

It is the policy of the charity not to capitalise individual assets costing under £1,000.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminating the employment of an employee or to providing termination benefits.

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

There are some employees who are members of the Pensions Trust's Growth Plan which is a multiemployer pension Plan. The charitable company is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. It is therefore accounted for on a defined contribution basis. The annual contributions payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities. Further information concerning the Plan is given at note 15.

The net interest element is determined by multiplying the net defined benefit liability by the discount rate, taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments. The net interest is recognised in income/(expenditure) for the year.

Remeasurement changes comprise actuarial gains and losses, the effect of the asset ceiling and the return on the net defined benefit liability excluding amounts included in net interest. These are recognised immediately in other recognised gains and losses in the period in which they occur and are not reclassified to income/(expenditure) in subsequent periods.

The net defined benefit pension asset or liability in the balance sheet comprises the total for each plan of the present value of the defined benefit obligation (using a discount rate based on high quality corporate bonds), less the fair value of plan assets out of which the obligations are to be settled directly. Fair value is based on market price information, and in the case of quoted securities it is the published bid price. The value of a net pension benefit asset is limited to the amount that may be recovered either through reduced contributions or agreed refunds from the scheme.

1.12 Creditors and provisions

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

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £
Donations and gifts	962	6,109	435	6,544
Grants receivable for core activities	248,290	262,566	-	262,566
	<u>249,252</u>	<u>268,675</u>	<u>435</u>	<u>269,110</u>
Grants receivable for core activities				
Watford Council Direct Grant	204,190	204,190	-	204,190
Watford Council Premises	39,500	39,500	-	39,500
Watford & Three Rivers Trust	-	7,370	-	7,370
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	600	-	-	-
Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service	4,000	-	-	-
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	11,506	-	11,506
	<u>248,290</u>	<u>262,566</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>262,566</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4 Advisory services

	Advisory services 2024 £	Advisory services 2023 £
Income from services provided	4,448	5,971
Performance related grants	345,788	233,208
	<u>350,236</u>	<u>239,179</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	948	1,471
Restricted funds	349,288	237,708
	<u>350,236</u>	<u>239,179</u>
Performance related grants		
Watford Foodbank	34,393	20,657
Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service	20,850	135,782
Citizens Advice Bureau - National and Local	139,285	16,841
Watford Borough Council	28,323	-
Bugler Group Limited	3,000	3,000
Community Fund	19,693	1,400
Watford Community Housing Trust	30,815	29,348
Access to Justice - Community Justice Fund	-	14,672
Hertfordshire County Council	57,150	-
Watford Health Trust	6,063	5,212
Other	6,216	6,296
	<u>345,788</u>	<u>233,208</u>

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Interest receivable	<u>16,179</u>	<u>5,154</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

6 Other income

	Restricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2024	2023
	£	£
Other income	125	372
	<u>125</u>	<u>372</u>

7 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2024	2023
	£	£
Costs of generating voluntary income		
Advertising	346	642
	<u>346</u>	<u>642</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

8 Advisory services

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs	419,565	357,367
Depreciation and impairment	2,316	2,316
Other staff costs	5,395	785
Training	3,083	15,684
Project costs	8,011	12,857
Premises costs	43,993	19,629
Insurance	3,187	1,357
Repairs	168	456
Office costs	26,043	30,861
Computer costs	11,316	23,093
Travel expenses	13,375	8,036
General costs	25,369	1,017
Legal and professional costs	10,427	6,661
Bank charges and other finance costs	1,111	384
Governance costs	2,390	2,256
	<u>575,749</u>	<u>482,759</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	244,382	268,546
Restricted funds	331,367	214,213
	<u>575,749</u>	<u>482,759</u>

Governance costs comprise of independent examiner's fees £1,620 (2023: £1,620) and AGM costs £770 (2023: £636).

9 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year, but 1 of them was reimbursed a total of £95 for travel expenses incurred on behalf of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

10 Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Advice services	17	13
Management and administration	2	2
	<u>19</u>	<u>15</u>

Employment costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	375,552	317,480
Social security costs	23,205	21,545
Other pension costs	20,808	18,342
	<u>419,565</u>	<u>357,367</u>

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and machinery £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	<u>28,930</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>28,930</u>
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023	26,614
Depreciation charged in the year	<u>2,316</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>28,930</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>2,316</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

13 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Other debtors	5,708	4,477
Prepayments and accrued income	1,179	4,361
	<u>6,887</u>	<u>8,838</u>

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Other taxation and social security		6,281	5,097
Deferred income	16	75,957	31,700
Trade creditors		1,230	3,160
Other creditors		5,333	5,148
Accruals and deferred income		7,315	2,052
		<u>96,116</u>	<u>47,157</u>

15 Provisions for liabilities

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Retirement benefit obligations	17	2,649	5,672
		<u>2,649</u>	<u>5,672</u>

16 Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
Other deferred income	<u>75,957</u>	<u>31,700</u>

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	<u>75,957</u>	<u>31,700</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

17 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The company participates in the scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 638 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out at 30 September 2020. This valuation showed assets of £800.3m, liabilities of £831.9m and a deficit of £31.6m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee has asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2022 to 31 January 2025: (payable monthly)	£3,312,000 per annum
--	----------------------

The recovery plan contributions are allocated to each participating employer in line with their estimated share of the Series 1 and Series 2 scheme liabilities.

Where the scheme is in deficit and where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement the company recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The present value is calculated using the discount rate detailed in these disclosures. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

17 Retirement benefit schemes

(Continued)

	31 March 2024 (£s)	31 March 2023 (£s)	31 March 2022 (£s)
Present value of provision	2,649	5,673	8,899
Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions		Period Ended 31 March 2023 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2023 (£s)
Provision at start of period		5,673	8,899
Unwinding of the discount factor (interest expense)		217	168
Deficit contribution paid		(3,242)	(3,242)
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions		1	(152)
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule		.	-
Provision at end of period		2,649	5,673
Income and Expenditure Impact		Period Ended 31 March 2023 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2023 (£s)
Interest expense		217	168
Remeasurements – impact of any change in assumptions		1	(152)
Remeasurements – amendments to the contribution schedule		-	-
Assumptions	31 March 2024 % per annum	31 March 2023 % per annum	31 March 2022 % per annum
Rate of discount	5.31	5.52	2.35

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates which, when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results as using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.

The pension charge for the year was £21,025 (2023: £18,342).

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

18 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds			Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Client Funds	2,670	5,416	(6,954)	1,132	6,188	(5,935)	1,385
Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme	15,025	60,287	(45,312)	30,000	76,429	(68,938)	37,491
Watford Community Housing Trust	-	29,578	(25,136)	4,442	30,815	(35,257)	-
Disability Benefits Service	1,151	10,000	(8,695)	2,456	10,000	(4,477)	7,979
CitA Guardian- Cost of Living Grant	-	-	-	-	15,000	(15,000)	-
Housing Partnership	-	-	-	-	31,470	(26,689)	4,781
Client Emergency Fund	-	3,000	(2,969)	31	3,070	(2,626)	475
Cost of Living Project	-	-	-	-	53,975	(53,975)	-
Hertfordshire Community Training Project	12,496	14,480	(22,664)	4,312	3,500	(7,812)	-
Energy Advice Programme	-	-	-	2,211	16,800	(19,011)	-
Watford Foodbank	-	22,057	(15,863)	6,194	34,393	(33,742)	6,845
The HERT project	3,752	44,935	(40,056)	8,631	48,080	(38,212)	18,499
The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS)	-	23,359	(23,359)	-	-	-	-
Access to Justice (Community Justice Fund)	-	14,672	(14,672)	-	-	-	-
Community Fund Grant	-	-	-	-	19,693	(19,693)	-
Other	385	10,359	(8,533)	-	-	-	-
	<u>35,479</u>	<u>238,143</u>	<u>(214,213)</u>	<u>59,409</u>	<u>349,413</u>	<u>(331,367)</u>	<u>77,455</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

18 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Client Funds is funding received to assist clients purchase items of household equipment.

Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme is funding to provide advice and guidance to clients in extreme hardship situations, to reduce debt and increase income.

Watford Community Housing Trust is funding to provide debt and benefits advice to Watford Community Housing tenants.

Disability Benefits Service is funding from Blandford Trust towards the cost of the service.

CitA Guardian is a Cost of Living Grant

The Housing Partnerships Grant is for the funding of a housing advisor

Client Emergency Funds is funding received from The Bugler Foundation to provide emergency funds for clients in financial crisis.

Hertfordshire Community Training Project - We received funding from the National Lottery Fund to train staff and volunteers based across Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services.

Energy Advice Programme is funding for energy advice

Watford Foodbank is funding to provide debt and benefits advice to clients in receipt of multiple food vouchers.

The HERT project is funded by Hertfordshire County Council to provide benefits and debt advice to Primary Care Network (PCN) Link Workers, Community Navigators and Social Prescribers in Hertfordshire. The project is run by The Money Advice Unit (MAU) and Citizens Advice Hertfordshire (Hertsmere and Watford). MAU provide benefit advice with Citizens Advice Hertsmere and Watford providing debt advice.

Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) is funding secured by the National Citizens Advice to increase the capacity of debt advice nationwide.

Access to Justice (Community Justice Fund) is funding to support the escalating impact of the cost-of-living crisis on Citizens Advice Watford.

Community Fund grant is National Lottery funding for generalist advice

Other represents other smaller restricted funds.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:				
Tangible assets	-	-	-	2,316
Current assets/(liabilities)	355,059	77,455	432,514	393,524
Provisions and pensions	(2,649)	-	(2,649)	(5,672)
	<u>352,410</u>	<u>77,455</u>	<u>429,865</u>	<u>390,168</u>

20 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).

21 Cash generated from operations

	2024 £	2023 £
Surplus for the year	39,697	30,414
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(16,179)	(5,154)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	2,316	2,316
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions	(3,395)	(40,420)
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	1,951	423
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	4,702	(12,103)
Increase in deferred income	44,257	6,324
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	<u>73,349</u>	<u>(18,200)</u>

22 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no debt during the year.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

England & Wales - Charity number 1109872

Accounts

Charity registration number 1109872

Company registration number 05453262 (England and Wales)

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustee	Mr Abayomi Akisanya	
	Mr Laurence Blake	
	Mr Richard Boulton	
	Dr Pui Wah Carter	
	Ms Leena Nagrecha	
	Ms Danielle Sherman	
	Mr Mohammed Farrukh Siddiqi	
	Mr Anthony Swabe	
	Cllr Kennedy Rodrigues	Representing Watford Borough Council (appointed 10 August 2022)
	Cllr Jennifer Pattinson	Representing Watford Borough Council (appointed 10 August 2022)
	Mr George Derbyshire	Representing Watford Borough Council (resigned 04 August 2022)
	Cllr Stephen Johnson	Representing Watford Borough Council (appointed 26 October 2021, resigned 04 August 2022)

Honorary Officers

Chairman	Mr Mohammed Farrukh Siddiqi
Treasurer	Dr Pui Wah Carter
Company Secretary	Ms Leena Nagrecha

Principal Staff

Chief Officer	Ms Emma Burgham
Advice Service Manager	Ms Catherine Markowski
Projects Manager	Ms Kalpna Budhdeo

Charity number 1109872

Company number 05453262

Principal address St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered office St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

Independent examiner Gary Howard FCA
Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE

Bankers

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

Virgin Money
Jubilee House
Gosforth
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE3 4PL

United Trust Bank Limited
One Ropemaker Street
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EC2Y 9AW

Flagstone
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26-27 Oxenden Street
London
SW1Y 4EL

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

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WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustee Board of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau ("the Bureau" or "the Company") presents its report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a local charity funded by local grants and donations. We are also a member of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (National Citizens Advice) and shares its key aim 'to shape a society where people face far fewer problems'

We value diversity and promote equality in all we do. We seek to challenge discrimination, both within our own organisation and when, in the course of our work, we encounter it in the communities we serve. In all our work we seek to act in accordance with National Citizens Advice fundamentals:

- Led by people's needs
- Rooted in the community
- Strengthened by volunteers
- Holistic
- Trusted experts

The above fundamentals are achieved by:

- Providing Information, Advice and Advocacy
- Offering a free, independent, confidential and impartial service
- Providing a unique feedback loop, from frontline insights to policy change
- Building partnerships
- Working as one service
- Prioritising the needs of marginalised communities

The objectives of the Bureau are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of principally the community in the Borough of Watford by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress.

The Trustees have given consideration to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission in respect of public benefit in respect of all its activities.

The Bureau's service is independent and it provides free, confidential and impartial advice to everybody regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality. The Bureau recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

The Bureau's Activities

The Bureau helps people in Watford to resolve their problems. As part of the UK's largest advice network, we are equipped to deal with issues from anyone, spanning debt and benefits to employment and housing, plus everything in between. Our clients are at the heart of the service, and we are here to ensure that people who need help get the right support at the right time.

The activities of the Bureau continue to be advising the individual client and engaging in research and campaigns work. By advising clients, the Bureau ensures that individuals do not suffer through a lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, or of the services available to them, or through an inability to express their needs effectively. The Bureau exercises a responsible influence on the development of research and campaigns, both locally and nationally.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

The main area of the charitable activity is providing advice. Generalist advice is offered by volunteer and paid staff. Paid caseworkers provide specialist advice on debt and benefits issues. Along with other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services, we have access to a British Sign Language (BSL) adviser funded via Hertfordshire County Council. The Bureau is a referral agency for the Free Representation Unit whereby solicitors represent clients at Tribunals and court hearings on a pro bono basis.

The service and projects of the bureau include:

- Generalist Advice
- Debt Advice
- Energy Advice
- Housing Advice
- Benefits Advice
- Charitable Support & Food Banks
- Relationships & Family

Face-to-face advice is provided to clients at the Bureau's Watford office situated in the Advice Centre. Telephone advice is provided by advisors in partnership with nine other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services. Watford residents can access information on the Citizens Advice website or contact Watford Citizens Advice via email. There is free internet access for clients from computers in the reception area, providing access to the Citizens Advice website, other key advice sites and local information.

The Bureau is involved in the community, works with local or community partners and attends local events. Advisers, assessors, administrative workers, receptionists, and project workers make up the bulk of the Bureau's workforce. Our volunteers form the backbone of the service and the Trustees are responsible for governing the organisation.

Major Risks

The Bureau maintains a risk register which is agreed by the Trustee Board. The Trustee Board assesses the major risks to which the Bureau may be exposed. These include operational, financial, regulatory, external and governance risks. The Trustees recognise that any major risks to which the Bureau is exposed need to be reviewed and systems put in place to mitigate those risks. To that end, the risk register is continually monitored by the Chief Officer to manage the risks and to ensure that appropriate action plans are in place to mitigate its key risks.

The Bureau has a balanced approach to risk management and adopts an active process to the mitigation of risk. The most significant risks faced by the Bureau have been identified by the Trustee Board and relate to the following:

- Maintaining volunteer recruitment at a level that keeps pace with turnover and enables the delivery of our strategic objectives
- Servicing an increased demand for Benefits, Housing and Debt advice arising from welfare reform, the Covid-19 pandemic and the rise in the cost of living
- Income sustainability in a highly competitive environment with ongoing pressures on public funding.

As part of its risk management policy the Finance & Risk sub-committee of the Board regularly reviews the Risk Register and reports to the Board on the policies and process for identifying and assessing business risks and the management of those risks by the Company. The Finance & Risk sub-committee also reviews and reports to the Board on the Business Continuity plan, Insurances, Health and Safety and Information Assurance matters.

The Trustees remain satisfied that all insurable risks have been identified and adequately dealt with and that the Bureau's exposure to other risks is kept at a minimum by good working practice by the management team, paid staff and volunteers.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Achievements and performance 2022-23

We took the strategic decision in 2022, coming out of Covid, to increase opening hours and assist more clients in person to ensure the most vulnerable and the digitally isolated are supported. Advice is provided by a number of channels including face-to-face, phones, and email. Support and useful information is also available via the new website.

2022/23 Service Highlights

- Advised 670 people a month (14% increase on 21/22)
- Clients came with 13,000 issues (12,300 in 21/22)
- Helped 1,772 clients at drop-in (593 in 21/22, restricted by Covid)
- 3,233 clients advised by phone (4,547 in 21/22 as no face-to-face advice)
- 2,464 follow up advice appointments (2,441 in 21/22)
- 959 clients helped by email (878 in 21/22)
- Increased income of clients with benefits & tax credit issues by an average of £5,431 per client
- Wrote off & stabilised debts of £976,094 (£400,000 in 21/22), an average of £4,564 per client (£2,000 in year 21/22)

Organisational Highlights

- New website launched with improved self-help resources
- Extended opening hours
- Cost of Living Survey undertaken & Report with recommendations published
- Tangibly improved partnership working, and external newsletter launched
- Cyber Security Plus accreditation acquired
- New IT Platform implemented

The demand for our service remains high and we are often limited by the available resources. Clients are increasingly coming with multiple and complex issues requiring detailed casework and more than one appointment, which has a direct impact on resources. We continue to seek additional funding to meet the continual and increasing demand.

We also provide advice to a large number of people who are disabled or have a long-term health condition. In 2022/23 they accounted for 39% of the clients that disclosed this information. This number rises to 53% for clients helped with cost of living issues, underlining the impact of price rises on this vulnerable group.

There are marked changes in the client issues compared to 2021/22, reflecting a community struggling with the cost of living. Benefits and Tax Credits remain the top issue for clients. Debt issues increase by 31% in the year compared to last year with significant increases in Council Tax and Credit card debts.

Other advice areas showing a significant increase include Charitable support which increased to 17% of the total issues compared to 7% in 2020/21. Help with energy issues (Utilities and Communications) accounted for 7%, having not featured in the top issues in the previous year.

We anticipate ongoing need for crisis support and expert debt advice as:

- Food prices continue to rise, hitting low-income families hard. The inflation rate for low-income families is almost 50% higher than that for high-income families
- Rental costs are rising, and Local Housing Allowance remains frozen
- The number of debt clients we support with negative budgets (when essential outgoings are higher than income) is rising

The Trustees are pleased to report that the Bureau has continued its volunteer recruitment and training program and the total number of volunteers is being maintained around 40.

Specialist legal advice is available for family and immigration issues. Expert advice is available for Benefits, Debt, Employment and Housing issues.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Projects

Projects undertaken by the Bureau during 2022/23 included:

Hertfordshire County Council funded projects:

- Crisis Intervention - support for Hertfordshire clients facing crisis
- Crisis Enhancement - additional energy support for Hertfordshire clients facing crisis
- Cost of Living Advisor - additional support for people facing cost of living difficulties
- HERT Debt - Specialist debt casework advice for Hertfordshire clients

National Citizens Advice funded projects:

- MaPS - Continued delivery of debt casework via Money and Pensions Service (MaPS)
- Foodbank Trussell Trust - Dedicated Money and benefits advice for Foodbank clients

Watford Community Housing - debt and benefits advice to residents

Disability Benefits - Additional support for Disability Benefits claimants

National Lottery - County-wide training to 9 Hertfordshire Citizens Advice offices

Achievements of the volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of the service provided by Watford Citizens Advice, providing advice and information to the clients. All the volunteers are very generous with their time either working in the office or remotely. During the 2022-23 period, volunteers contributed an average of 336 hours per week of time which is estimated as £297,024 in value.

The Bureau offers excellent training to staff and volunteers. Each volunteer adviser undergoes over 400 hours of training before becoming qualified to advise at a generalist level and additional training is required for specialist advisers.

Strategic report

The description under the headings "Achievements and Performance 2022- 23" and "Financial Review" meet the company law requirements for the Trustees to present a Strategic Report.

Financial review

The year ended 31 March 2023 saw income of £513,815 and expenditure of £483,401. Both the income and expenditure are higher than last year reflecting the new projects secured and additional associated resources.

The pension liabilities further decreased significantly from £8,899 to £5,672 based on the latest evaluation by the pension provider.

At the year end, £431,843 was held as cash at bank, of which £59,409 related to restricted funds.

Principal Funding Sources

Watford Borough Council (WBC) remains the largest funder of the Bureau, providing 48% of income. WBC also provides premises as part of the annual grant.

In addition to this, the Bureau also received 26% of its income from Hertfordshire County Council for various projects. Other principal funders included Watford Community Housing Trust, Watford Foodbank, National Citizens Advice and Community Justice Foundation.

Investment Policy

The Articles of Association gives the Trustees power to invest or deposit funds in any lawful manner. The WBC grant is paid quarterly, and the Bureau has placed any surplus funds on deposit mainly with the Flagstone platform. In order to mitigate any losses should there be another banking crisis, the Flagstone funds have been invested in a number of bank accounts, within the level of the financial compensation scheme.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Reserves policy

The Trustees believe that the Bureau should hold financial reserves in order to ensure that it can continue to operate and meet the needs of clients and creditors in the event of unforeseen circumstances. The pension fund deficit is considered to be an operating expense and as such the liability for the pension fund is met out of current income.

Unrestricted reserves

The Trustees consider that it would be prudent to set aside 6 - 9 months of operating expenditure; at 31 March 2023 this equates to between £241,700 and £362,550 compared to actual unrestricted reserves of £330,759.

Plans for Future Periods

The strategic priorities of the two year Business Development Plan are:

- Advice - to improve the experience people have when they come to us for help, so everyone leaves with the knowledge and confidence they need to find a way forward
- Culture - to be a collaborative, supportive and proactive service that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion
- Sustainability - to secure our future through a more collaborative, proactive and competitive approach to fundraising
- Advocacy - to be a stronger voice on the issues that matter most to the people who come to us for help
- Technology - to use technology to enable a good experience for the people who come to us for help, while freeing up resources that will allow us to meet more demand

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The Bureau is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association dated 9th December 2022. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. All directors are members of the Company and cease to be a member when he or she ceases to be a director. Membership is also open to other individuals or organisations provided the individuals are over 16 years of age and not paid workers, employees or unpaid volunteers of the charity. There are currently 13 members, each of whom have agreed to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year are listed on the Legal and Administrative Information Page.

The directors of the Company are also trustees of the Bureau for the purposes of Charity law and under the Company's Articles are known as members of the Trustee Board. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association, elected Trustees serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting. Trustees nominated by WBC are also subject to the appointment processes of that body and the guidelines on appointment to public office as they apply to local government nominees.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees attend Induction Training, which gives them an outline of the Citizens Advice Services and its aims, principles and policies. Trustees are given introductory information and the new Trustees also spend time in the Bureau and have meetings with the specialist advisers, the Chief Officer and the Company Secretary. There are explanations of the role of a Trustee/Director, the Board, the development plan and issues including funding and client statistics. Trustees with interests in particular areas are encouraged to go on with further training. There are learning materials available for Trustees and these range from recruitment & selection to health & safety. Trustees are able to attend regional training events and are updated on governance issues as necessary. Trustees are asked to complete on annual basis online training in Information Assurance.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Organisation

The Trustee Board currently comprises ten Trustees, including the Chairman, Treasurer, Company Secretary, and two Trustees representing WBC. The Trustee Board meets at least four times a year and has collective responsibility for setting strategic objectives, ensuring sound governance and overall management of the Bureau, including risk management, direction and performance of the Bureau. The Trustee Board gives the Chief Officer duties and powers to represent and to manage the Bureau in accordance with the delegation of authorities and policies approved by the Trustee Board.

The Board has established two sub-committees, Governance and Finance, Risk and Remuneration Committee to assist the Trustee Board in the carrying out of its business by reviewing and analysing certain matters prior to being considered by the full Trustee Board. The scope of responsibilities for the Governance Committee includes governance and regulatory compliance matters as well as review of policies. The scope of responsibilities for the Finance, Risk and Remuneration Committee covers business, financial reporting and controls, risk and remuneration related matters.

Related Parties

The Bureau is a member of National Citizens Advice, which provides the Bureau with its Information System, Intranet and the case-recording system Casebook. Citizens Advice also provides specialist support and audits the Bureau for organisational performance and for quality of advice.

WBC provides the essential core funding for the Bureau and this includes premises costs. The Bureau is part of the Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service, which works in close partnership and makes joint bids for funding. The Bureau is a member of the local Voluntary Sector consortium Watford and Three Rivers Trust. The Bureau has links with local solicitors who offer pro-bono advice.

The Trustees Report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mr M. F. Siddiqi

Chairman

Dated: 8 August 2023

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these accounts, 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; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts 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.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (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 charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable 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 Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity 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 financial statements to be reached.



Gary Howard FCA

Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE

Dated: 15 August 2023

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Current financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
	Notes				
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>					
Donations and legacies	3	268,675	435	269,110	260,187
Advisory services	4	1,471	237,708	239,179	185,328
Investments	5	5,154	-	5,154	825
Other income	6	372	-	372	206
Total income		275,672	238,143	513,815	446,546
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Raising funds	7	642	-	642	41
Advisory services	8	268,546	214,213	482,759	441,780
Total expenditure		269,188	214,213	483,401	441,821
Net income for the year/ Net incoming resources		6,484	23,930	30,414	4,725
<u>Other recognised gains and losses</u>					
Actuarial gain on defined benefit pension schemes		152	-	152	28,251
Net movement in funds		6,636	23,930	30,566	32,976
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		324,123	35,479	359,602	326,626
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		330,759	59,409	390,168	359,602

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Prior financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
	Notes			
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>				
Donations and legacies	3	258,487	1,700	260,187
Advisory services	4	-	185,328	185,328
Investments	5	825	-	825
Other income	6	52	154	206
Total income		259,364	187,182	446,546
<u>Expenditure on:</u>				
Raising funds	7	41	-	41
Advisory services	8	258,948	182,832	441,780
Total expenditure		258,989	182,832	441,821
Net incoming resources before transfers		375	4,350	4,725
Gross transfers between funds		860	(860)	-
Net income for the year/ Net incoming resources		1,235	3,490	4,725
<u>Other recognised gains and losses</u>				
Actuarial gain on defined benefit pension schemes		28,251	-	28,251
Net movement in funds		29,486	3,490	32,976
Fund balances at 1 April 2021		294,637	31,989	326,626
Fund balances at 31 March 2022		324,123	35,479	359,602

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12		2,316		4,632
Current assets					
Debtors	13	8,838		9,261	
Cash at bank and in hand		431,843		407,544	
		<u>440,681</u>		<u>416,805</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(47,157)		(52,936)	
Net current assets			393,524		363,869
Total assets less current liabilities			395,840		368,501
Provisions for liabilities	13		(5,672)		(8,899)
Net assets			<u>390,168</u>		<u>359,602</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	18		59,409		35,479
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
General unrestricted funds		336,431		333,022	
Pension reserve		<u>(5,672)</u>		<u>(8,899)</u>	
			330,759		324,123
			<u>390,168</u>		<u>359,602</u>

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

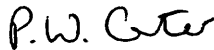
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 8 August 2023



Mr M. F. Siddiqi
Trustee



Dr P. W. Carter
Trustee

Company Registration No. 05453262

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	21		19,145		(8,482)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-		(6,948)	
Investment income received		5,154		825	
Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities			5,154		(6,123)
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			24,299		(14,605)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			407,544		422,149
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			431,843		407,544

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is St Mary's Churchyard, High Street, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 2BE.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual and performance related arrangements are recognised as goods or services are supplied. Expenditure includes any non-recoverable VAT.

Expenditure is allocated to activities as follows:

Charitable activities comprise costs which relate directly to delivering activities.

Governance comprises of costs which relate directly to governance arrangements and meeting statutory requirements.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and machinery	straight line over 3 years
---------------------	----------------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

It is the policy of the charity not to capitalise individual assets costing under £1,000.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminating the employment of an employee or to providing termination benefits.

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

There are some employees who are members of the Pensions Trust's Growth Plan which is a multiemployer pension Plan. The charitable company is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. It is therefore accounted for on a defined contribution basis. The annual contributions payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities. Further information concerning the Plan is given at note 15.

The net interest element is determined by multiplying the net defined benefit liability by the discount rate, taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments. The net interest is recognised in income/(expenditure) for the year.

Remeasurement changes comprise actuarial gains and losses, the effect of the asset ceiling and the return on the net defined benefit liability excluding amounts included in net interest. These are recognised immediately in other recognised gains and losses in the period in which they occur and are not reclassified to income/(expenditure) in subsequent periods.

The net defined benefit pension asset or liability in the balance sheet comprises the total for each plan of the present value of the defined benefit obligation (using a discount rate based on high quality corporate bonds), less the fair value of plan assets out of which the obligations are to be settled directly. Fair value is based on market price information, and in the case of quoted securities it is the published bid price. The value of a net pension benefit asset is limited to the amount that may be recovered either through reduced contributions or agreed refunds from the scheme.

1.12 Creditors and provisions

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

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £	2022 £
Donations and gifts	6,109	435	6,544	6,661	1,700	8,361
Grants receivable for core activities	262,566	-	262,566	251,826	-	251,826
	<u>268,675</u>	<u>435</u>	<u>269,110</u>	<u>258,487</u>	<u>1,700</u>	<u>260,187</u>
Grants receivable for core activities	204,190	-	204,190	204,190	-	204,190
Watford Council Direct Grant	39,500	-	39,500	39,500	-	39,500
Watford Council Premises	7,370	-	7,370	-	-	-
Watford & Three Rivers Trust	-	-	-	1,000	-	1,000
Tesco	-	-	-	2,000	-	2,000
Herfordshire Community Foundation	11,506	-	11,506	5,136	-	5,136
Citizens Advice Bureau	<u>262,566</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>262,566</u>	<u>251,826</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>251,826</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4 Advisory services

	Advisory services 2023 £	Advisory services 2022 £
Income from services provided	5,971	-
Performance related grants	233,208	185,328
	<u>239,179</u>	<u>185,328</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	1,471	-
Restricted funds	237,708	185,328
	<u>239,179</u>	<u>185,328</u>
Performance related grants		
Watford Foodbank	20,657	-
Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service	135,782	46,866
Citizens Advice Bureau - National and Local	16,841	128,416
St Albans District Council	2,500	-
Bugler Group Limited	3,000	-
Community Fund	1,400	-
Watford Community Housing Trust	29,348	-
Access to Justice - Community Justice Fund	14,672	-
Watford Health Trust	5,212	2,432
Other	3,796	7,614
	<u>233,208</u>	<u>185,328</u>

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Interest receivable	<u>5,154</u>	<u>825</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

6 Other income

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £	2022 £
Other income	<u>372</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>206</u>

7 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2023 £	2022 £
Costs of generating voluntary income		
Advertising	<u>642</u>	<u>41</u>
	<u>642</u>	<u>41</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

8 Advisory services

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	357,367	324,141
Depreciation and impairment	2,316	2,316
Other staff costs	785	228
Training	15,684	10,344
Project costs	12,857	-
Premises costs	19,629	59,543
Insurance	1,357	1,819
Repairs	456	704
Office costs	30,861	20,723
Computer costs	23,093	9,342
Travel expenses	8,036	4,027
General costs	1,017	3,457
Legal and professional costs	6,661	2,806
Bank charges and other finance costs	384	382
Governance costs	2,256	1,948
	<u>482,759</u>	<u>441,780</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	268,546	258,948
Restricted funds	214,213	182,832
	<u>482,759</u>	<u>441,780</u>

Governance costs comprise of independent examiner's fees £1,620 (2022: £1,320) and AGM costs £636 (2022: £628).

9 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year, but 1 of them was reimbursed a total of £88 for miscellaneous expenses incurred on behalf of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

10 Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Advice services	13	13
Management and administration	2	2
	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>

Employment costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	317,480	287,235
Social security costs	21,545	19,593
Other pension costs	18,342	17,313
	<u>357,367</u>	<u>324,141</u>

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and machinery £
Cost	
At 1 April 2022	28,930
At 31 March 2023	<u>28,930</u>
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2022	24,298
Depreciation charged in the year	2,316
At 31 March 2023	<u>26,614</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	<u>2,316</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>4,632</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

13 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Other debtors	4,477	7,119
Prepayments and accrued income	4,361	2,142
	<u>8,838</u>	<u>9,261</u>

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Other taxation and social security		5,097	-
Deferred income	16	31,700	25,376
Trade creditors		3,160	399
Other creditors		5,148	4,009
Accruals and deferred income		2,052	23,152
		<u>47,157</u>	<u>52,936</u>

15 Provisions for liabilities

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Retirement benefit obligations	17	5,672	8,899
		<u>5,672</u>	<u>8,899</u>

16 Deferred income

	2023 £	2022 £
Other deferred income	31,700	25,376
	<u>31,700</u>	<u>25,376</u>

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	31,700	25,376
	<u>31,700</u>	<u>25,376</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

17 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The company participates in the scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 638 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out at 30 September 2020. This valuation showed assets of £800.3m, liabilities of £831.9m and a deficit of £31.6m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee has asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2022 to 31 January 2025: (payable monthly)	£3,312,000 per annum
--	----------------------

The recovery plan contributions are allocated to each participating employer in line with their estimated share of the Series 1 and Series 2 scheme liabilities.

Where the scheme is in deficit and where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement the company recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The present value is calculated using the discount rate detailed in these disclosures. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

17 Retirement benefit schemes

(Continued)

	31 March 2023 (£s)	31 March 2022 (£s)	31 March 2021 (£s)
Present value of provision	5,673	8,899	49,354
Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions	Period Ended 31 March 2023 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2022 (£s)	
Provision at start of period	8,899	49,354	
Unwinding of the discount factor (interest expense)	168	285	
Deficit contribution paid	(3,242)	(12,489)	
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions	(152)	(205)	
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule	-	(28,046)	
Provision at end of period	5,673	8,899	
Income and Expenditure Impact	Period Ended 31 March 2023 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2022 (£s)	
Interest expense	168	285	
Remeasurements – impact of any change in assumptions	(152)	(205)	
Remeasurements – amendments to the contribution schedule	-	(28,046)	
Assumptions	31 March 2023 % per annum	31 March 2022 % per annum	31 March 2021 % per annum
Rate of discount	5.52	2.35	0.66

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates which, when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results as using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.

The pension charge for the year was £18,342 (2022: £17,313).

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

18 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Movement in funds		Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Movement in funds		Balance at 31 March 2023 £
		Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	£		Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	
Client Funds	1,565	4,380	(3,275)	-	2,670	5,416	(6,954)	1,132
Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme	-	44,468	(29,443)	-	15,025	60,287	(45,312)	30,000
Watford Community Housing Trust	-	-	-	-	-	29,578	(25,136)	4,442
Disability Benefits Service	-	10,833	(9,682)	-	1,151	10,000	(8,695)	2,456
Rough Sleeping Prevention Project	3,362	-	(3,362)	-	-	-	-	-
Client Emergency Fund	-	-	-	-	-	3,000	(2,969)	31
Hertfordshire Community Training Project	9,162	9,996	(6,662)	-	12,496	14,480	(22,664)	4,312
Community Justice Fund	1,500	-	(1,500)	-	-	-	-	-
Homeworking Initiative	12,650	-	(12,650)	-	-	-	-	-
Watford Foodbank	-	-	-	-	-	22,057	(15,863)	6,194
The HERT project	3,750	38,320	(38,318)	-	3,752	44,935	(40,056)	8,631
The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS)	-	38,218	(38,218)	-	-	23,359	(23,359)	-
Help to Claim	-	12,480	(12,480)	-	-	-	-	-
Access to Justice (Community Justice Fund)	-	-	-	-	-	14,672	(14,672)	-
Other	-	28,487	(27,242)	(860)	385	10,359	(8,533)	2,211
	31,989	187,182	(182,832)	(860)	35,479	238,143	(214,213)	59,409

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

18 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Client Funds is funding received to assist clients purchase items of household equipment.

Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme is funding to provide advice and guidance to clients in extreme hardship situations, to reduce debt and increase income.

Watford Community Housing Trust is funding to provide debt and benefits advice to Watford Community Housing tenants.

Disability Benefits Service is funding from Blandford Trust towards the cost of the service.

Rough Sleeping Prevention Project is funding from New Hope, Watford towards the cost of the project.

Client Emergency Funds is funding received from The Bugler Foundation to provide emergency funds for clients in financial crisis.

Hertfordshire Community Training Project - We received funding from the National Lottery Fund to train staff and volunteers based across Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services.

Community Justice Fund is a grant from The Access to Justice Foundation to recruit a welfare benefits caseworker to mitigate the loss of volunteer capacity and meet the expected post lockdown surge in demand.

Homeworking Initiative is funding from Hertfordshire Community Foundation, Hertfordshire County Council and The National Lottery Community Fund to allow remote working for staff and volunteers and increase staff levels to meet the demand during lockdown.

Watford Foodbank is funding to provide debt and benefits advice to clients in receipt of multiple food vouchers.

The HERT project is funded by Hertfordshire County Council to provide benefits and debt advice to Primary Care Network (PCN) Link Workers, Community Navigators and Social Prescribers in Hertfordshire. The project is run by The Money Advice Unit (MAU) and Citizens Advice Hertfordshire (Hertsmere and Watford). MAU provide benefit advice with Citizens Advice Hertsmere and Watford providing debt advice.

Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) is funding secured by the National Citizens Advice to increase the capacity of debt advice nationwide.

Help to Claim is a project which offers support to clients setting up new claims for Universal Credit.

Access to Justice (Community Justice Fund) is funding to support the escalating impact of the cost-of-living crisis on Citizens Advice Watford.

Other represents other smaller restricted funds.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:				
Tangible assets	2,316	-	2,316	4,632
Current assets/(liabilities)	335,865	57,659	393,524	363,869
Provisions and pensions	(5,672)	-	(5,672)	(8,899)
	<u>332,509</u>	<u>57,659</u>	<u>390,168</u>	<u>359,602</u>

20 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2022 - none).

21 Cash generated from operations

	2023 £	2022 £
Surplus for the year	30,414	4,725
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(5,154)	(825)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	2,316	2,316
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions	(3,075)	(12,204)
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	423	8,222
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(12,103)	14,956
Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	6,324	(25,672)
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	<u>19,145</u>	<u>(8,482)</u>

22 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no debt during the year.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

England & Wales - Charity number 1109872

Accounts

Charity registration number 1109872

Company registration number 05453262 (England and Wales)

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

Elected Members

Mr Abayomi Akisanya	
Mr Laurence Blake	
Mr Richard Boulton	(appointed 06 April 2021)
Dr Pui Wah Carter	
Ms Meera Lachani	(resigned 21 March 2022)
Ms Leena Nagrecha	
Ms Danielle Sherman	(appointed 06 April 2021)
Mr Farrukh Siddiqi	
Mr Anthony Swabe	(appointed 06 April 2021)

Co-opted Members

Cllr Kennedy Rodrigues	Representing Watford Borough Council (appointed 10 August 2022)
Cllr Jennifer Pattinson	Representing Watford Borough Council (appointed 10 August 2022)
Mr George Derbyshire	Representing Watford Borough Council (resigned 04 August 2022)
Cllr Stephen Johnson	Representing Watford Borough Council (appointed 26 October 2021, resigned 04 August 2022)

Non trustee representative members

Mr Jamie Normanton	Representing volunteers
Ms Kalpna Budhdeo	Representing paid staff

The representative members have observer status at Trustee Board meetings.

Honorary Officers

Chairman	Mr Farrukh Siddiqi
Treasurer	Dr Pui Wah Carter
Company Secretary	Ms Leena Nagrecha

Principal Staff

Chief Officer	Ms Emma Burgham	(appointed 17 May 2021)
	Mr Salim Bakirci	(resigned 09 April 2021)
Advice Service Manager	Ms Catherine Markowski	
	Ms Kalpna Budhdeo	

Charity number 1109872

Company number 05453262

Principal address St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered office	St Mary's Churchyard High Street Watford Hertfordshire WD17 2BE
Independent examiner	Gary Howard FCA Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants 36 Crown Rise Watford Hertfordshire WD25 0NE
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ Virgin Money Jubilee House Gosforth Newcastle Upon Tyne NE3 4PL United Trust Bank Limited One Ropemaker Street London EC2Y 9AW

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

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WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The Trustee Board of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau ("the Bureau" or "the Company") presents its report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a local charity funded by local grants and donations. We are also a member of Citizens Advice UK and share its key aims:

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

We value diversity and promote equality in all we do. We seek to challenge discrimination, both within our own organisation and when, in the course of our work, we encounter it in the communities we serve. In all our work we seek to act in accordance with Citizens Advice core values, which comprise:

- a focus on clients;
- achieving results;
- continuously improving;
- promoting equality and fairness;
- valuing each other; and
- working together.

The objectives of the Bureau are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of principally the community in the Borough of Watford by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress.

The Trustees have given consideration to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission in respect of public benefit in respect of all its activities.

The Bureau's service is independent and it provides free, confidential and impartial advice to everybody regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality. The Bureau recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

The strategic objectives for the three-year period of the Business Development Plan are:

- 1 To provide a good generalist advice service to those who reside or work in Watford so that individuals do not suffer either because they do not know their rights or cannot express their needs and so they are empowered through the information and guidance they receive to manage their own affairs more effectively.
- 2 To maintain core resources sufficient to deliver a good advice service and obtain new funding where possible to deliver new projects.
- 3 To maintain the national standards of the Citizens Advice, providing advice, which is at all times independent, confidential, free and impartial and meets their quality requirements.
- 4 To improve access to advice for all sectors of the community by increasing the number of volunteers and volunteer roles.
- 5 To maintain our research and campaigns work to improve the lives of Watford residents affected by local and national policies.
- 6 To continue to value diversity and to challenge discrimination.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

The activities of the Bureau continue to be advising the individual client and engaging in research and campaigns work. By advising clients, the Bureau ensures that individuals do not suffer through a lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, or of the services available to them, or through an inability to express their needs effectively. The Bureau exercises a responsible influence on the development of research and campaigns, both locally and nationally.

The main area of the charitable activity is providing advice. Generalist advice is offered by volunteer and paid staff. Paid caseworkers provide specialist advice on debt and benefits issues. Along with other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services, we have access to a British Sign Language (BSL) adviser funded via Hertfordshire County Council. The Bureau is a referral agency for the Free Representation Unit whereby solicitors represent clients at Tribunals and court hearings on a pro bono basis.

Face-to-face advice is provided to clients at the Bureau's Watford office situated in the Advice Centre. Telephone advice is provided by advisors in partnership with nine other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services. Watford residents can access information on the Citizens Advice website or contact Watford Citizens Advice via email. There is free internet access for clients from computers in the reception area, providing access to the Citizens Advice website, other key advice sites and local information.

The Bureau is involved in the community, partnership working and local events. Our volunteers form the backbone of the advice service and administration work at the Bureau and volunteer Trustees are responsible for governing the organisation. Generalist advisers, gateway assessors, administrative workers, receptionists, and project workers make up the bulk of the Bureau's workforce.

Major Risks

The Bureau maintains a risk register which is agreed by the Trustee Board. The Trustee Board assesses the major risks to which the Bureau may be exposed. These include operational, financial, regulatory, external and governance risks. The Trustees recognise that any major risks to which the Bureau is exposed need to be reviewed and systems put in place to mitigate those risks. To that end, the risk register is continually monitored by the Chief Officer to manage the risks and to ensure that appropriate action plans are in place to mitigate its key risks.

The Bureau has a balanced approach to risk management and adopts an active process to the mitigation of risk. The most significant risks faced by the Bureau have been identified by the Trustee Board and relate to the following:

- Maintaining volunteer recruitment at a level that keeps pace with turnover and enables the delivery of our strategic objectives
- Servicing an increased demand for Benefits, Housing and Debt advice arising from welfare reform, the Covid-19 pandemic and the rise in the cost of living
- Income sustainability in a highly competitive environment with ongoing pressures on public funding.

As part of its risk management policy the Board has established three sub-committees – Governance, Finance & Risk and Remuneration - which meet regularly and report to the Board on their areas of responsibility.

The Trustees remain satisfied that all insurable risks have been identified and adequately dealt with and that the Bureau's exposure to other risks is kept at a minimum by good working practice by the management team, paid staff and volunteers.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Achievements and performance 2021-22

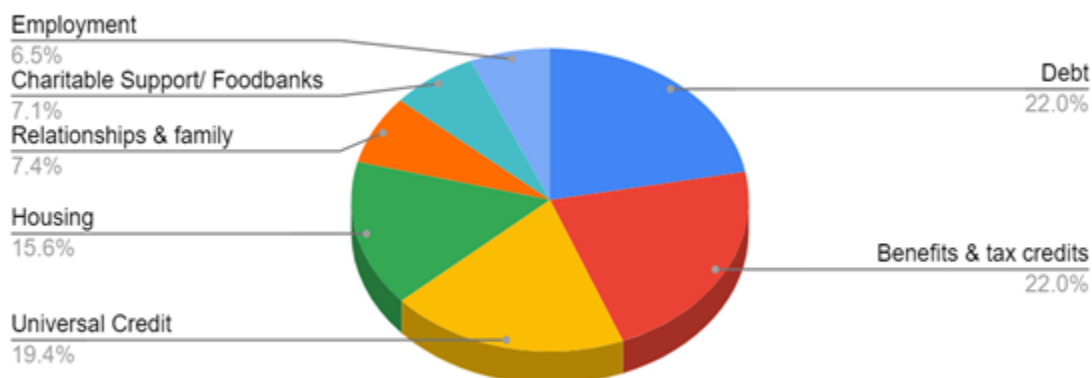
The reduced risk of Covid-19 has enabled a gradual return of staff and volunteers to the office and an increase in face to face advice provision. Nevertheless, the efficiencies of the remote service developed during the pandemic such as flexible working, increased online information and advice and remote working capabilities will be retained into the future.

Impact at a Glance

- Advised 4,967(5,490) people with 12,352 (11,250) issues
- Answered 4,547 (5,015) calls from Watford residents
- 2,441 (2,203) detailed advice appointments provided
- Helped 878 people by email
- Secured income gains of £1,094,091 (£544,269) for clients through benefit applications, appeals and hardship funds
- Helped write off £400,531 (£82,682) of client debt
- ** (last year)

The small decline in number of clients advised and telephone calls answered shows increasing number of issues and need for more detailed appointments. Clients demonstrated an increased need for advice with benefits and debt issues reflecting the impact of the increasing cost of living.

Top Client Issues 2021/22



National Citizens Advice continued to receive funding from the Department for Work and Pensions to run the Help to Claim service, supporting clients to set up initial Universal Credit claims. Watford Citizens Advice continued as a local office to participate in the project, being granted funds to do so, and all Help to Claim services operated by Watford Citizens Advice were provided according to the grant agreement. In addition, National Citizens Advice secured funding from the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) to increase the capacity of debt advice nationwide.

Large numbers in the UK and locally are experiencing the acute financial impact of the increased cost of living and struggling with income not covering outgoings. We are witnessing an increase in clients coming with fuel debts, needing food vouchers and being eligible for charitable support.

The Trustees are pleased to report that the Bureau has continued its volunteer recruitment and training program with 24 new volunteers being trained during the year.

Specialist legal advice is available for family and immigration issues. Expert Advice is available for Benefits, Debt, Employment and Housing issues.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

The Bureau continues to:

- Deliver high quality of advice to clients
- Promote good management practices
- Focus on increasing the number of people helped over the phone, email and face to face
- Take an active role in raising the profile of research and campaigns, and equality and diversity issues for Watford clients
- Build new partnerships and maintain existing ones to provide holistic advice and information services.

In recent surveys of clients advised by Watford Citizens Advice, 84% of respondents indicated that the Bureau had helped them to find a way forward with over 88% likely to recommend the service.

Projects

Projects undertaken by the Bureau during 2021/22 included:

- Continued delivery of additional support for clients for facing crisis via Crisis Intervention Project.
- Continued delivery of debt casework via Money and Pensions Service (MaPS)
- Specialist debt casework advice for Hertfordshire clients funded by Hertfordshire County Council
- Energy advice funded by National Citizens Advice
- Countywide training to 9 Hertfordshire Citizens Advice offices
- Successful implementation of email advice and remote working to maintain client needs
- Additional support for Disability Benefits claimants
- Successful implementation and delivery of Help to Claim project funded by DWP

Achievements of the volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of the service provided by Watford Citizens Advice, providing advice and information to the clients. All the volunteers are very generous with their time either working in the office or remotely. During the 2021-22 period, volunteers contributed an average of 200 hours per week of time.

The Bureau offers excellent training to staff and volunteers. Each volunteer adviser undergoes over 400 hours of training before becoming qualified to advise at a generalist level and additional training is required for specialist advisers.

Strategic report

The description under the headings "Achievements and Performance 2021- 22" and "Financial Review" meet the company law requirements for the Trustees to present a Strategic Report.

Financial review

The year ended 31 March 2022 saw income of £446,546 and expenditure of £441,821. Both the income and expenditure are lower than last year reflecting the end of some projects.

The funding environment is very challenging with a reduction in available funding in general, commissioning and increased competition. A number of new funders and projects are expected in the new financial year which will help to provide dedicated support for Debt issues. Some of the existing funding streams will also continue.

Next year's budget projects a deficit of approximately £13K for the 2022-23 period which includes a salary increase for the staff and increased national insurance contributions.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

Following an actuarial valuation during the year, the pension scheme liability fell by £28,251, this is reflected in the Statement of Financial Activities on page 9. This reduction is subject to future revaluations and could therefore be a temporary reduction in the scheme liability rather than a permanent reduction. As a result of the adjustment following the actuarial valuation and the amounts paid to the pension scheme during the year, the pension liability has decreased from £49,354 to £8,899.

At the year end, £407,544 was held as cash at bank, of which £35,479 related to restricted funds.

Principal Funding Sources

Watford Borough Council (WBC) remains the largest funder of the Bureau, providing 56% of income. WBC also provides premises as part of the annual grant.

In addition to this, the Bureau also received 20% of its income from Hertfordshire County Council for the Crisis Intervention project and specialist debt advice.

Investment Policy

The Articles of Association gives the Trustees power to invest or deposit funds in any lawful manner. The WBC grant is paid quarterly, and the Bureau has placed any surplus funds on deposit with its bank. In order to mitigate any losses should there be another banking crisis, the Bureau has set up Virgin Money and United Trust Bank Charity Accounts, which will hold on deposit funds within the level for financial compensation.

Reserves policy

The Trustees believe that the Bureau should hold financial reserves in order to ensure that it can continue to operate and meet the needs of clients and creditors in the event of unforeseen circumstances. The pension fund deficit is considered to be an operating expense and as such the liability for the pension fund is met out of current income.

Unrestricted reserves

The Trustees consider that it would be prudent to set aside at least 6 months operating expenditure; at 31 March 2022 this equates to some £212,611 compared to actual unrestricted reserves of £331,402.

Plans for Future Periods

The Trustees and Chief Officer agreed that the Bureau's Development Plan should be focused on

- strengthening the telephone service and increasing the percentage of calls answered
- increasing the numbers of volunteer advisers and gateway assessors to deal with the increased demand
- building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones
- delivering against the requirements of our core funding
- working to demonstrate adherence to new requirements introduced by Citizens Advice in its membership arrangements

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The Bureau is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association dated 23rd September 2010. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. Anyone over the age of 18 or any association with an interest in furthering the work of the Bureau can become a member of the Company. Each Trustee is also a member and there are currently 24 members, each of whom have agreed to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year are listed on the Administrative Information Page.

The directors of the Company are also trustees of the Bureau for the purposes of Charity law and under the Company's Articles are known as members of the Trustee Board. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association, elected Trustees serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting. Nominated or co-opted members may be elected or re-appointed after three years. Trustees have the power to co-opt members to fill specialist roles. Trustees nominated by WBC are subject to the appointment processes of that body and the guidelines on appointment to public office as they apply to local government nominees.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees attend an Induction Training, which gives them an outline of the Citizens Advice Services and its aims, principles and policies. Trustees are given introductory information and the new Trustees also spend time in the Bureau and have meetings with the specialist advisers, the Chief Officer and the Company Secretary. There are explanations of the role of a Trustee/Director, the Board, the development plan and issues including funding and client statistics. Trustees with interests in particular areas are encouraged to go on with further training. There are learning materials available for Trustees and these range from recruitment & selection to health & safety. Trustees are able to attend regional training events and are updated on governance issues as necessary. Trustees are asked to complete on annual basis online training in Information Assurance.

Organisation

The Trustee Board currently comprises the Chairman, Treasurer, Company Secretary, five Trustees and two Trustees representing WBC. The Trustee Board meets at least four times a year as well as having an annual Strategy Away day where the Trustee Board reviews the scope and value of services provided by the Bureau and its place in the local community and use that to make long-term decisions about the strategic direction. The Trustee Board has collective responsibility for governance and overall management of the Bureau, including risk management, direction and performance of the Bureau. The Trustee Board gives the Chief Officer duties and powers to represent and to manage the Bureau in accordance with the delegation of authorities and policies approved by the Trustee Board.

Related Parties

The Bureau is a member of National Citizens Advice Bureaux ("Citizens Advice"), which provides the Bureau with its Information System, Advisernet, and the case-recording system Casebook. Citizens Advice also provides IT support, specialist support and audits the Bureau for organisational performance and for quality of advice.

WBC provides the essential core funding for the Bureau and this includes premises costs. The Bureau is part of the Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service, which works in close partnership and makes joint bids for funding. The Bureau is a member of the local Voluntary Sector consortium Watford and Three Rivers Trust. The Bureau has links with local solicitors who offer pro-bono advice.

The Trustees Report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mr M. F. Siddiqi

Chairman

Dated: 8 November 2022

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these accounts, 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; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts 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.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (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 charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable 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 Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity 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 financial statements to be reached.



Gary Howard FCA

Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE

Dated: 9 November 2022

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Current financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
	Notes				
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>					
Donations and legacies	3	258,487	1,700	260,187	247,944
Advisory services	4	-	185,328	185,328	309,879
Investments	5	825	-	825	1,600
Other income	6	52	154	206	240
Total income		259,364	187,182	446,546	559,663
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Raising funds	7	41	-	41	-
Advisory services	8	258,948	182,832	441,780	423,522
Total expenditure		258,989	182,832	441,821	423,522
Net incoming resources before transfers		375	4,350	4,725	136,141
Gross transfers between funds		860	(860)	-	-
Net income for the year/ Net incoming resources		1,235	3,490	4,725	136,141
<u>Other recognised gains and losses</u>					
Actuarial gain on defined benefit pension schemes		28,251	-	28,251	-
Net movement in funds		29,486	3,490	32,976	136,141
Fund balances at 1 April 2021		294,637	31,989	326,626	190,485
Fund balances at 31 March 2022		324,123	35,479	359,602	326,626

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Prior financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £
	Notes			
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>				
Donations and legacies	3	245,875	2,069	247,944
Advisory services	4	9,871	300,008	309,879
Investments	5	1,600	-	1,600
Other income	6	150	90	240
Total income		257,496	302,167	559,663
<u>Expenditure on:</u>				
Advisory services	8	133,922	289,600	423,522
Total expenditure		133,922	289,600	423,522
Net incoming resources before transfers		123,574	12,567	136,141
Gross transfers between funds		(860)	860	-
Net income for the year/ Net incoming resources		122,714	13,427	136,141
Other recognised gains and losses				
Net movement in funds		122,714	13,427	136,141
Fund balances at 1 April 2020		171,923	18,562	190,485
Fund balances at 31 March 2021		294,637	31,989	326,626

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	£	2021 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		4,632		-
Current assets					
Debtors	12	9,261		17,483	
Cash at bank and in hand		407,544		422,149	
		<u>416,805</u>		<u>439,632</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(52,936)</u>		<u>(63,652)</u>	
Net current assets			363,869		375,980
Total assets less current liabilities			368,501		375,980
Provisions for liabilities	13		<u>(8,899)</u>		<u>(49,354)</u>
Net assets			<u>359,602</u>		<u>326,626</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	17		35,479		31,989
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
General unrestricted funds		333,022		343,991	
Pension reserve		<u>(8,899)</u>		<u>(49,354)</u>	
			324,123		294,637
			<u>359,602</u>		<u>326,626</u>

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

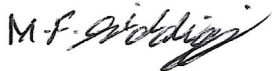
The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 8 November 2022



Mr M. F. Siddiqi
Trustee



Dr P. W. Carter
Trustee

Company Registration No. 05453262

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is St Mary's Churchyard, High Street, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 2BE.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual and performance related arrangements are recognised as goods or services are supplied. Expenditure includes any non-recoverable VAT.

Expenditure is allocated to activities as follows:

Charitable activities comprise costs which relate directly to delivering activities.

Governance comprises of costs which relate directly to governance arrangements and meeting statutory requirements.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and machinery	straight line over 3 years
---------------------	----------------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

It is the policy of the charity not to capitalise individual assets costing under £1,000.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

There are some employees who are members of the Pensions Trust's Growth Plan which is a multiemployer pension Plan. The charitable company is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. It is therefore accounted for on a defined contribution basis. The annual contributions payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities. Further information concerning the Plan is given at note 15.

The net interest element is determined by multiplying the net defined benefit liability by the discount rate, taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments. The net interest is recognised in income/(expenditure) for the year.

Remeasurement changes comprise actuarial gains and losses, the effect of the asset ceiling and the return on the net defined benefit liability excluding amounts included in net interest. These are recognised immediately in other recognised gains and losses in the period in which they occur and are not reclassified to income/(expenditure) in subsequent periods.

The net defined benefit pension asset or liability in the balance sheet comprises the total for each plan of the present value of the defined benefit obligation (using a discount rate based on high quality corporate bonds), less the fair value of plan assets out of which the obligations are to be settled directly. Fair value is based on market price information, and in the case of quoted securities is the published bid price. The value of a net pension benefit asset is limited to the amount that may be recovered either through reduced contributions or agreed refunds from the scheme.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.12 Creditors and provisions

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2022 £	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £	2021 £
Donations and gifts	6,661	1,700	8,361	2,185	2,069	4,254
Grants receivable for core activities	251,826	-	251,826	243,690	-	243,690
	<u>258,487</u>	<u>1,700</u>	<u>260,187</u>	<u>245,875</u>	<u>2,069</u>	<u>247,944</u>
Grants receivable for core activities						
Watford Council Direct Grant	204,190	-	204,190	204,190	-	204,190
Watford Council Premises	39,500	-	39,500	39,500	-	39,500
Tesco	1,000	-	1,000	-	-	-
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	2,000	-	2,000	-	-	-
Citizens Advice Bureau	5,136	-	5,136	-	-	-
	<u>251,826</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>251,826</u>	<u>243,690</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>243,690</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

4 Advisory services

	Advisory services 2022 £	Advisory services 2021 £
Sales within charitable activities	-	17,325
Performance related grants	185,328	292,554
	<u>185,328</u>	<u>309,879</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	-	9,871
Restricted funds	185,328	300,008
	<u>185,328</u>	<u>300,008</u>
Performance related grants		
The Clothworkers Foundation	-	4,850
Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service	46,866	58,618
Citizens Advice Bureau - National and Local	128,416	114,775
New Hope Watford	-	32,834
The Lawton Trust	-	1,289
Community Fund	-	10,000
Access to Justice - Community Justice Fund	-	44,141
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	-	17,000
Watford Health Trust	2,432	1,345
Other	7,614	7,702
	<u>185,328</u>	<u>292,554</u>

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £
Interest receivable	825	1,600
	<u>825</u>	<u>1,600</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

6 Other income

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2022 £	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £	2021 £
Other income	52	154	206	150	90	240
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

7 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds	Total
	2022 £	2021 £
<u>Costs of generating voluntary income</u>		
Advertising	41	-
	=====	=====
	41	-
	=====	=====

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

8 Advisory services

	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs	324,141	303,559
Depreciation and impairment	2,316	1,503
Other staff costs	228	1,076
Training	10,344	13,409
Project costs	-	8,430
Premises costs	59,543	39,500
Insurance	1,819	1,832
Repairs	704	432
Office costs	20,723	23,468
Computer costs	9,342	21,562
Travel expenses	4,027	1,179
General costs	3,457	3,549
Legal and professional costs	2,806	2,627
Bank charges and other finance costs	382	69
Governance costs	1,948	1,327
	<u>441,780</u>	<u>423,522</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	258,948	
Restricted funds	182,832	
	<u>441,780</u>	
For the year ended 31 March 2021		
Unrestricted funds		133,922
Restricted funds		289,600
		<u>423,522</u>

Governance costs comprise of independent examiner's fees £1,320 (2021: £1,320) and AGM costs £628 (2021: £7).

9 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year, but 1 of them was reimbursed a total of £202 for miscellaneous expenses incurred on behalf of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

10 Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2022 Number	2021 Number
Advice services	13	12
Management and administration	2	2
	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>

Employment costs

	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	287,235	271,190
Social security costs	19,593	17,457
Other pension costs	17,313	14,912
	<u>324,141</u>	<u>303,559</u>

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and machinery £
Cost	
At 1 April 2021	21,981
Additions	6,948
	<u>28,929</u>
At 31 March 2022	
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2021	21,981
Depreciation charged in the year	2,316
	<u>24,297</u>
At 31 March 2022	
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2022	4,632
	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2021	-

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

12 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Other debtors	7,119	14,735
Prepayments and accrued income	2,142	2,748
	<u>9,261</u>	<u>17,483</u>

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Other taxation and social security		-	6,223
Deferred income	15	25,376	51,048
Trade creditors		399	456
Other creditors		4,009	4,198
Accruals and deferred income		23,152	1,727
		<u>52,936</u>	<u>63,652</u>

14 Provisions for liabilities

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Retirement benefit obligations	16	8,899	49,354
		<u>8,899</u>	<u>49,354</u>

15 Deferred income

	2022 £	2021 £
Other deferred income	25,376	51,048

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	25,376	51,048

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

16 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The company participates in the scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 950 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out at 30 September 2017. This valuation showed assets of £794.9m, liabilities of £926.4m and a deficit of £131.5m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee has asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2025:	£11,243,000 per annum
(payable monthly and increasing by 3% each on 1st April)	

The recovery plan contributions are allocated to each participating employer in line with their estimated share of the Series 1 and Series 2 scheme liabilities.

Where the scheme is in deficit and where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement the company recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The present value is calculated using the discount rate detailed in these disclosures. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

16 Retirement benefit schemes

(Continued)

	31 March 2022 (£s)	31 March 2021 (£s)	31 March 2020 (£s)
Present value of provision	8,899	49,354	58,478
Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions	Period Ended 31 March 2022 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2021 (£s)	
Provision at start of period	49,354	58,478	
Unwinding of the discount factor (interest expense)	285	1,314	
Deficit contribution paid	(12,489)	(12,126)	
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions	(205)	1,688	
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule	(28,046)	-	
Provision at end of period	8,899	49,354	
Income and Expenditure Impact	Period Ended 31 March 2022 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2021 (£s)	
Interest expense	285	1,314	
Remeasurements – impact of any change in assumptions	(205)	1,688	
Remeasurements – amendments to the contribution schedule	(28,046)	-	
Assumptions	31 March 2022 % per annum	31 March 2021 % per annum	31 March 2020 % per annum
Rate of discount	2.35	0.66	2.53

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates which, when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results as using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.

The pension charge for the year was £17,313 (2021: £14,911).

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

17 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds					Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Client Funds	6,030	3,965	(8,430)	-	1,565	4,380	(3,275)	-	2,670
Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme	-	42,298	(42,298)	-	-	44,468	(29,443)	-	15,025
Energy Advice and Best Deal Extra	250	-	(250)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disability Benefits Service	1,666	7,500	(9,166)	-	-	10,833	(9,682)	-	1,151
Rough Sleeping Prevention Project	8,200	32,834	(37,672)	-	3,362	-	(3,362)	-	-
Scams Advice	-	24,459	(24,459)	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Clothworkers Foundation	-	4,850	(4,850)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Volunteer Training Programme	832	-	(832)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hertfordshire Community Training Project	1,348	19,333	(11,519)	-	9,162	9,996	(6,662)	-	12,496
Community Justice Fund	-	44,141	(42,641)	-	1,500	-	(1,500)	-	-
Homeworking Initiative	-	37,000	(24,350)	-	12,650	-	(12,650)	-	-
The HERT project	-	22,500	(18,750)	-	3,750	38,320	(38,318)	-	3,752
The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS)	-	23,663	(23,663)	-	-	38,218	(38,218)	-	-
Help to Claim	-	18,337	(18,337)	-	-	12,480	(12,480)	-	-
Other	236	21,287	(22,383)	860	-	28,487	(27,242)	(860)	385
	<u>18,562</u>	<u>302,167</u>	<u>(289,600)</u>	<u>860</u>	<u>31,989</u>	<u>187,182</u>	<u>(182,832)</u>	<u>(860)</u>	<u>35,479</u>

Client Funds is funding received to assist clients purchase items of household equipment.

Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme is funding to provide advice and guidance to clients in extreme hardship situations, to reduce debt and increase income.

Energy Advice and Best Deal Extra are projects whose aim is to eradicate fuel poverty.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

17 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Disability Benefits Service is funding from Blandford Trust towards the cost of the service.

Rough Sleeping Prevention Project is funding from New Hope, Watford towards the cost of the project.

Scams Advice - As part of Hertfordshire Scams Support and Prevention this project is funded by Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner. We are delivering scams advice and training sessions to clients and frontline workers.

The Clothworkers' Foundation - Funding received to upgrade our IT hardware to improve productivity and to improve information assurance in the office.

Volunteer Training Programme - Funding from the National Lottery fund used to recruit, train, support and supervise new and existing volunteers to deliver information and advice to people in Watford affected by Covid-19.

Hertfordshire Community Training Project - We received funding from the National Lottery Fund to train staff and volunteers based across Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services.

Community Justice Fund is a grant from The Access to Justice Foundation to recruit a welfare benefits caseworker to mitigate the loss of volunteer capacity and meet the expected post lockdown surge in demand.

Homeworking Initiative is funding from Hertfordshire Community Foundation, Hertfordshire County Council and The National Lottery Community Fund to allow remote working for staff and volunteers and increase staff levels to meet the demand during lockdown.

The HERT project is funded by Hertfordshire County Council to provide benefits and debt advice to Primary Care Network (PCN) Link Workers, Community Navigators and Social Prescribers in Hertfordshire. The project is run by The Money Advice Unit (MAU) and Citizens Advice Hertfordshire (Hertsmere and Watford). MAU provide benefit advice with Citizens Advice Hertsmere and Watford providing debt advice.

Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) is funding secured by the National Citizens Advice to increase the capacity of debt advice nationwide.

Help to Claim is a project which offers support to clients setting up new claims for Universal Credit.

Other represents other smaller restricted funds.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2022 are represented by:				
Tangible assets	4,632	-	4,632	-
Current assets/(liabilities)	328,390	35,479	363,869	375,980
Provisions and pensions	(8,899)	-	(8,899)	(49,354)
	<u>324,123</u>	<u>35,479</u>	<u>359,602</u>	<u>326,626</u>

19 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2021 - none).

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

England & Wales - Charity number 1109872

Accounts

Charity Registration No. 1109872

Company Registration No. 05453262 (England and Wales)

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mr Abayomi Akisanya	
Elected Members	Mr Laurence Blake	
	Mr Richard Boulton	(appointed 06 April 2021)
	Dr Pui Wah Carter	
	Ms Meera Lachani	
	Ms Ntombizifikile Mkoyana	(resigned 04 January 2021)
	Ms Leena Nagrecha	
	Ms Danielle Sherman	(appointed 06 April 2021)
	Mr Farrukh Siddiqi	
	Mr Anthony Swabe	(appointed 06 April 2021)
	Ms Gail Tendler	(resigned 19 November 2020)
Co-opted Members	Mr George Derbyshire	Representing Watford Borough Council
	Cllr Stephen Bolton	Representing Watford Borough Council (resigned 26 May 2021)
Non trustee representative members	Mr Jamie Normanton	Representing volunteers
	Ms Kalpna Budhdeo	Representing paid staff

The representative members have observer status at Trustee Board meetings.

Honorary Officers

Chairman	Mr Farrukh Siddiqi
Treasurer	Dr Pui Wah Carter
Company Secretary	Ms Leena Nagrecha

Principal Staff

Chief Officer	Ms Emma Burgham	(appointed 17 May 2021)
	Mr Salim Bakirci	(resigned 09 April 2021)
Advice Service Manager	Ms Catherine Markowski	
	Ms Kalpna Budhdeo	

Charity number 1109872

Company number 05453262

Principal address St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered office St Mary's Churchyard
High Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 2BE

Independent examiner Gary Howard FCA
Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE

Bankers CAF Bank
25 Kings Hill Avenue
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

Virgin Money
Jubilee House
Gosforth
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE3 4PL

United Trust Bank Limited
One Ropemaker Street
London
EC2Y 9AW

Solicitors Bates, Wells & Braithwaite
2-6 Cannon Street
London
EC4M 6YH

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

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WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The Trustee Board have pleasure in presenting its annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 for Watford Citizens Advice Bureau ("the Bureau" or "the Company").

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

The Bureau is a registered charity funded by local grants and donations. The Bureau is also a member of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux ("Citizens Advice") and is subject to regular quality audits as part of its membership requirements. The Bureau shares key aims of Citizens Advice:

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

The objectives of the Bureau are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of principally the community in the Borough of Watford by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress.

The Trustees have given consideration to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission in respect of public benefit in respect of all its activities.

The Bureau's service is independent and it provides free, confidential and impartial advice to everybody regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality. The Bureau values and recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination both within the organisation and when encountered in the communities we serve. In all our work, the Bureau seeks to act in accordance with Citizens Advice core values, which comprise:

- a focus on customers;
- achieving results;
- continuously improving;
- promoting equality and fairness;
- valuing each other; and
- working together.

The strategic objectives for the three-year period of the Business Development Plan are:

- 1 To provide, throughout the period of the plan, a good generalist advice service to those who reside or work in Watford so that individuals do not suffer either because they do not know their rights or cannot express their needs and so that they are empowered through the information and guidance they receive to manage their own affairs more effectively.
- 2 To maintain core resources sufficient to deliver a good advice service and obtain new funding where necessary to deliver new projects.
- 3 To maintain the national standards of the Citizens Advice, providing advice, which is at all times independent, confidential, free and impartial and meets their quality requirements.
- 4 To improve access to advice for all sectors of the community by increasing the number of volunteers and volunteer roles.
- 5 To maintain our research and campaigns work to improve the lives of Watford residents affected by local and national policies.
- 6 To continue to value diversity and to challenge discrimination.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

The activities of the Bureau continue to be advising the individual client and engaging in research and campaigns work. By advising clients, the Bureau ensures that individuals do not suffer through a lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, or of the services available to them, or through an inability to express their needs effectively. The Bureau exercises a responsible influence on the development of research and campaigns, both locally and nationally. The Bureau is the only agency in Watford providing Quality Mark advice at the Generalist Help level in Benefits, Consumer, Debt, Education, Employment, Health, Housing, Immigration, Legal, Relationships, Tax, Travel and on Utilities.

The main area of the charitable activity is providing advice. Generalist advice is offered by volunteer and paid staff. Paid caseworkers provide specialist advice on debt, benefits and housing advice issues. Along with other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services, we have access to a British Sign Language (BSL) adviser funded via Hertfordshire County Council. The Bureau is a referral agency for the Free Representation Unit whereby solicitors represent clients at Tribunals and court hearings on a pro bono basis.

Face-to-face advice was available at the Bureau's office situated in the Advice Centre, which was closed for most of the year in accordance with Government Covid-19 guidance. Telephone advice is provided by advisors in partnership with nine other Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services. Watford residents can access information and advice via a web chat portal provided by Citizens Advice on the Citizens Advice webpage or contact Watford Citizens Advice via email. There is free Internet access for clients from tablet computers in the reception area, providing access to the Citizens Advice website, other key advice sites and local information.

The Bureau is involved in the community and participates at local events. Our volunteers form the backbone of advice services and administration work at the Bureau and volunteer Trustees are responsible for governing the organisation. Generalist advisers, gateway assessors, administration workers, receptionists, and project workers make up the bulk of the Bureau's workforce.

Major Risks

The Bureau maintains a risk register which is agreed by the Trustee Board. The Trustee Board assesses the major risks to which the Bureau may be exposed. These include operational, financial, regulatory, external and governance risks. The Trustees recognise that any major risks to which the Bureau is exposed need to be reviewed and systems put in place to mitigate those risks. To that end, the risk register is continually monitored by the Chief Officer to manage the risks and to ensure that appropriate action plans are in place to mitigate its key risks.

The Bureau has a balanced approach to risk management and adopts an active process to the mitigation of risk. The most significant risks faced by the Bureau have been identified by the Trustee Board and relate to the following:

- Maintaining volunteer recruitment at a level that keeps pace with turnover and enables the delivery of our strategic objectives
- Servicing an increased demand for Benefits, Immigration, Employment and Debt advice arising from welfare reform, Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Income sustainability in a highly competitive environment with ongoing pressures on public funding.
- The Covid-19 pandemic's impact on service delivery, and particularly face to face advice, on volunteers' and staff's health and wellbeing, and on partners and funders.

As part of its risk management policy the Board has established three sub-committees – Finance & Risk, Governance and Remuneration - which will meet regularly and report to the Board on their areas of responsibility.

The Trustees are confident that, in response to the Covid-19 outbreak, the Bureau is taking all actions necessary to continue to provide our services as best we can, while protecting the safety of our users, staff and volunteers.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

The Trustees remain satisfied that all insurable risks have been identified and adequately dealt with and that the Bureau's exposure to other risks is kept at a minimum by good working practice by the management team, paid staff and volunteers.

Achievements and performance

The year ended 31 March 2021 was an unprecedented year due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and our free, impartial and confidential advice was more important than ever. Our offices were closed for most part of the year and a large proportion of our advisors continued to work remotely providing advice via telephone and introducing email support.

Despite the significant reduction in drop-in and face to face appointments, our staff and volunteers advised a total of 5,494 clients and assisted with 11,256 issues. The number of clients advised on telephone almost doubled to 4,243 and 1,925 email interactions with clients took place during the year. A total of 2,203 appointments were conducted assisting clients with their more in-depth issues.

The needs of local community changed last year due to the pandemic. Clients demonstrated an increased need for advice relating to employment, housing and benefits reflecting the impact of the various measures introduced by the Government.

Benefits advice accounted for 34% of all client issues, dominated by providing help on Universal Credit. This involved checking the current position of a client, helping them to make a claim, managing the claim's progress through the multi-agencies and complex central and local government systems, and through the tribunal appeal process.

National Citizens Advice received funding from the Department for Work and Pensions to run Help to Claim, a project which offered support to clients setting up new claims for Universal Credit. Watford Citizens Advice continued as a local office to participate in the project and helped 606 clients with their Universal Credits claims and provided services according to the grant agreement.

Large numbers of people in the UK are experiencing the financial impact of Covid-19 with many having lost work, being ineligible for furlough schemes, or struggling with reduced income and/or welfare benefits not covering outgoings. The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) predicts that by the end of 2021 demand for debt help will increase by 60% to 8 million people. A significant increase in personal debt, benefits, housing and employment is expected and the Trustees of Watford Citizens Advice have agreed to retain current staff levels to manage this demand.

The Trustees are pleased to report that, despite the offices being closed for a large part of year due to Covid-19 government restrictions, the Bureau has continued its volunteer recruitment and training program with 15 new volunteers being trained during the year remotely.

The Bureau continues to:

- Maintain focus on high quality advice to clients
- Focus on good management practices
- Increase the number of people helped over the phone and face to face
- To take an active role in raising the profile of Research and Campaigns, and Equality and Diversity issues for Watford clients.
- Build new partnerships and maintain existing ones to provide holistic advice and information services.

In a recent survey of clients advised by Watford Citizens Advice, 85% of respondents indicated that the Bureau had helped them to find a way forward with over 88% very likely to recommend the service.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Projects and Achievements

Projects undertaken by the Bureau during 2020/21 included:

- Continued delivery of additional support for clients for facing crisis via Crisis Intervention Project.
- Continued delivery of Scams Advice project.
- Continued delivery of Rough Sleeping Intervention project.
- Successful implementation of email advice and remote working to maintain client support during office closure due to Covid-19.
- Additional support for Disability Benefits claimants via dedicated caseworkers.
- Successful implementation and delivery of Help to Claim project funded by Citizens Advice to deliver the Help to Claim service from April 2020 - March 2021 across Watford and provide Universal Credit advice face to face, via webchat, and on the national HTC line.

Achievements of the volunteers

The Bureau offers excellent training to staff and volunteers. Each volunteer adviser undergoes over 400 hours of training before becoming qualified to advise at a generalist level and additional training is required for specialist advisers.

Strategic report

The description under the headings "Achievements and performance" and "Financial review" meet the company law requirements for the trustees to present a strategic report.

Financial review

The year ended 31 March 2021 saw £559,663 in income, an increase of £120,116 on the previous year. This favorable position is largely the result of the generosity of Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Community Fund, Community Justice Fund and National Lottery who provided unbudgeted income to cover the additional expenses incurred due to Covid-19. Next year's budget projects a deficit of approximately £90,000 which will enable us to maintain current staffing levels but would reduce unrestricted reserves to very close to policy. It is expected that existing funding streams will be maintained.

The operational expenditure in 2020/21 also increased by £48,809 to £423,522. The main driver of this was an increase in employment costs due to an increase in the number of paid staff to cater for remote working and continuation of advice services. A small pay increase was also awarded to the paid staff.

At the year end, £422,149 was held as cash at bank, of which £31,989 related to restricted funds.

Principal Funding Sources

Watford Borough Council (WBC) is and has always been the largest funder of the Bureau. WBC also provides premises as part of the annual grant.

In addition to this, the Bureau has also received about 7% of its income from Hertfordshire County Council for the Crisis Intervention project and further 8% from Community Justice Foundation for dedicated Disability Benefits caseworkers.

Investment Policy

The Articles of Association gives the Trustees power to invest or deposit funds in any lawful manner. The WBC grant is paid quarterly, and the Bureau has placed any surplus funds on deposit with its bank. In order to mitigate any losses should there be another banking crisis, the Bureau has set up Virgin Money and United Trust Bank Charity Accounts, which will hold on deposit funds within the level for financial compensation.

Reserves policy

The Trustees believe that the Bureau should hold financial reserves in order to ensure that it can continue to operate and meet the needs of clients and creditors in the event of unforeseen circumstances. The pension fund deficit is considered to be an operating expense and as such the liability for the pension fund is met out of current income.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

Unrestricted reserves

The Trustees consider that it would be prudent to set aside at least 6 months operating expenditure; at 31 March 2021 this equates to some £212,000 compared to actual unrestricted reserves of £294,637.

Plans for Future Periods

The Trustees and Chief Officer agreed that the Bureau's Development Plan should be focused on

- Strengthening the telephone service and increasing the percentage of calls answered
- Increasing the numbers of volunteer advisers and gateway assessors to deal with the increased demand
- Building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones
- Delivering against the requirements of our core funding
- Working to demonstrate adherence to new requirements introduced by Citizens Advice in its membership arrangements
- Safely opening the office and outreach locations when possible to restart face-to-face and drop-in advice

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The Bureau is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association dated 23rd September 2010. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. Anyone over the age of 18 or any association with an interest in furthering the work of the Bureau can become a member of the Company. Each Trustee is also a member and there are currently 23 members, each of whom have agreed to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year are listed on the Administrative Information Page.

The directors of the Company are also trustees of the Bureau for the purposes of Charity law and under the Company's Articles are known as members of the Trustee Board. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association, elected Trustees serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting. Nominated or co-opted members may be elected or re-appointed after three years. Trustees have the power to co-opt members to fill specialist roles. Trustees nominated by WBC are subject to the appointment processes of that body and the guidelines on appointment to public office as they apply to local government nominees.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees attend an Introductory Day, which gives them an outline of the Citizens Advice Services and its aims, principles and policies. Trustees are given an Introductory Pack and the new Trustees will also spend time in the Bureau experiencing reception, and have meetings with the specialist advisers, the Chief Officer and the Company Secretary. There are explanations of the role of a Trustee/Director, the Board, the development plan and issues including funding and client statistics. Trustees with interests in particular areas are encouraged to go on further training. There are learning materials available for Trustees and these range from recruitment & selection to health & safety. Trustees are able to attend regional training events and are updated on governance issues as necessary. Trustees are asked to complete online training in Information Assurance on an annual basis.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

Organisation

The Trustee Board currently comprises the Chairman, Treasurer, Company Secretary, six Trustees and two Trustees representing WBC. During the year, two Trustees resigned on 19th November 2020 and 4th January 2021 and three new Trustees were appointed on 6 April 2021. One of the co-opted Trustees, a nominee appointed by the WBC, retired on 26 May 2021. The Trustee Board meets at least four times a year as well as having an annual Strategy Away day where the Trustee Board reviews the scope and value of services provided by the Bureau and its place in the local community, and uses that to make long-term decisions about strategic direction. The Trustee Board has collective responsibility for governance and overall management of the Bureau, including risk management, direction and performance of the Bureau. The Trustee Board gives the Chief Officer duties and powers to represent and to manage the Bureau in accordance with the delegation of authorities and policies approved by the Trustee Board. The Trustee Board appointed Emma Burgham as Chief Officer with effect from 18 May 2021, replacing Salim Backirci who left the Bureau on 12 April 2021.

Related Parties

The Bureau is a member of National Citizens Advice Bureaux ("Citizens Advice"), which provides the Bureau with its Information System, Advisernet, and the case-recording system Casebook. Citizens Advice also provides IT support, specialist support and audits the Bureau for organisational performance and for quality of advice.

WBC provides the essential core funding for the Bureau which includes premises costs. The Bureau is part of the Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service, which works in close partnership and makes joint bids for funding. The Bureau is a member of the local Voluntary Sector consortium Watford and Three Rivers Trust. The Bureau has links with local solicitors who offer pro-bono advice.

The Trustees Report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mr M. F. Siddiqi

Chairman

Dated: 26 October 2021

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these accounts, 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; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts 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.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (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 charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable 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 Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity 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 financial statements to be reached.



Gary Howard FCA

Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants
36 Crown Rise
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD25 0NE

Dated: 1 November 2021

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Current financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
	Notes				
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>					
Donations and legacies	3	245,875	2,069	247,944	261,657
Advisory services	4	9,871	300,008	309,879	175,041
Investments	5	1,600	-	1,600	1,911
Other income	6	150	90	240	938
Total income		257,496	302,167	559,663	439,547
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Advisory services	7	133,922	289,600	423,522	374,713
Net incoming resources before transfers		123,574	12,567	136,141	64,834
Gross transfers between funds		(860)	860	-	-
Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds		122,714	13,427	136,141	64,834
Fund balances at 1 April 2020		171,923	18,562	190,485	125,651
Fund balances at 31 March 2021		294,637	31,989	326,626	190,485

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Prior financial year

		Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
	Notes			
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>				
Donations and legacies	3	261,642	15	261,657
Advisory services	4	7,577	167,464	175,041
Investments	5	1,911	-	1,911
Other income	6	760	178	938
Total income		271,890	167,657	439,547
<u>Expenditure on:</u>				
Advisory services	7	213,731	160,982	374,713
Net incoming resources before transfers		58,159	6,675	64,834
Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds		58,159	6,675	64,834
Fund balances at 1 April 2019		113,764	11,887	125,651
Fund balances at 31 March 2020		171,923	18,562	190,485

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	£	2020 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10		-		1,504
Current assets					
Debtors	11	17,483		23,476	
Cash at bank and in hand		422,149		236,269	
		<u>439,632</u>		<u>259,745</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(63,652)		(12,286)	
Net current assets			375,980		247,459
Total assets less current liabilities			375,980		248,963
Provisions for liabilities	13		(49,354)		(58,478)
Net assets			<u>326,626</u>		<u>190,485</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	16		31,989		18,562
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
General unrestricted funds		343,991		230,401	
Pension reserve		<u>(49,354)</u>		<u>(58,478)</u>	
			294,637		171,923
			<u>326,626</u>		<u>190,485</u>

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 26 October 2021



Mr M. F. Siddiqi
Trustee



Dr P. W. Carter
Trustee

Company Registration No. 05453262

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	£	2020 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	19		184,280		35,643
Investing activities					
Investment income received		1,600		1,911	
Net cash generated from investing activities			1,600		1,911
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			185,880		37,554
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			236,269		198,715
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			422,149		236,269

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Watford Citizens Advice Bureau is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is St Mary's Churchyard, High Street, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 2BE.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, despite the ongoing and potential effects of COVID-19, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements and no adjustments to the results or the carrying values declared in these financial statements are required, and none have been made.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual and performance related arrangements are recognised as goods or services are supplied. Expenditure includes any non-recoverable VAT.

Expenditure is allocated to activities as follows:

Charitable activities comprise costs which relate directly to delivering activities.

Governance comprises of costs which relate directly to governance arrangements and meeting statutory requirements.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and machinery	straight line over 3 years
---------------------	----------------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

It is the policy of the charity not to capitalise individual assets costing under £1,000.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

There are some employees who are members of the Pensions Trust's Growth Plan which is a multiemployer pension Plan. The charitable company is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. It is therefore accounted for on a defined contribution basis. The annual contributions payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities. Further information concerning the Plan is given at note 15.

The net interest element is determined by multiplying the net defined benefit liability by the discount rate, taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments. The net interest is recognised in income/(expenditure) for the year.

Remeasurement changes comprise actuarial gains and losses, the effect of the asset ceiling and the return on the net defined benefit liability excluding amounts included in net interest. These are recognised immediately in other recognised gains and losses in the period in which they occur and are not reclassified to income/(expenditure) in subsequent periods.

The net defined benefit pension asset or liability in the balance sheet comprises the total for each plan of the present value of the defined benefit obligation (using a discount rate based on high quality corporate bonds), less the fair value of plan assets out of which the obligations are to be settled directly. Fair value is based on market price information, and in the case of quoted securities is the published bid price. The value of a net pension benefit asset is limited to the amount that may be recovered either through reduced contributions or agreed refunds from the scheme.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.12 Creditors and provisions

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2021 £	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £	2020 £
Donations and gifts	2,185	2,069	4,254	1,706	15	1,721
Grants receivable for core activities	243,690	-	243,690	259,936	-	259,936
	<u>245,875</u>	<u>2,069</u>	<u>247,944</u>	<u>261,642</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>261,657</u>
Grants receivable for core activities						
Watford Council Direct Grant	204,190	-	204,190	204,190	-	204,190
Watford Council Premises	39,500	-	39,500	39,500	-	39,500
Other	-	-	-	16,246	-	16,246
	<u>243,690</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>243,690</u>	<u>259,936</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>259,936</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

4 Advisory services

	Advisory services 2021 £	Advisory services 2020 £
Sales within charitable activities	17,325	10,075
Performance related grants	292,554	164,966
	<u>309,879</u>	<u>175,041</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	9,871	7,577
Restricted funds	300,008	167,464
	<u>309,879</u>	<u>175,041</u>
Performance related grants		
The Clothworkers Foundation	4,850	21,500
Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service	58,618	47,947
Citizens Advice Bureau - National and Local	114,775	33,093
New Hope Watford	32,834	32,834
The Lawton Trust	1,289	5,374
Community Fund	10,000	9,989
Universal Credit	-	5,004
Access to Justice - Community Justice Fund	44,141	-
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	17,000	-
Watford Health Trust	1,345	8,324
Other	7,702	901
	<u>292,554</u>	<u>164,966</u>

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £
Interest receivable	<u>1,600</u>	<u>1,911</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

6 Other income

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2021 £	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £	2020 £
Other income	150	90	240	760	178	938

7 Advisory services

	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs	303,559	236,335
Depreciation and impairment	1,503	1,991
Other staff costs	1,076	513
Training	13,409	8,758
Project costs	8,430	10,135
Premises costs	39,500	39,500
Insurance	1,832	1,722
Repairs	432	5,036
Office costs	23,468	22,016
Computer costs	21,562	29,712
Travel expenses	1,179	11,172
General costs	3,549	2,031
Legal and professional costs	2,627	3,494
Bank charges and other finance costs	69	60
Governance costs	1,327	2,238
	<u>423,522</u>	<u>374,713</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	133,922	
Restricted funds	289,600	
	<u>423,522</u>	
For the year ended 31 March 2020		
Unrestricted funds		213,731
Restricted funds		160,982
		<u>374,713</u>

Governance costs comprise of independent examiner's fees £1,320 (2020: £1,320) and AGM costs £7 (2020: £918).

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

8 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

9 Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2021 Number	2020 Number
Advice services	12	9
Management and administration	2	2
	<u>14</u>	<u>11</u>

Employment costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	271,190	211,423
Social security costs	17,457	13,741
Other pension costs	14,912	11,171
	<u>303,559</u>	<u>236,335</u>

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and machinery £
Cost	
At 1 April 2020	21,981
At 31 March 2021	<u>21,981</u>
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2020	21,981
At 31 March 2021	<u>21,981</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2021	-
At 31 March 2020	<u>1,504</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

11 Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	-	17,805
Other debtors	14,735	3,053
Prepayments and accrued income	2,748	2,618
	<u>17,483</u>	<u>23,476</u>

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2021	2020
		£	£
Other taxation and social security		6,223	4,130
Deferred income	14	51,048	-
Trade creditors		456	2,955
Other creditors		4,198	3,446
Accruals and deferred income		1,727	1,755
		<u>63,652</u>	<u>12,286</u>

13 Provisions for liabilities

	Notes	2021	2020
		£	£
Retirement benefit obligations	15	49,354	58,478
		<u>49,354</u>	<u>58,478</u>

14 Deferred income

	2021	2020
	£	£
Other deferred income	<u>51,048</u>	<u>-</u>

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

15 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The company participates in the scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 950 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out at 30 September 2017. This valuation showed assets of £794.9m, liabilities of £926.4m and a deficit of £131.5m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee has asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2025: (payable monthly and increasing by 3% each on 1st April)	£12,945,440 per annum
From 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2028: (payable monthly and increasing by 3% each on 1st April)	£54,560 per annum

The recovery plan contributions are allocated to each participating employer in line with their estimated share of the Series 1 and Series 2 scheme liabilities.

Where the scheme is in deficit and where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement the company recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The present value is calculated using the discount rate detailed in these disclosures. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

15 Retirement benefit schemes

(Continued)

	31 March 2021 (£s)	31 March 2020 (£s)	31 March 2019 (£s)
Present value of provision	49,354	58,478	70,939
Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions		Period Ended 31 March 2021 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2020 (£s)
Provision at start of period		58,478	70,939
Unwinding of the discount factor (interest expense)		1,314	898
Deficit contribution paid		(12,126)	(11,773)
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions		1,688	(1,586)
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule		-	-
Provision at end of period		49,354	58,478
Income and Expenditure Impact		Period Ended 31 March 2021 (£s)	Period Ended 31 March 2020 (£s)
Interest expense		1,314	898
Remeasurements – impact of any change in assumptions		1,688	(1,586)
Remeasurements – amendments to the contribution schedule		-	-
Assumptions	31 March 2021 % per annum	31 March 2020 % per annum	31 March 2019 % per annum
Rate of discount	2.53	2.53	1.39

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates which, when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results as using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.

The pension charge for the year was £12,126 (2020: £11,171).

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

16 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	Movement in funds			Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Movement in funds			Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
		Incoming resources £	Resources expended £			Incoming resources £	Resources expended £		£	£
Client Funds	1,962	14,203	(10,135)	6,030	3,965	(8,430)	-	1,565		
Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme	-	25,947	(25,947)	-	42,298	(42,298)	-	-		
Energy Advice and Best Deal Extra	650	6,165	(6,565)	250	-	(250)	-	-		
Universal Credit - Help to Claim	-	22,521	(22,521)	-	-	-	-	-		
Disability Benefits Service	375	10,000	(8,709)	1,666	7,500	(9,166)	-	-		
Rough Sleeping Prevention Project	8,200	32,834	(32,834)	8,200	32,834	(37,672)	-	3,362		
Scams Advice	-	22,000	(22,000)	-	24,459	(24,459)	-	-		
The Clothworkers Foundation	-	21,500	(21,500)	-	4,850	(4,850)	-	-		
Volunteer Training Programme	-	9,989	(9,157)	832	-	(832)	-	-		
Hertfordshire Community Training Project	-	2,498	(1,150)	1,348	19,333	(11,519)	-	9,162		
Community Justice Fund	-	-	-	-	44,141	(42,641)	-	1,500		
Homeworking Initiative	-	-	-	-	37,000	(24,350)	-	12,650		
The HERT project	-	-	-	-	22,500	(18,750)	-	3,750		
The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS)	-	-	-	-	23,663	(23,663)	-	-		
Help to Claim	-	-	-	-	18,337	(18,337)	-	-		
Other	700	-	(464)	236	21,287	(22,383)	860	-		
	11,887	167,657	(160,982)	18,562	302,167	(289,600)	860	31,989		

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

16 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Client Funds is funding received to assist clients purchase items of household equipment.

Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance Scheme is funding to provide advice and guidance to clients in extreme hardship situations, to reduce debt and increase income.

Energy Advice and Best Deal Extra are projects whose aim is to eradicate fuel poverty.

Universal Credit - Help to Claim project was set up to help people with making online benefit claims for Universal Credit.

Disability Benefits Service is funding from Blandford Trust towards the cost of the service.

Rough Sleeping Prevention Project is funding from New Hope, Watford towards the cost of the project.

Scams Advice - As part of Hertfordshire Scams Support and Prevention this project is funded by Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner. We are delivering scams advice and training sessions to clients and frontline workers.

The Clothworkers' Foundation - Funding received to upgrade our IT hardware to improve productivity and to improve information assurance in the office.

Volunteer Training Programme - Funding from the National Lottery fund used to recruit, train, support and supervise new and existing volunteers to deliver information and advice to people in Watford affected by Covid-19.

Hertfordshire Community Training Project - We received funding from the National Lottery Fund to train staff and volunteers based across Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

16 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Community Justice Fund is a grant from The Access to Justice Foundation to recruit a welfare benefits caseworker to mitigate the loss of volunteer capacity and meet the expected post lockdown surge in demand.

Homeworking Initiative is funding from Hertfordshire Community Foundation, Hertfordshire County Council and The National Lottery Community Fund to allow remote working for staff and volunteers and increase staff levels to meet the demand during lockdown.

The HERT project is funded by Hertfordshire County Council to provide benefits and debt advice to Primary Care Network (PCN) Link Workers, Community Navigators and Social Prescribers in Hertfordshire. The project is run by The Money Advice Unit (MAU) and Citizens Advice Hertfordshire (Hertsmere and Watford). MAU provide benefit advice with Citizens Advice Hertsmere and Watford providing debt advice.

Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) is funding secured by the National Citizens Advice to increase the capacity of debt advice nationwide.

Help to Claim is a project which offers support to clients setting up new claims for Universal Credit.

Other represents other smaller restricted funds.

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are represented by:				
Tangible assets	-	-	-	1,504
Current assets/(liabilities)	343,992	31,988	375,980	247,459
Provisions and pensions	(49,354)	-	(49,354)	(58,478)
	<u>294,638</u>	<u>31,988</u>	<u>326,626</u>	<u>190,485</u>

18 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2020 - none).

19 Cash generated from operations

	2021 £	2020 £
Surplus for the year	136,141	64,834
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(1,600)	(1,911)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	1,503	1,991
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions	(9,123)	(12,461)
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	5,993	(18,185)
Increase in creditors	318	1,375
Increase in deferred income	51,048	-
Cash generated from operations	<u>184,280</u>	<u>35,643</u>

20 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no debt during the year.

