

2024-25 Annual Report

Communicare in Southampton

Registered Charity No.1110427
Registered Company No.5430846



Everyone deserves *a friend*

Communicare in Southampton is a friendly, local charity that enriches the quality of life of lonely and isolated people in Southampton.

Where available, our committed volunteers act as good neighbours; they offer practical and emotional support in a variety of ways at no cost to the service users (though donations are very gratefully received).



Our coordinators work from our main office at 6 Northlands Road and from their homes where appropriate.

This year, our drop-in sessions at satellite offices were reduced to one weekly slot in Woolston at Your Key Space, Centenary Quay, which we are grateful to be given access to free of charge.

*We serve people across
the City of Southampton*

310

Communitiers

10

Employees
(6.48 40h/wk FTE)

8

Trustees



The value of what is achieved is measured not only financially, but also by the trust that has been earned from health and social care professionals and caring organisations; as well as the enduring relationships that are developed with our service users and their families.

We value partnership working and are delighted to have served our community alongside:

Partnerships

University of Southampton
Unpaid Carers in Southampton
Highfield Church
Social Care in Action (SCiA)
Southampton Voluntary Services
Shirley Baptist Church
St. Mark's Church (Archers Road)
Caraway
John Hansard Gallery
The Community Wellbeing Team
SCPA (Soton Children's Play Association)
Saints Foundation
St Patrick's Church
King's Church, Lordswood
New Community Church
Avenue St. Andrew's Church
St Mary's Church (City Centre)
St Mary's Church (Sholing)
Southampton Solent Rotary
Wessex AHSN
Solent University
University of Winchester

Business Supporters

Spectrum Signs & Workwear Ltd
Drop the Mask
Eling Studios
Cranfield
Your Key Space
BUPA and Aurem Care

We have also received support from Southampton Solent Rotary and Rotary Club of Southampton Magna.



We are a member of Hampshire Good Neighbours, Woolston Millennium Garden, Action Hampshire, Southampton Mental Health Network and Southampton Voluntary Services. The Charity is also a Community Partner with Solent NHS (now Hants & IOW Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust).

Progress on plans proposed

in 2023-24 

Key area of focus

Outcome

Finance and Fundraising

Continue to develop the group established to consider all aspects of financial activity. To include commercial projects, business planning, expenditure and impact measurement.

- Established group continued to meet to consider commercial projects, business planning, expenditure, impact measurement and grant applications.
- There was continued support from The Cranfield Trust to re-write our business plan.
- Our successful partnership with Southampton Solent Rotary Club was extended, attracting additional revenue and new areas of focus.
- All areas of expenditure were reviewed to cut costs.

Partnership Working

Maintain and extend collaborative partnerships that strengthen our support for Southampton residents. Explore both formal and informal opportunities to work together.

- Existing partnerships were nurtured and expanded where possible.
- We were a founder member of the Integrated Neighbourhood Working teams across the city.

Volunteer opportunities, recruitment, management, deployment

Continuing to refine and create roles available within the charity to enable the most effective delivery of the charity's objectives. This needs to align with both volunteer preferences and available funding & resource.

- A reduction in available funding hampered our ability to advertise for new volunteers.
- Good use was made of media releases to raise our profile and encourage take up.
- The "Happier Working Lives" course, run by Solent NHS, was attended by a group of four, who used the outcomes to consider possible changes to managing volunteers.
- Working with students engaged on University courses that benefit from taking part in community activities was piloted with new programmes.
- A physical activity steering group with a diverse and experienced membership was established to direct & expand this area of our work.

Progress on plans proposed continued...

Key area of focus

Outcome

Multi-Generational Work

Continuing to refine and create roles available within the charity to enable the most effective delivery of the charity's objectives. This needs to align with both volunteer preferences and available funding & resource.

- Extra groups were founded, although some groups also folded where circumstances meant that they were no longer viable.
- Other organisations approached Communicare to set new groups up.

Diversity and Inclusion

Build on relationships with other faith groups and organisations whose membership lies outside the demographic most typically supported by Communicare to improve the offer to a greater range of Southampton's citizens.

- Support was given to a newly formed SE Asian lunch club.
- Our volunteer conference included a key note presentation on "belonging", highlighting the importance of encouraging involvement of all demographics in Communicare.

Research

Build relationships with local universities to explore opportunities to engage with research, contributing to evidence informed planning.

- Several opportunities to work with the University of Southampton around research and evidence gathering projects were taken up.

Training the Future Workforce

Work with educational establishments including Universities to provide opportunities for students to develop relevant skills, whilst supporting Communicare to deliver its programmes.

- Continued to host Y1 & 2 students studying Occupational Therapy at the University of Southampton
- Continued our relationship with the Solent University Community Nursing programme
- Piloted a new programme, hosting Y1 students studying Physiotherapy at the University of Winchester



Projects & Commercial Venture

CommuniBakes

CommuniBakes, our commercial arm – a small community bakery located at 21 St James Road, Shirley – has continued to grow and develop. It has provided regular free catering for Communicare events and hosted fundraising events in its backyard.



Postal Project

Our regular service user newsletters continue to be very popular, fostering a sense of belonging and connection even when people are on a waiting list for help.

With around 50% of those we support not digitally active this is also a vital way of providing service users with information about opportunities on offer with both Communicare and other organisations, including statutory providers.

Southampton Mental Health Network (SMHN)

Whilst SMHN is now a registered charity in its own right, Communicare has continued to play a leading role in its development. The organisation has a vision to “Make Southampton a Mental Health Friendly City”, thereby contributing to the social inclusion of those who may otherwise struggle to get involved.

Paid staff who deliver the day to day work of the new charity are hosted and managed through Communicare as they work towards achieving a size that will allow them to operate independently in the future.

Future Plans



Southampton residents are experiencing poorer health and greater economic difficulties than many other similar sized cities in the UK.

This is further complicated by significant changes at Southampton City Council and the merging of several NHS Trusts serving Hampshire & the Isle of Wight, including Southampton & Portsmouth.

With funding becoming more scarce and services on offer by both statutory and voluntary organisations being stretched beyond capacity, Communicare will need to explore every possible avenue to allow it to continue to make a difference to the lives of those who come to us for help. This will include looking creatively at how we contribute to “making an existence into a life worth living”.

The key areas of focus during the period from April 2025–March 2026 will take into account the reduced staff team and will include:

Finance & Fundraising

Continue to develop the established group, to consider all aspects of financial activity.

To include partnership funding bids, commercial projects, business planning, expenditure and impact measurement.

Training the future workforce

Work with educational establishments to provide opportunities for pupils and students to develop relevant skills and understanding.

Volunteer opportunities, recruitment, management & deployment

Continue to deliver a high quality PR strategy that retains Communicare’s significance in the public eye. Refine and create roles available within the charity to enable the most effective delivery of the charity’s objectives. This needs to align with both volunteer preferences and available funding & resource.

Cultivating a sense of belonging

Continue, extend and develop the successful postal project. Explore additional ways to get the digitally inactive more included in the local area. Build on relationships with faith groups and organisations whose membership lies outside the demographic most typically supported by Communicare to improve the offer to a greater range of Southampton’s citizens.

Health, Mobility and Access

Focus on the major challenges of transport, barriers to physical activity and lack of local facilities. Look for creative solutions to the issues raised by service users and residents to overcome the problems they encounter, with an emphasis on shared responsibility for surmounting them.

Research

Continue to build relationships with local universities and other organisations, exploring opportunities to engage with research, contributing to evidence informed planning.

Who we've helped

946
Individuals

2,625
Requests

500

Gift bags delivered in partnership with Solent Rotary

Of those helped 70% were over 65 years of age, and 39% (36% 2023-24) were over 80.

The majority of those helped were experiencing some form of social difficulty (isolation/loneliness), followed by those with a physical challenge and 44% of those helped had some form of mental health issue.

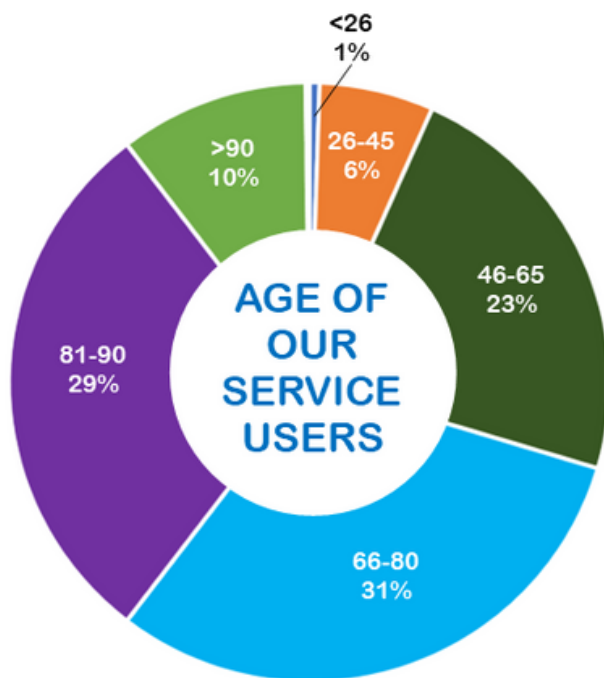
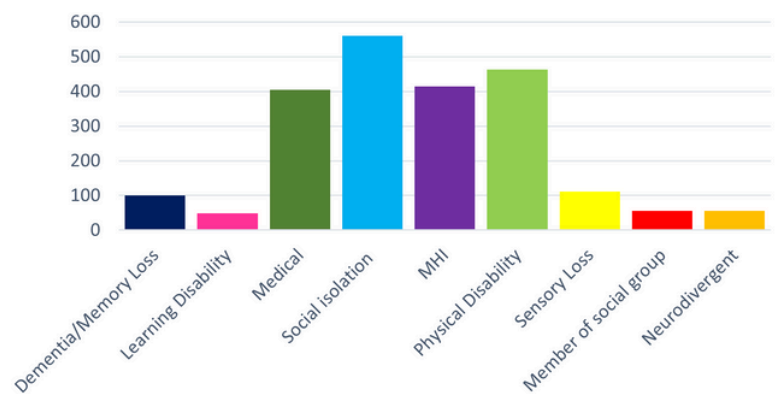


Figure 1

Age Profile of Service Users 2024-25

OUR SERVICE USERS TELL US THEY NEED OUR HELP DUE TO*...



*Many service users are introduced to us for support for more than one reason. This graph shows the percentage of service users we supported who were introduced for for each of the reasons above. Previously we reported the primary reason why service users needed our help, whereas this graph shows all of the reasons.

Figure 2

Primary Reason for Introduction 2024-25

Support via partnership working...

Some 170 service users were supported with social activities by our volunteers as part of partnership working. An additional 201 adult guests who aren't registered with us.

- St Mark's Church, Banister Park at the Haven Lunch Club
- St Patrick's Church & School at the Woolston Friendship Club
- King's Church and Oakwood Primary School at Cuppa's Friendship Club
- St Mary's Church (Central) & October Books at the Meeting Place, Portswood
- King Edward VI School & Avenue St Andrews Church
- King Edwards and Northlands House Care Home – Young Visitors Project
- Mayflower Court Anchor Care Home, St Mary's Primary School and Mason Moor Primary School
- Valentine Primary School & St Mary's Church, Sholing
- Hope School and New Community Church Southampton – Hope Friendship Club
- Tea Parties at Freemantle Community Centre and Living Well Day Centre.

Help we've given

In total we provided 607 lifts for service users for a variety of reasons. This includes medical and social appointments, attending Lunch and Friendship Clubs or activity sessions. 144 lifts were provided by SCA minibuses.

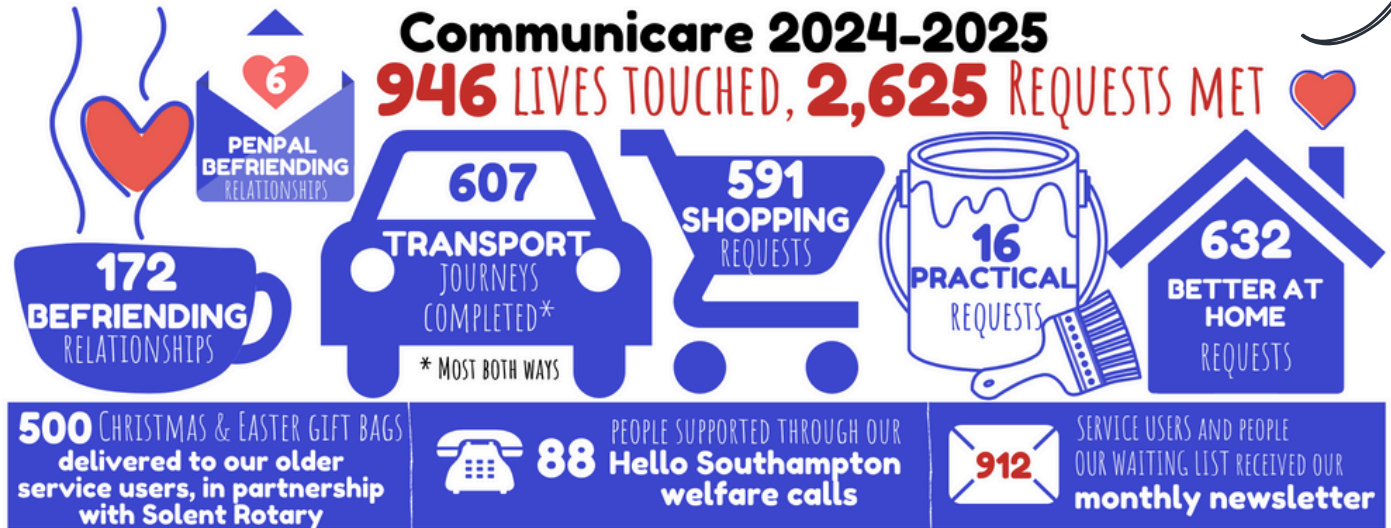


Figure 3 – Number of Service Users Helped, by Type of Request 2024–25

Our 46 transport volunteers drove approximately 8,012 miles this year (1).

Our volunteers provided approximately 10,440 hours (2) of one-to-one support, plus their time on trips out and at regular social groups.

The support we provide enables our service users to continue to live as independently as possible, in their own homes.

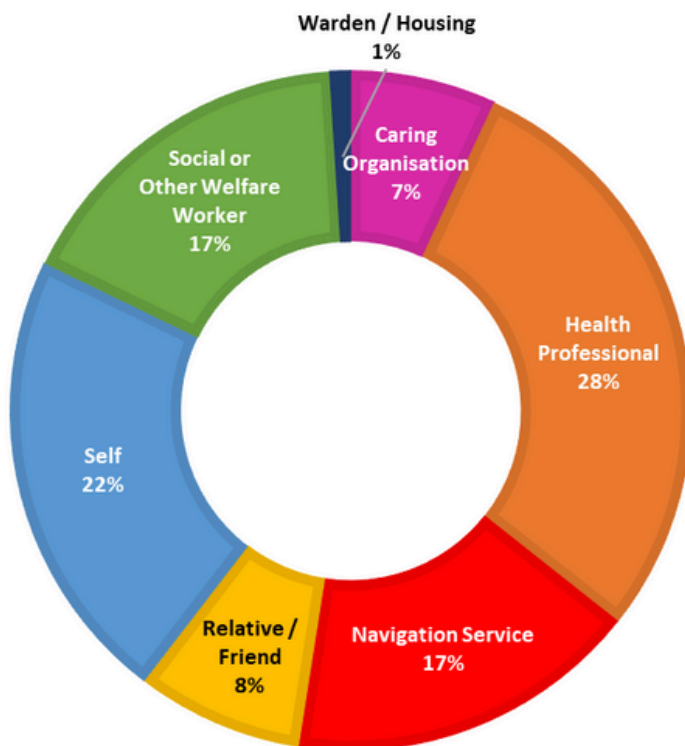


1 Calculated by reading the distance between start and end postcodes for each trip. Figure includes minibus trips.

2 Calculated by average time spent per request multiplied by the number of requests completed in the period. Based on 31 submissions in 2024–25. The estimated number of hours provided by Hello Southampton callers and Care Home volunteers was added.

Who referred to us?

OUR SERVICE USERS ARE REFERRED TO US BY...



71% of the introductions to Communicare continued to come from health and social care professionals and caring organisations, a reflection of the trust placed in Communicare over the 34 years of its existence.

Figure 4 – Source of introductions 2024-25

Waiting list

At the end of the year, 395 service users were on a waiting list for a definite request; this does not include requests for possible one-off events, such as tea parties or group trips. Some of these individuals may have been receiving support from one of our services while waiting for another, e.g. someone may have been having Hello Southampton calls while waiting for a 1:1 befriender, or be having shopping support but also waiting for an activity buddy.

There were 246 service users who had not yet been supported in any way by 31st March 2025 (except with the postal project and assessment visits).

Our volunteers

The help we provide is only made possible by our wonderful volunteers, who work tirelessly to support those around them. In 2024-25 we had 310 volunteers, some giving an hour a week, others almost full-time!



Our Communiters have worked tirelessly to make a real difference in our community and Communicare relies on their continued dedication and commitment.

Drop-ins for volunteers, including conferences and information sessions, are held to provide support and build a better understanding of requirements. In 2024-25, some of these have been face-to-face and some online. Where appropriate, volunteers are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

Our Coordinators continue to use our extensive volunteer induction packs, given to volunteers at induction, providing an additional level of support for the volunteers in the form of a go-to pack. Our monthly newsletters are also an easy way for us to keep our volunteers in-the-loop with current information and training.

This year we have extended our "Patch" meetings, which cater for smaller geographical locations. This provides an opportunity volunteers to meet others in their area, to share experiences of volunteering, learn from and encourage each other.

One volunteer said "Every group I'm able to attend makes me leave brighter as I've learnt more often about different people, age groups and just a conversation during activities can improve someone's week, especially mine!"

Membership

Members are asked to renew their membership annually and pay a £2 fee for registration. This allows the charity to track its membership more effectively and ensure that members are positively opting into engagement with the organisation.

Membership of the charity is open to church representatives, individuals and organisations who support the work of the charity and who live, work or reside in Southampton or the surrounding area.

Governance

Our Manager, Anne Clewlow continues to manage the staff and oversee Communicare's day-to-day operational activities. The Manager reports to the Trustees at their regular meetings. Strategic management, including adoption of policies, of Communicare is undertaken by the Trustees.

Members and Trustees of Communicare guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of winding up. There were 41 guarantors at 31 March 2025.

Trustees

The directors for the purpose of Company Law and Trustees for the purpose of Charity Law, that served during the year and up to the date of this report and are set out below:

- Barrie Worth: Chair, Director and Trustee
- Carolyn Page: Director and Trustee
- Lenka Fremerova: Director and Trustee
- Darren Crispin: Director and Trustee
- Deborah Hendry: Director and Trustee
- Debbie Burns: Director and Trustee
- Adrian Littlemore (appointed 13th October 2024)
- Su Mihelic (appointed 4th February 2025)
- John Ansell: Director and Trustee (resigned 15th January 2025)

Responsibilities of the Trustees

Company Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of Communicare in Southampton and its surplus or deficit of income over expenditure for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees follow best practice and:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and estimates, which are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that show and explain the charity's transactions which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

Main Funding Sources

During 2024-25 81% (84.9% 2023-24) of funding was from grants.

Communicare continued working with Saints Foundation on a 3 year Partnership Grant from the National Lottery (ending March 2026).

Reserves Policy

It is the policy of Communicare in Southampton to maintain unrestricted funds, which are our free reserves, at a minimum level of up to approximately three months unrestricted expenditure. At 1st April 2025 there were reserves available to cover 3 months of expenditure.

With pressure on core grant givers (such as SCC) which will result in reductions or suspensions of income to the charity, our reserves may be adversely affected going forward. The Trustees continue to monitor the situation closely, whilst exploring alternative revenue sources.

Risk Review

The Trustees have considered the major risks to which Communicare in Southampton is exposed and have put in place policies and systems to mitigate these risks. Volunteers are protected under the insurance policy of umbrella organisation: The Hampshire Good Neighbours Network provided by Capital Markets Underwriting Ltd.



We have a wide range of policies including Adult & Child Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Financial Reserves, Data Protection and Gifts and Legacies.

Cyber security is provided through subscription to Allteks at Soda IT Support (South) Ltd.

Small Company Exemption

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

By Order of the Board

 Anne Clewlow - 17th September 2025

Anne Clewlow, Company Secretary

Registered Office:

Shirley Baptist Church, Church Street, Southampton, Hampshire SO15 5LG

Finances

Income

		2024-25	of which Gift Aided	2023-24	of which Gift Aided
Donations	Service Users	£ 4,181.65	£ 195.00	£ 2,263.26	£ 450.00
	Regular Giving	£ 9,091.00	£ 8,851.00	£ 11,783.84	£ 8,911.00
	Volunteers	£ 916.66	£ 647.58	£ 1,002.46	£ 627.85
	Churches	£ 805.00		£ 1,202.68	
	Other	-£ 1,032.60		£ 215.00	
	Amazon Smile Donation	£ -		£ 35.12	
	General Donations	£ 4,713.67		£ 2,153.10	
	JustGiving Donations	£ 725.66		£ 1,490.68	
		£ 19,401.04		£ 20,146.14	
		£ 2,040.30		£ 2,759.97	
Fundraising	Marathon Fundraising	£ 2,040.30		£ 1,671.98	
	Tree of Light	£ 1,766.60	£ 1,147.65	£ 1,408.17	£ 779.00
	General Fundraising	£ 10,232.28		£ 2,000.00	
	Business Events	£ 2,500.00		£ 394.59	
	Plant Sale	£ 781.87		£ 358.50	
	SO:Lotto	£ 378.50		£ 182.98	
	Easy Fundraising	£ 108.02		£ 1,296.20	
	Work for Good	£ -			
	Postal Project Income	£ 3,868.58			
		£ 21,676.15		£ 10,072.39	
Membership Fees		£ 61.94		£ 64.00	
Commercial Project	Communibakes	£ 250.00		£ -	
Grants	NHS Hampshire & IOW (Better at Home)	£ 58,033.00		£ 58,033.00	
	Mental Health Network	£ 59,559.18		£ 49,018.00	
	Saints Foundation (Saints Care)	£ 66,405.00		£ 38,823.00	
	SCC Grant	£ 8,250.00		£ 8,250.00	
	Hampshire & IOW Charitable Foundation			£ 3,000.00	
	SCA Transport (Travel Buddies)	£ 3,073.93		£ 1,825.00	
	Grants General	£ 8,243.00		£ 10,764.68	
		£ 203,564.11		£ 169,713.68	
SU Shopping Payment					
Tax Refund on Gift Aid		£ 5,040.18		£	
TOTAL INCOME		£ 249,993.42		£ 199,996.21	

Special thanks go to:

ExxonMobil Fawley
Gallagher Insurance Brokers
Southampton West Rotary Club
St. Mark's School

Highfield Church
Isaac Watts Church
King Edward School

...for their fundraising efforts on our behalf.

Finances

Expenditure

EXPENDITURE	Salaries and NI	£	169,494.44	£	169,869.46
	Pensions	£	5,896.32	£	2,997.47
	Staff Expenses	£	255.52	£	1,414.25
	Volunteers' Expenses	£	1,973.86	£	2,609.04
	DBS Fees	£	-	£	58.16
	Rent	£	17,837.14	£	14,600.03
	Telephone & Internet	£	5,955.48	£	6,436.37
	Social Events (Volunteers & Tea Parties)	£	4,168.71	£	2,336.09
	Postage & Office Supplies	£	9,044.37	£	9,900.54
	Insurance	£	357.63	£	332.24
	Fundraising Expenses	£	1,228.00	£	188.49
	Website & Publicity	£	14,553.60	£	16,461.04
	Training	£	295.00	£	2,590.73
	Volunteer Conference	£	177.50	-£	25.00
	IT Expenses	£	4,742.10	£	8,023.23
	Fees	£	34.00	£	2,449.00
	Equipment	£	464.43	£	382.91
	Recruitment	£	172.16		
	Shopping Reimbursement	£	-	£	
	Other Expenses	£	1,285.87	£	44.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£	232,031.81	£	240,668.05
NET LOSS(-)/SURPLUS		£	17,961.61	-£	40,671.84

Balance Sheet at 31st March 2025



	2024-25	2023-24
Fixed Assets		
Current Assets	£230,906.55	£216,587.80
Cash at Bank & in Hand	£230,906.55	£216,587.80
Prepayment (Rent)	£3,642.86	
Other Debtors	-	-
		-
Net current assets less current liabilities	£234,549.41	£216,587.80
Total assets less current liabilities	£234,549.41	£216,587.80
Liabilities	-	-
Total net assets less liabilities	£234,549.41	£216,587.80

The Trustees are of the opinion that the charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, relating to small companies. No notice has been deposited under Section 476 of the Act in relation to the accounts for the period.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for:

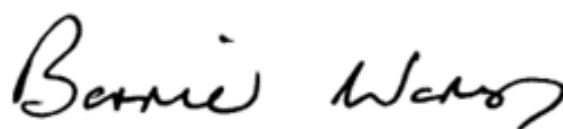
- Ensuring the Charitable Company keeps accounting records which comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- Preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charitable Company as at the end of the financial period, and of its deficit for the financial period in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the Charitable Company.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 3rd September 2025.



Anne Clewlow, Company Secretary



Barrie Worth, Chair of Trustees

Balance Sheet

	2024-25	2023-24
Reserves brought forward	£216,587.80	£257,259.64
Loss(-)/Surplus	£17,961.61	£-40,671.84
CLOSING BALANCE C/FWD	£234,549.41	£216,587.80

Financial Statement Notes

- **Accounting Policies**

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (2005) and the provisions applicable for companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Fixed assets

Office accommodation was provided through a licence to occupy at 6, Northlands Road, SO15 2LF, from July 2023 for agreed rental. Tangible fixed assets are of low value and are written off in the year of purchase.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are recognised as income in the year in which they are received.

Resources expended

Resources expended are recognised in the period in which they are incurred. Resources expended include, where appropriate, VAT which is not recoverable.

- **Directors/Trustees Remuneration and Expenses**

No remuneration was paid to any director/trustee nor were any expenses reimbursed.

- **Taxation**

The Charitable Company is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

- **General Fund**

Communicare in Southampton is a Charitable Company with no share capital that is limited by guarantee. Movements on the general fund in the period to 31 March 2025 were as follows:

Gain/loss on ordinary activities for the period:	£17,961.61
Balance at start of the year:	£216,587.80
Balance at the end of the year:	£234,549.41

- **Financial commitments**

The Company has not entered into any financial commitments

- **Control** – Throughout the year the Charity was controlled ultimately by its members.

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the accounts of Communicare in Southampton, set out on pages 15–18, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. I am qualified to undertake this examination as I am a Chartered Certified Accountant and have an independent interest in the charity.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act: and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below:

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

Have not been met; or

1. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



17th September 2025

Simon Rudd

Coastal Accountants Ltd, Office 2, Unit 3 Mitchell Point, Ensign Way, Hamble SO31 4RF