



**Your
voice
counts**

Your Voice Counts

Our Year in Review

Annual Report and
Accounts for the year
ended 31 March 2022

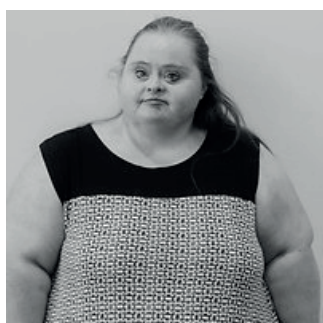




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Welcome from Lisa Kelly and Christina Gates



On behalf of the Board we want say a massive thank you to our amazing team of staff and volunteers who have done such fantastic work over the last year. Seeing the difference that the organisation has been able to make in so many people's lives at such challenging times has been really inspiring, well done everyone!

This year the Board have been focused on making sure we support the organisation in the best way that we can. We've challenged ourselves to be more inclusive, and have made changes to how we work to make sure our Experts by Experience are able to contribute fully. We've undertaken a full Board appraisal which involved speaking to each Board member individually and coming together as a group to look at what we're doing well and what we want to be better at. We now have a plan for how we want to improve and in particular we want to make sure that we spend more time with our staff teams seeing the work that they do and understanding the challenges they face. We've identified some areas where we need extra help, and have recruited some new Board members who have the knowledge and skills we need to guide the organisation going forward.

We've also realised that we haven't spent time together in person in well over a year! We're really looking forward to meeting together face-to-face at our next Board meeting. Being able to see first-hand how well the organisation has coped with so many challenges in the last couple of years has been a privilege. We've been able to see how passionate the team are about improving things for the people they support and we've been blown away by their creativity and commitment. We're excited about the organisation's plans for the future and looking forward to helping the staff team to achieve the goals we've set together.

Lisa Kelly and Christina Gates,
Co-Chairs, You Voice Counts

Welcome from David Woolley



Like most organisations, our focus this year was moving on from Covid and building on what we learned as we began the process of carefully returning to face-to-face working, all while negotiating changing restrictions and government guidance.

Our staff and volunteers have been amazing. Their willingness to adapt and go the extra mile has been humbling and it's no exaggeration to say that some of the people we support simply wouldn't have coped at times without them. However, it's been challenging and as we have moved forward we have explored with everyone how we want to operate in future. Having the flexibility to work from home has been convenient and efficient, but staff also reported feeling isolated and less of a connection to the organisation. We reflected that we wanted to bring people back together in physical spaces so they could feel that connection, but also so that we could encourage the type of peer support that is hard to replicate when working remotely. We agreed to a hybrid model of working, allowing staff the freedom and flexibility to work from home when it made sense to do so, but also making sure we had office spaces to allow them to come together.

Moving on also gave us an opportunity to reflect on our priorities as an organisation. We renewed our commitment to co-production and were delighted to employ a new lived experience team that has been challenging and improving our approach to co-production.

Renewing our Advocacy QPM was also a fantastic opportunity for us to reflect on what we do well in our Advocacy services, and where we need to improve. The process of assessment was rigorous and challenging but also incredibly rewarding, and we were delighted to be awarded the QPM for a further three years.

The Board has also invested in our Business Development and Communications capacity so that we can continue to secure much-needed investment for the people we help. We also recognised the amazing contribution that volunteers make to our organisation and have prioritised developing our approach to finding and supporting volunteers.

Your Voice Counts was founded on a principle that people with lived experience of services are best placed to design the solutions that meet their needs. As we look ahead to the future we recognise that there are significant challenges on the horizon, for our organisation and for the people we support. Despite this we find ourselves in a strong position to navigate these times successfully and to go from strength to strength.

Next year we want to make sure we reach more people in need and make sure that our support is delivered in a way that works for them. To do this we'll create more opportunities for people with lived experience to join our team in paid and volunteer roles, and we'll create more opportunities for the people who use our services to tell us how they want these services to be delivered. We're committed to learning and growing as an organisation and to nurturing the creativity, flexibility and passion that our teams have demonstrated in this last year. By investing in our staff and volunteers we'll make sure that they can continue to make a huge difference in the lives of the people we support.

David Woolley,
Chief Executive, Your Voice Counts

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Advisors

Auditors:

Azets Audit Services,
Bulman House,
Regent Centre,
Gosforth,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
NE3 3LS

**Main
Bankers:**

Lloyds Bank,
17 Ellison Walk,
Gateshead,
NE8 1BF

Savings:

Hampshire Trust Bank,
55 Bishopsgate, London,
EC2N 3AS

Aldermore Savings, 1st Floor,
Block B, Western House,
Lynch Wood, Peterborough
PE2 6FZ

Redwood Bank
The Nexus Building, Broadway,
Letchworth Garden City,
Hertfordshire, SG6 3TA

Our Board

Your Voice Counts is a registered charity and limited company governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. Our Governance Handbook sets out how we ensure our governance is effective and inclusive.

Our Articles

Our Articles set out that at least 50% of our Board need to have lived experience of our services, which includes family carers of people who have used our services. We call the Directors with lived experience of our services Experts by Experience. We call Directors who don't have experience of our services Advocates by Experience.

Our Articles also set out that we should have a Chair and Co-Chair and that one should be someone with a learning disability and the other someone without a learning disability.

Our Directors

Our Directors serve for a term of four years and are eligible for re-appointment by the Directors. There are no restrictions on the number of terms a Director can serve.

There are arrangements for induction, training and support of Board members, which are reviewed by our Operations Committee. Each new Board Member is given an induction pack and attends an induction session with the executive team and meets the Chair. The Operations Committee reviews the training needs of the Board members and arranges training as required.

Our Co-Chairs hold an annual appraisal of the Board and of individual Directors to ensure that the skills and time provided by Directors are used to best effect. Additionally, Board skills are kept under review to inform Board member recruitment, engagement and support.

Board meetings

Our Board meets six times a year. Our Experts by Experience also hold a pre-meeting before each Board meeting to give them additional time to prepare for the meeting. Our Experts by Experience and Advocates by Experience meet separately six times a year in order to explore themes and key subject areas in more detail.

The Board holds an annual plan which includes:

- Agreeing the operating budget
- Reviewing bi-monthly management accounts
- Reviewing the organisation's strategic priorities
- Monitoring performance within agreed targets
- Considering risk and ways to mitigate these risks
- Considering strategic issues; and
- Receiving reports and minutes from all our sub-committees.

Sub-committees

The Board appoints sub-committees, which are responsible for more detailed oversight of strategy and activities within their area of responsibility. The sub-committees that met during the year were:

- Finance Committee
- Operations Committee.

The Board intends to establish a Quality and Services Committee, and People Committee in the coming year.

Directors during 2021/2022

Directors who served during the year up to the date of signing the financial statements were:

	APPOINTMENT DATE	RESIGNATION DATE
Lisa Kelly	12/3/2011	NA
Christina Gates	15/8/2019	NA
Derek Peters	19/8/2014	NA
Nick Herron	12/3/2011	NA
Bryan McClelland	30/6/2011	24/2/2022
David Taylor	17/6/2015	NA
Matthew Ife	18/1/2018	NA
Andrew Lane	17/12/2020	NA
Rebekah Coombes	19/8/2021	NA
Tom Relph	13/3/2018	NA
Lorraine Scott	3/2/2011	21/10/21

OBJECTIVE AND ACTIVITIES

About Your Voice Counts

Your Voice Counts is a registered charitable company limited by guarantee. The Charity's Object is to relieve the need or disability of persons, particularly those suffering impairment of their learning abilities.

What does Your Voice Counts do?

Your Voice Counts is a charity that exists to support people with learning disabilities, autistic people and people who are at risk of exclusion due to disability, illness or other challenges.

We achieve our Object, or our aims, by focusing on our mission to help people to be connected, to have choice and control in their lives, and to speak up for what they want and need. We believe in listening to and empowering people with different needs and abilities to bring about positive change. To do this, we work with our partners to design and deliver learning, personal development and social opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autistic people, and promote and support self-advocacy and user-led groups that are run by adults with learning disabilities.

We are also a statutory provider of mental health and learning disability advocacy services for people living in Newcastle upon Tyne and South Tyneside.

How do we decide what services to offer?

We have a five-year organisational strategy that has been approved by our Board of Directors. This strategy guides our work and ensures all of our activities work towards at least one of our six priority areas:

1. Design services that make a difference to people
2. Learn from what we're doing so that we get better at helping people
3. Improve how the Board works
4. Help our staff and volunteers be great at their jobs
5. Ensure the organisation is financially resilient
6. Make sure people know who we are, what we do and the difference we make to the people we support.

Our strategy also sets out our commitment to ensuring the voices of lived experience underpin all of our work, and we're proud to co-produce and co-deliver our services with people with learning disabilities, autistic people and people who have experienced mental ill health.

Public Benefit

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'Public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. Our main activities and the people we aim to support are described in this report. All of our charitable activities focus on supporting vulnerable people - particularly those with learning disabilities and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.



ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Communities team highlights



Coping with Covid

Evolving and adapting our activities to respond to the continuing Covid situation ensured we were able to provide the support that people with learning disabilities and autistic people needed to cope with the ongoing challenges of the pandemic.

- We ran Winter Wellness sessions where group members shared how they coped with lockdowns and social isolation then created a useful poster as a reminder of techniques that can help when feeling low or lonely.
- When Covid restrictions allowed, we welcomed people back to face-to-face activities and drop-in groups but we were mindful that some people weren't ready to mix in person and continued to run our online sessions such as our arts and crafts and cooking groups that had been popular during lockdowns. These groups enabled people to maintain their links with us and each other, with those attending the in-person cooking group often making extra food to deliver to group members who were shielding or self-isolating.



- We provided practical support to help people with learning disabilities access their Covid-19 vaccine, speaking to 948 people over the course of five days in April to provide accessible information about vaccinations and directly booking appointments for 132 people.
- We partnered with the Gateshead Learning Disabilities Team and the Physical Health Hub in South Tyneside who visited our groups to show people how to do lateral flow tests.
- We delivered a Covid Champions project in South Tyneside where we developed an accessible Covid Coping Plan and shared it with everyone we support.
- Thanks to NHS Charities Together, Newcastle Hospitals Charity and County Durham Community Foundation we were fortunate to receive funding from the Covid-19 Community Partnership Grants Programme (North East and North Cumbria). This made £183,000 available for us to work in partnership with LD:NorthEast, Skills for People, Adapt and Inclusion North and Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW) on projects to help people with learning disabilities and autistic people to improve their mental and physical health.

Case study: Ian's story

Ian accessed all the online groups we offered and built up confidence in his cooking abilities, leading Ian to focus more on his health and creating healthy meals. Our Cooking with Confidence sessions helped Ian overcome his Covid anxiety as his desire to cook encouraged Ian to go shopping and travel independently. We also helped Ian to book his Covid vaccinations and supported him when he caught Covid, helping him to arrange a test and ensuring he was aware of the guidance he needed to follow.



Helping people with learning disabilities to thrive online

Our Digital Toolkit

During lockdown restrictions, we realised many people had no access to the internet and we were concerned about the risk this posed to people with learning disabilities and autistic people who were cut off from their usual support networks. Thanks to funding from The National Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund, we delivered a Digital Toolkit project to provide practical and emotional support to help people get connected online so they could join in with social activities as well as interact with the services that support them.

Case study: Peter's story

"I was angry because I had nobody to talk to, I couldn't go to my meetings and see my friends, it was like I was locked in a shell."

Peter was at risk of social isolation so we gave him a phone and showed him how to use it so he could join our online sessions and feel connected to his friends.

"Now I can do cooking online which I never did. It's nothing to be frightened of, you can do it as long as someone shows you how. Now everybody in our group has got a phone or a tablet. It's just great, magnificent, how it's brought the glory out of me and all my friends."



Sharing our digital inclusion best practice

We promoted our Digital Toolkit learning through a series of short films that shared the stories of some of the people we supported through this project, focussing on our message that 'with the right support, people with learning disabilities can thrive online.' We also showcased the expertise we developed around this through a presentation at the "No one left behind – Improving digital health and care inclusion" event hosted by the Academic Science Health Network in October.



We partnered with local organisation Digital Voice to produce a number of short films this year which we used to share our learning and best practice. These included our Digital Toolkit series and a Digital Me video about hate crime, and we were delighted that our work with Digital Voice was nominated for two Royal Television Society awards.

Co-production

Lived experience, co-production and partnership working are at the heart of our work so we were pleased to launch our Our Lives, Our Leadership programme this year that saw us recruit three leaders with lived experience of learning disabilities, autism and mental health services to deliver a project that used staff training to embed co-production processes throughout the organisation.

We were also involved in a number of other co-production projects, including:

- co-producing a piece of work looking at accessibility with the Learning Disability Transformation Board
- holding a focus group for young people to understand their needs and priorities then presenting the findings to the Strategic Alliance, leading the review of 0-25 services in South Tyneside
- establishing our GP Quality Checkers programme where people with lived experience of learning disabilities and autism inspected and provided feedback to GP surgeries across South Tyneside to improve how they deliver their service and challenge the health inequalities people face.

ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Using our co-produced framework to guide our support

Case study: Preddi's story

Preddi is 21 and was referred to us by AutismAble this year because he wasn't accessing any training, employment or education and had been rejected for an EHCP plan and needed help to challenge this decision. To support Preddi, we used our co-produced framework of nine key areas that helps people identify the goals they want to work towards and guides the support we provide.

1. **Where I live** – Preddi lives with his mum but identified he would like to live independently with support so we discussed options with him and how this might work.
2. **People in my life** - We provided emotional support to his mum and helped her connect to carer services.
3. **My health** - Preddi was admitted to hospital after a deterioration in his mental health. We maintained regular contact with him to ensure some familiarity in his support during a difficult time and we attended all MDT and CTR meetings so the hospital staff had a good insight into Preddi's life before the admission.
4. **Help and support** - Preddi was largely unknown to services so we arranged MDTs to build support around him and supported him to attend and share his perspective. We referred Preddi for support from community nursing, liaised with his social worker and worked with him to help him understand and attend his medical appointments.
5. **Looking after myself** - Preddi has been part of our Cooking with Confidence group to help him learn how to prepare healthy meals for himself.
6. **Money** - We supported Preddi with his Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment claims, helped him to use internet banking and provided professional observations to his social worker for a financial capacity assessment claim
7. **How I spend my time** - Preddi attends our group sessions and we have introduced him to other activities such as the Twisting Ducks theatre group.
8. **Having choices and speaking up** - We helped Preddi to produce an About Me book to help healthcare professionals understand his needs and preferences.
9. **Phones and the internet** - We taught Preddi how to access internet banking on his phone.



"Your Voice Counts are a good support to me. They have nice people there that can help us with anything. For example, they have helped me understand things like my money. They help me to think about the future, and gives us the skills we need to build a better life. YVC are very special."






Making a contribution nationally


- We took part in "The Other One Show," an interactive afternoon chat show hosted by people with learning disabilities and recorded by the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities and London South Bank University.
- We co-produced a Skills for Care webinar on digital accessibility.
- Our Commissioning Officer with lived experience won a Skills for Care and Health Education England contract to co-facilitate an Experts by Experience Workforce Advisory group which reviews training for the social care sector.
- Our Commissioning Officer with lived experience sat on the Oliver McGowan national steering group that reviews mandatory training to increase the skills of healthcare staff working with people with learning disabilities and autism.

Ensuring information is accessible and sharing our insight

- We create Easy Read versions of documents so our information and resources are accessible to as many people as possible.
- We supported the South Tyneside and Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to put the LeDeR report into Easy Read.
- We worked on a Making Safeguarding Personal leaflet with the South Tyneside Safeguarding Children's and Adults' Partnership.
- We provided feedback to the South Tyneside commissioning team on health check surveys and their learning disability strategy outcomes measurements.
- We presented at two Financial Abuse Practice Priorities events in South Tyneside.
- We took part in a number of consultations, including the South Tyneside Better Lives consultation with South Tyneside Strategic Alliance led by Even Better and Northumbria University's wellbeing and health in South Tyneside research.

Volunteering at Your Voice Counts






Anthony's Story


2019 → 2021


I have been volunteering for Your Voice Counts for nearly two years now




I have enjoyed every moment including meeting clients and supporting staff with the drop-in sessions and activities.

How I got involved

 **University of Sunderland** I am a student at the University of Sunderland studying sociology

 The staff from my university have always told me how important volunteer can be

 I also think volunteering is important for finding another purpose and building new skills

www.yvc.org.uk

ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Wise Steps job coaching

Our Wise Steps programme links people with learning disabilities with Job Coaches to help them develop skills and confidence and access training that can prepare them for employment.



Coping with Covid

This year we had to adapt our service to help keep people motivated at a time when employment felt like a low priority for many. Some people experienced a deterioration in both their physical and mental health due to lockdown and isolation restrictions so we spent time focussing on health and wellbeing so they could more actively take part in our targeted work around employment skills.

Face-to-face engagement was strongly preferred by people on the programme, so we arranged and delivered Covid-secure meetings as much as possible.

We also made use of Specialist Partner referrals to ensure people received 121 tuition in specific areas where needed. This included literacy and numeracy skills, leading two people to pass exams in English, and IT training from Leonard Cheshire, leading one person to a successful volunteering role that has had a positive impact on her life.

Wise Steps 2021/2022



20 people

between the ages of
18 and 65
supported



eight people

have found jobs (with
more pending before
the end of the project in
December 2022):

- Two jobs with Your Voice Counts as Peer Support Workers
- Four jobs with Sunderland University in Expert by Experience roles
- One gardener job
- One kitchen porter job

People who took part in Wise Steps also showed an increase in soft skills such as communication and interpersonal skills as they learned to manage social isolation. Many have participated in wellbeing activities such as visits to garden centres, the theatre, picnics, sports day events, guitar sessions and cooking. We also engaged people in Christmas wellbeing activities and arranged a Christmas Day lunch, welfare calls and gifts for people who would otherwise be alone.



Anthony, Barry and Ricky took part in a sport research project at Northumbria University that involved cycling, walking and mental agility tasks over several weeks.

'Thanks to YVC staff and my Wise Steps Job Coach, I am in a far better place than I was this time last year!' Ricky

Anthony is 60 and loves gadgets but had little confidence in using IT. By working with his Your Voice Counts Job Coach and an IT Specialist at Leonard Cheshire, Anthony's confidence increased and he learned how to use Microsoft Office and how to browse and explore the internet safely.

Our programme gave Anthony the opportunity to practice connecting his gadgets, such as his cameras, to a laptop and learn how to use Zoom and social media so he can connect with family and friends and comfortably take part in online sessions and interviews.



Self-advocacy highlights



Your Voice Counts believes in supporting and connecting people to be advocates for themselves so they can share their views and speak up for what they want and need. One of the ways we do this is by supporting and championing self-advocacy groups that are run by and for adults with learning disabilities.



This year, two of the self-advocacy groups we support, Gateshead People and Talk 2 Us, made the decision to merge and form one group called Speaking Up Together.

Speaking Up Together is open to people living in Gateshead and South Tyneside and we were pleased to support the merger of the groups by providing our advice and expertise to help the new group agree and form its constitution, apply to the Charity Commission and establish fundraising processes to help it achieve its aims.

If you are interested in finding out more about this group, contact joanne.mcgeachin@yvc.org.uk.

We Are Human Too

The self-advocates from Speaking Up Together are part of a regional We Are Human Too campaign to raise awareness of the issue of the abuse that some people with learning disabilities and autistic people experience in hospitals and assessment and treatment units. The group began in response to a BBC Panorama programme about Whorlton Hall. It now has members nationwide campaigning for more measures to be put in place to prevent this abuse from happening.



Advocacy team highlights

Coping with Covid

Our face-to-face contact with people continued to be limited by restrictions in settings such as hospitals and care homes. However, due to our close links with colleagues in the local authority, hospital trust and care settings we were able to understand and plan how we could individualise our service to each person's needs.

We found that while some people struggled with video calls, with the support of staff working within the settings many people were able to use this method of communication to work with us. This enabled our advocates to talk to people, not only about their rights under the relevant legislation, but more importantly about being human, about being in an institution where everyone around them was working with their faces covered and full PPE, and where seeing a smiling face was now the exception and not the norm. We recognised the value of being able to offer a listening ear and a friendly face while at the same time helping people to consider their options, to uphold their rights, represent their interests and ensure approaches and decisions are person-centred.

Adapting during the pandemic

To ensure our services stayed up to date and responded to the changing Covid picture, we adapted our systems, protocols and guidance.

- We organised virtual advocacy workshops with legal professionals to ensure advocates understood the implications of the Coronavirus Bill and when it would be appropriate to challenge restrictions.
- We designed a Covid-19 risk assessment and integrated it seamlessly into usual practice.
- We used Microsoft Teams to enable our advocates to keep connected, share information and good practice, problem-solve together, and reduce isolation. The team also took part in a variety of virtual training sessions on subjects such as communicating with people with English as an additional language, cultural competency, unpacking neurodiversity, the autistic advocate and as the restrictions began to lift they attended in-person training on dementia awareness.

Quality Performance Mark

We were awarded the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark (QPM) from the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi). The QPM is the UK's only independent quality performance mark for organisations offering independent advocacy and accreditation involves a rigorous self-assessment process and policy review followed by a structured site visit for NDTi assessors to meet advocates and the people they support.

"Your Voice Counts has demonstrated a strong and robust commitment throughout their site visits with all we spoke to; to empowering and/or representing the person through all their interactions; with the person themselves and stakeholders. Your Voice Counts received an exceptionally high standard of feedback regarding their service from those who had accessed the service and stakeholders. As a grounds roots organisation Your Voice Counts see the importance of ensuring there is representation at all levels from those that access their services".

QPM Assessor



Making a contribution nationally

We campaigned with the Leaders in Advocacy Network and over 50 other organisations about extending the rights of people to receive advocacy support and calling for Independent Mental Health Advocates to have access to high-quality training. We were also part of the pilot training programme on culturally appropriate advocacy developed and delivered in partnership with the Department of Health and Social Care.

To mark Advocacy Awareness Week 2021, we shared case studies and reflections on our website and social media channels to raise the profile of advocacy and share examples of how our person-centred approach that puts the needs of the individual at the heart of our work makes a real difference to people's lives.

#AAW21



Our advocacy services

Independent Care Act Advocacy (ICAA)

Local authorities have a legal duty under the Care Act of 2014 to arrange for an independent advocate to represent and support a person who has a 'substantial difficulty' in understanding the Care Act process and has no one else appropriate to support them. The aim of our advocates is to enable people to be involved in the relevant Care Act process and to be supported as fully as possible in understanding what is happening, why and what it may mean for them. Where necessary our advocates will represent the person and speak on their behalf and ensure their wishes, feelings and needs are at the heart of the process.

ICAA in Newcastle



111 people
supported



1,724
hours
of advocacy

Case study: Lee's story

What was Lee's situation?

Lee was referred to our ICAA service when social services were planning to carry out a review of his support. Lee has a family, but professionals were worried that family support made it hard for Lee to say what he wanted for himself while Lee felt that professionals didn't listen to him.

What did our advocate do?

Lee's advocate supported him to access and understand information and have a stronger voice and feel more confident about sharing his wishes and thoughts with other people.

What did that mean for Lee?

Lee was able to take part in his own review where it was agreed that he could be involved in choosing the staff that worked with him. Lee reported to his advocate that he had felt listened to and was hopeful of his future and support being provided in a way that he wanted.

Activities, achievements and performance

South Tyneside Community Case Advocacy for people with a learning disability

Our community advocates work with people who have difficulties being involved in decisions that affect them. Community advocates can support people to have their voice and views heard by others, gain access to relevant information to make decisions and to act on information, attend meetings, and assist with issues such as benefits, housing, and to be afforded fair and equal treatment.

Our community case advocacy service also offers support to parents with a learning disability where they are involved with the local authority in child protection procedures.

Community case advocacy in South Tyneside



44 people supported



88 hours of advocacy

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)

This service supports people who are detained under the Mental Health Act in hospitals or in the community, helping people to understand what their rights are in relation to their legal situation, their medication and treatment and discharge plans.

They can help the person communicate with medical teams and other appropriate professionals and assist with raising their own issues or complaints. Advocates can attend meetings, tribunals and appeals and assist the person to access legal support.

IMHA in South Tyneside and Newcastle



328 people supported



3,037 hours of advocacy

Case study: Sally's story

What was Sally's situation?

Sally has a learning disability and was detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act. Sally found it hard to work with people and wouldn't attend meetings.

What did our advocate do?

Our advocate spent time with Sally to develop a relationship of understanding and trust and attended

meetings on Sally's behalf to represent Sally's voice and uphold her rights. Sally did not want to be in hospital so our advocate applied to the Mental Health Tribunal to review this decision and arranged for a special advocate from Sally's local area to assist with discharge planning.

What did that mean for Sally?

Sally's views and wishes were taken into account and the right support was in place to help Sally move on from her hospital stay successfully.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)

Our IMCA service provides independent advocacy for people who are deemed to lack decision-making capacity for a specific decision at the time that decision needs to be made. This might include where they live, what medical treatment they receive, what care and support they need or as part of safeguarding protective measures to ensure they are safe from harm or neglect.

IMCA in South Tyneside and Newcastle



294 people
supported



2,778
hours
of advocacy

Case study: Maureen's story

What was Maureen's situation?

Maureen was referred for IMCA support when doctors were thinking about which cancer treatment to offer her. She had been assessed and found not to have decision-making capacity so professionals would make a decision in her best interests.

What did our advocate do?

Our IMCA met with Maureen to talk through the situation and to listen to her thoughts and concerns and how she

wanted to still be able to do the things she enjoys like going shopping and attending church and was worried surgery would impact her ability to do this by reducing her mobility. Our advocate provided a report to the decision-making team setting out Maureen's wishes around her treatment, asking the team to consider the impact on Maureen if she lost mobility and the support that she would then need to live independently.

What did that mean for Maureen?

Maureen felt listened to and supported during a stressful time and her concerns and wishes were articulated to the team responsible for planning her care and treatment.

Paid Relevant Person Representative (RPR)

RPRs work with people who are subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). They ensure that when it is necessary to deprive someone of their liberty it is the least restrictive option possible to provide the required care and treatment and to keep the person safe from harm. If the person is objecting the advocate can request a review or support the person to access legal support and take their case to the Court of Protection.

RPR services in South Tyneside and Newcastle



350 new people supported,
535 people supported in total



7,713
hours
of advocacy

Case study: Harry's story

What was Harry's situation?

Harry had lived in the same care home for ten years. After building up their relationship, Harry told his RPR that he was unhappy living there and wanted to live in the community. Professionals disagreed with Harry and said he didn't know what he was saying.

What did our advocate do?

Our RPR helped Harry to speak to a solicitor and make an appeal to the Court of Protection.

What did that mean for Harry?

People started to take Harry's wishes seriously and he was supported to visit different accommodations. He moved to a new home that he liked and that meets his needs and allows him to be more independent and part of the community.

ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Operations, Finance and Business Development team highlights

Our organisation is underpinned by a team of back-office roles that lead and guide our work and provide processes, support and systems that ensure our projects and programmes achieve their aims and objectives. This year, we formalised and created capacity for this by establishing a Business Development function that allows us to take a more strategic approach to grant and bid writing and informs our organisational strategy, planning and monitoring work.

Funding

We developed a fundraising strategy this year and trialled a number of fundraising initiatives, including our Together for 30 thirtieth anniversary fundraising campaign that saw 26 fundraisers take part in a 30 mile challenge that raised £5,107.



Core funding from Lloyds Foundation, Sir James Knott Trust, and Garfield Weston Foundation has also supported us to strengthen our operations and to increase co-production approaches across our organisation this year.

Our Board and governance

We thanked Board members Lorraine Scott and Brian McClelland who stepped down from our Board this year, and we were pleased to welcome HR professional Rebekah Coombes who is providing valuable support and insight as we develop our HR approaches and policies.



Rebekah Coombes

Trustees' Week

We took part in Trustees' Week 2021 by giving a talk about how we make our Board a welcoming and inclusive space. We were able to share some of the practical things we do to ensure that everyone can be included, for example using cards to make it easier for people to speak up or to say if they don't understand something that is being discussed, and our Experts by Experience 'pre-meeting' ahead of our Board meeting where agenda items can be discussed in more detail at a pace that suits.

We also shared our guidance for staff who are asked to present at Board meetings that sets out how our Experts by Experience with learning disabilities prefer to view complicated information – for example we ask people to prepare presentations using 'Easy Read' principles and to use graphs and charts to present financial information where they can.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We're so proud of our volunteer Chloe whose advocacy for LGBTQIA+, autistic and disabled people has won them a place on Dimensions' Learning Disability and Autism Leaders List. This list celebrates inspirational people who are helping to make society better for everyone.

Chloe was nominated for their volunteering and for their contributions to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group. They are a passionate advocate for the LGBTQ+ community and have shared their own experience to help support our organisation to make positive change.

When advocating for the LGBTQ+ community, Chloe has used their creativity to help share their experiences. They use poetry, illustration and video to help to get their message across and also to make sure their work is accessible to others. Chloe has used their place on the Leaders List to raise awareness of barriers at Pride events for disabled and autistic people.



Making a difference

"My advocate has helped me to understand what professionals have been saying. You feel silly sitting in the meetings and listening to them when you don't understand it. She helped me to speak up more and to get my point across."

"YVC go above and beyond for people and it is great working in partnership with them. I definitely think working alongside YVC creates positive outcomes for the people we are working with."

"Ashley and team created a safe and welcoming environment for a new client this week who is facing challenges with acceptance from her family due to her gender identity. She came to us for help to make more friends and develop social networks. Ashley has done a brilliant job to make her feel comfortable and start on this path, and got this message: "Thank you for today I feel like it's really helped with my social anxiety and I had a good time today too:)"

"Thanks for all of your help and the role you've played in getting us to this point. You've advocated for what's best for him throughout the whole process and contributed invaluable ideas to all stages of the transition/move. The whole process has been the best example of partnership working I've had the fortune to be involved with."

"You are a pleasure to work with, and you maintain professionalism whilst supporting clients in a friendly and approachable way. From my experience, you take an interest in each individual case and offer good suggestions of ways in which our clients can be supported. You act quickly in your professional duties and maintain good levels of communication with all parties involved in the case."

"Thanks for helping this lady in the way you did. Every step of this is textbook quality, caring service and exactly how we should be dealing with things on the frontline."

Our year in numbers

Our services

Communities:

327

different people
attended activities

427

different activities
delivered

27

Care and Treatment
Reviews arranged for
people with learning
disabilities

Advocacy:

1,312

people supported

16,053

hours spent providing
advocacy

Fundraising – Together for 30:

£5,107

raised

26

fundraisers

445

miles walked

**8**

people found jobs
through Wise Steps

**948**

offered Covid-19 vaccine
support

**4**

4 people volunteered
with us

Our finances:

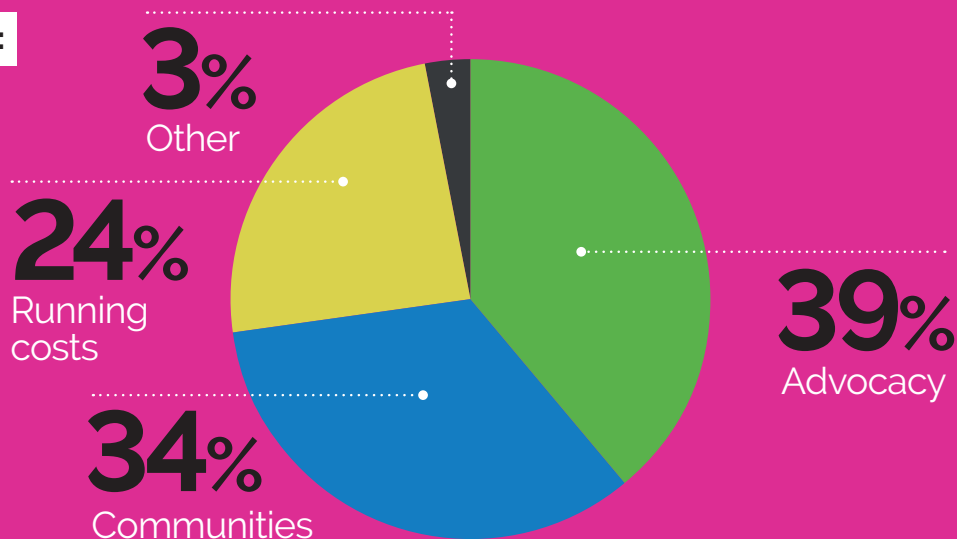
**£1,144,157**

Income

**£1,061,641**

Expenditure

How we spent it:



REVIEW OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Your Voice Counts aims to maintain a robust financial position in the face of increasing economic uncertainty in order to continue delivering much needed services to the people we support.

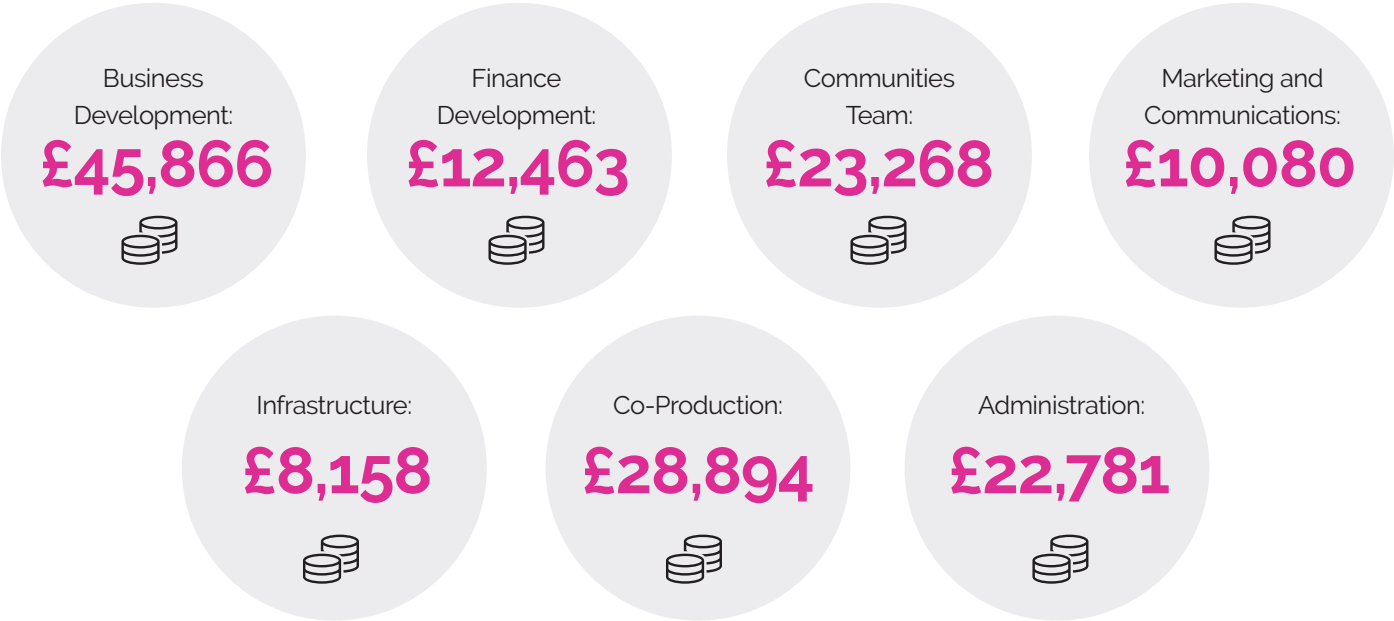
The charity receives the majority of its funding from statutory sources and grants from foundations and charitable trusts. Our internal structure comprises Advocacy, Communities and Operations and is aligned to our funding sources. We seek to recover our full costs from all projects.

This year, we have been pleased to continue to benefit from the generosity of grant funders, allowing us to continue to exceed a million pounds of income for the second year despite the challenging economic environment: £1,144,157

(2021: £1,063,540). We are extremely grateful to our funders, both those who have continued to support us and to those funders who have provided us with additional support this year due to the difficult conditions brought about by Covid-19 and the ongoing cost of living crisis. We have continued to control our costs and are reporting expenditure of £1,061,641 (2021: £993,006).

We have continued to strengthen our financial controls this year by, for example, putting into place a new Investment Policy. Transitioning to a new audit team and the recruitment of a new Finance Officer have also allowed for fresh insights into our financial procedures. We have continued to invest in our Business Development function in order to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Due to additional grant funding and to controlling costs, we have produced a surplus of £82,516 this year (2021: £70,534). This leaves us with overall reserves of £584,200 (2021: £501,684). Trustees take a forward-looking and proactive approach to financial management and so have again taken the decision to designate funds this year. These funds are for projects we are undertaking over the next two years to improve the infrastructure and capacity of the organisation for the benefit of our clients. The areas we are investing in are:



We hold between three and six months necessary operating expenses as a minimum reserve. Based on the accounts for the year to 31 March 2022, three months would equate to £155,953 and six months to £311,905. Our free reserves (unrestricted funds not invested in tangible fixed assets) stand at £158,592 (2021: £253,757). Our reserves policy is reviewed annually by the Finance Committee.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY

Your Voice Counts takes a proactive and structured approach to fundraising and complies with 'Charity fundraising: a guide to trustee duties (CC20)'. A fundraising strategy is in place and is updated each year and reviewed by trustees. A Donations Policy is also in place. These were developed using Charity Commission, Fundraising Regulator and Institute of Fundraising guidance.

Your Voice Counts undertakes minimal public fundraising as most of our funding comes from statutory sources and grant funders. The charity does not use a professional fundraiser. The charity has a Business Development function which is managed by the Head of Finance. Fundraising is a standing agenda item on the Finance Committee and this sub-committee of the Board scrutinises all fundraising activity on a bi-monthly basis.

The charity regularly seeks input and advice from Experts by Experience and Advocates by Experience, including those on the Board, on the impacts of all its activities, including fundraising, on vulnerable people and no issues with its fundraising activity have been raised.

Fundraising activity this year includes the Together for 30 anniversary fundraising campaign that saw 26 fundraisers take part in a 30-mile challenge that raised £5,107. We are also grateful for core funding from Lloyds Foundation, Sir James Knott Trust, and Garfield Weston Foundation who have supported us to strengthen our operations and to increase co-production approaches across our organisation this year.

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment. In particular, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have been considered. Based on these assessments, the trustees have concluded that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.



PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Over the coming year, we will use our organisational strategy and the priorities it outlines to focus our efforts on making progress in a number of key areas.

We want to grow our advocacy offer beyond the statutory services we deliver

We see a number of the people we support through our IMHA service readmitted to hospital. We want to be able to offer support to people after they move out of hospital to see if we can help them settle back into life in the community. We've also recognised there is a growing need from parents with learning disabilities, particularly around child protection proceedings, and we want to position ourselves to offer more help in this area and to reach more people.

We want to employ more people with lived experience

Our Co-Production Team has been reviewing our approach to co-production and co-design. We are committed to investing in co-production which will mean employing more people with lived experience and creating more leadership roles for people with lived experience, and ensuring these roles are representative of all of the groups we deliver services to. To do this successfully, we will need to make sure our policies and procedures and the systems and processes we use are accessible to our lived experience colleagues. Looking outward, we also want to use our influence to challenge and support other organisations to increase opportunities for co-production in the work that they do.

We want to improve how we measure and articulate our impact

We need to develop how we understand the difference we're making for the people we support, thinking about what we measure, the data we capture and how we provide opportunities for people to give us feedback about our services.

This will be a real challenge as some of our clients are profoundly disabled and may not be able to directly feed back to us, but we're committed to exploring creative ways to understand the quality of service we provide to all our clients. We also want to give people an opportunity to stay in contact with us so that we can continue to have conversations with them about what matters to them and the role we can play in supporting them in future to achieve the things they want to achieve.

We want to tell our story

We will work to raise our profile so that we can influence others on behalf of our beneficiaries, and so we can continue to attract investment from funders and commissioners in order to provide much needed support to the people we work with. We'll be looking at capturing more stories that demonstrate the difference we can make and will be looking at how to use social media and other platforms to increase our reach.

We want to be a fantastic place to work

Our staff and volunteers have been incredible during the last couple of years. They've coped amazingly well with all the changes and challenges that Covid has brought, and have gone above and beyond to ensure the people we work with have been safe and well. We want to make sure that we invest in their development and nurture their creativity, commitment and passion. We're a growing team and we can harness the fantastic skills and experience that our existing staff have to enable our newer team members to develop. We also want to push ourselves to learn and grow as an organisation, so we want to ensure all our teams have the tools and resources they need to be innovative and creative and feel fulfilled and supported at work.

Your Voice Counts

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Your Voice Counts for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each trustee has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information. The trustees confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and of which they know the auditor is unaware.

Reappointment of auditor

MHA Tait Walker were appointed to the company in February 2022 after a tender exercise.

Azets Audit Services Limited, trading as Azets Audit Services, were appointed auditor to the company following their acquisition of the trade of Tait Walker LLP, trading as MHA Tait Walker, on 1 May 2022.

In accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006, a resolution for the re-appointment of Azets Audit Services as auditors of the charity is to be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 7.11.2022 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
C D Gates
Trustee

Your Voice Counts

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Your Voice Counts

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Your Voice Counts (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2022, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising Charities SORP - FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

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

Your Voice Counts

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Your Voice Counts

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities (set out on page 27), the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

- Enquiries with management about any known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Reviewing board minutes;

Your Voice Counts

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Your Voice Counts

- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their significant accounting estimates;
- Review financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations; and
- Auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness.

Because of the field in which the charity operates, we identified the following areas as those most likely to have a material impact on the financial statements: Health and Safety; employment law; and compliance with both the UK Companies Act and UK Charities Act.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with the ISAs (UK). For instance, the further removed non-compliance is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the auditor is to become aware of it or to recognise the non-compliance.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Simon Brown BA ACA DChA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
Azets Audit Services
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Bulman House
Regent Centre
Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 3LS

Date: 10.11.2022

Azets Audit Services is a trading name of Azets Audit Services Limited

Your Voice Counts

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2022 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	10,135	-	10,135	11,703
Charitable activities	4	734,036	396,237	1,130,273	1,048,692
Investment income	5	1,355	-	1,355	2,723
Other income	6	2,394	-	2,394	422
Total Income		<u>747,920</u>	<u>396,237</u>	<u>1,144,157</u>	<u>1,063,540</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	7	<u>(799,612)</u>	<u>(262,029)</u>	<u>(1,061,641)</u>	<u>(993,006)</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>(799,612)</u>	<u>(262,029)</u>	<u>(1,061,641)</u>	<u>(993,006)</u>
Net (expenditure)/income		<u>(51,692)</u>	<u>134,208</u>	<u>82,516</u>	<u>70,534</u>
Net movement in funds		(51,692)	134,208	82,516	70,534
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>368,800</u>	<u>132,884</u>	<u>501,684</u>	<u>431,150</u>
Total funds carried forward	19	<u><u>317,108</u></u>	<u><u>267,092</u></u>	<u><u>584,200</u></u>	<u><u>501,684</u></u>

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

Your Voice Counts

Comparative Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2021 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)


	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2021 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	3	11,703	-	11,703
Charitable activities	4	731,716	316,976	1,048,692
Investment income	5	2,723	-	2,723
Other income	6	422	-	422
Total income		<u>746,564</u>	<u>316,976</u>	<u>1,063,540</u>
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	7	<u>(731,659)</u>	<u>(261,347)</u>	<u>(993,006)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(731,659)</u>	<u>(261,347)</u>	<u>(993,006)</u>
Net income		14,905	55,629	70,534
Transfers between funds		<u>(16,308)</u>	<u>16,308</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		(1,403)	71,937	70,534
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		<u>370,203</u>	<u>60,947</u>	<u>431,150</u>
Total funds carried forward	19	<u><u>368,800</u></u>	<u><u>132,884</u></u>	<u><u>501,684</u></u>

Your Voice Counts

(Registration number: 06654142) Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	7,006	11,850
Current assets			
Debtors	13	367,328	71,566
Investments	14	79,287	79,287
Cash at bank and in hand	15	318,831	391,514
		<u>765,446</u>	<u>542,367</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	16	<u>(188,252)</u>	<u>(52,533)</u>
Net current assets		<u>577,194</u>	<u>489,834</u>
Net assets		<u>584,200</u>	<u>501,684</u>
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted		<u>267,092</u>	<u>132,884</u>
Unrestricted income funds			
Designated funds		151,510	103,193
Unrestricted funds		<u>165,598</u>	<u>265,607</u>
Total unrestricted funds		<u>317,108</u>	<u>368,800</u>
Total funds	19	<u>584,200</u>	<u>501,684</u>

The financial statements on pages 31 to 46 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 7.11.2022 and signed on their behalf by:



 M Ife
 Trustee

Your Voice Counts

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash income		82,516	70,534
Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items			
Depreciation		4,844	4,586
Investment income	5	(1,355)	(2,723)
Current asset investment income		-	(821)
		<u>86,005</u>	<u>71,576</u>
Working capital adjustments			
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	13	(295,762)	17,747
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	16	719	(20,054)
Increase in deferred income		<u>135,000</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities		<u>(74,038)</u>	<u>69,269</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest receivable and similar income	5	1,355	2,723
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	12	<u>-</u>	<u>(7,957)</u>
Net cash flows from investing activities		<u>1,355</u>	<u>(5,234)</u>
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents		(72,683)	64,035
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April		<u>391,514</u>	<u>327,479</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		<u><u>318,831</u></u>	<u><u>391,514</u></u>

All of the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the above two periods.

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

1 Charity status

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

The address of its registered office is: 14-16 Greenesfield Business Centre Mulgrave Terrace,, Gateshead,, England,, NE8 1PQ

2 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

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

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). They also comply with the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011.

Basis of preparation

Your Voice Counts meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

These financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the entity and rounded to the nearest £.

Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charity.

Estimation uncertainty and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported.

There are considered to be no significant judgements (apart from those involving estimations) that management has made in the process of applying the entity's accounting policies which effect the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Income and endowments

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

Donations and legacies

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the charity before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Grants receivable

Grants are recognised when the charity has an entitlement to the funds and any conditions linked to the grants have been met. Where performance conditions are attached to the grant and are yet to be met, the income is recognised as a liability and included on the balance sheet as deferred income to be released.

Deferred income

Deferred income represents amounts received for future periods and is released to incoming resources in the period for which, it has been received. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting periods; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Investment income

Investment income is included when receivable.

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Charitable activities

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

Support costs

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, for example, allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and trustees's meetings and reimbursed expenses.

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

Government grants

Government grants are recognised based on the accrual model and are measured at the fair value of the asset received or receivable. Grants are classified as relating either to revenue or to assets. Grants relating to revenue are recognised in income over the period in which the related costs are recognised. Grants relating to assets are recognised over the expected useful life of the asset. Where part of a grant relating to an asset is deferred, it is recognised as deferred income.

Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Fixtures and fittings	25% reducing balance
Computer equipment	33% straight line

Current asset investments

Current asset investments are included at the lower of cost and net realisable value / market value.

Trade debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

Trade creditors

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charity does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside for specific purposes at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided.

Agency accounting

The charity acts as an agent in distributing funds under the NHS Charities Together Community Partnership Grants Programme. Payments received and subsequently disbursed are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities as the charity does not have control over the charitable applicable of the funds.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2022 £
Regular giving and capital donations	9,311	9,311
Government grants - HMRC furlough claims	824	824
	<u>10,135</u>	<u>10,135</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2021 £
Regular giving and capital donations	4,748	4,748
Government grants - HMRC furlough claims	6,955	6,955
	<u>11,703</u>	<u>11,703</u>

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Advocacy	679,873	49,715	729,588
Grants	54,163	346,522	400,685
	<u>734,036</u>	<u>396,237</u>	<u>1,130,273</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £
Advocacy	703,999	-	703,999
Grants	27,717	316,976	344,693
	<u>731,716</u>	<u>316,976</u>	<u>1,048,692</u>

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2022 £
Interest receivable and similar income; Interest receivable on bank deposits	<u>1,355</u>	<u>1,355</u>
	<u>1,355</u>	<u>1,355</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2021 £
Interest receivable and similar income; Interest receivable on bank deposits	<u>2,723</u>	<u>2,723</u>
	<u>2,723</u>	<u>2,723</u>

6 Other income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2022 £
Other income	<u>2,394</u>	<u>2,394</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2021 £
Other income	<u>422</u>	<u>422</u>

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

7 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Activity undertaken directly £	Activity support costs £	2022 £	2021 £
Salaries and related costs	729,480	192,359	921,839	881,796
Premises costs	-	19,697	19,697	45,156
Insurances	-	2,370	2,370	2,183
Light and heat	-	3,923	3,923	2,370
Telephone and internet	6,572	3,530	10,102	10,143
Postage and stationery	281	1,507	1,788	6,175
Bank charges	524	-	524	392
Legal and professional services	6,578	4,835	11,413	19,572
Training costs	6,088	3,049	9,137	6,325
Subscriptions	727	-	727	85
Room hire	5,701	-	5,701	2,998
Travelling expenses	9,600	240	9,840	3,035
Repairs and maintenance	720	-	720	816
Volunteer expenses	205	-	205	686
Accountancy/audit fees	-	5,500	5,500	5,700
Depreciation	4,844	-	4,844	4,586
Other costs	26,811	26,500	53,311	988
Total for 2022	<u>798,131</u>	<u>263,510</u>	<u>1,061,641</u>	<u>993,006</u>

8 Analysis of governance and support costs

Governance costs

	2022 £	2021 £
Audit fee	<u>5,500</u>	<u>5,700</u>

9 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

10 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	818,579	754,534
Social security costs	58,860	60,280
Pension costs	42,565	36,714
	<u>920,004</u>	<u>851,528</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2022 No	2021 No
Management	3	3
Finance	1	1
Advocacy, Communities and Operations	44	42
	<u>48</u>	<u>46</u>

During the year, the charity made redundancy and/or termination payments which totalled £Nil (2021 - £10,675).

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £58,678 (2021 - £54,039).

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2021	7,879	21,930	29,809
At 31 March 2022	7,879	21,930	29,809
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2021	4,724	13,235	17,959
Charge for the year	789	4,055	4,844
At 31 March 2022	5,513	17,290	22,803
Net book value			
At 31 March 2022	2,366	4,640	7,006
At 31 March 2021	3,155	8,695	11,850

13 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	365,490	70,871
Prepayments	-	660
Other debtors	1,838	35
	<u>367,328</u>	<u>71,566</u>

14 Current asset investments

	2022 £	2021 £
Short term deposits	<u>79,287</u>	<u>79,287</u>

15 Cash and cash equivalents

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash on hand	75	316
Cash at bank	<u>318,756</u>	<u>391,198</u>
	<u>318,831</u>	<u>391,514</u>

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	15,931	22,449
Other taxation and social security	16,902	14,198
Other creditors	584	735
Accruals	19,835	15,151
Deferred income	135,000	-
	<u>188,252</u>	<u>52,533</u>
	2022 £	2021 £
Resources deferred in the period	<u>135,000</u>	<u>-</u>

17 Obligations under leases and hire purchase contracts

Operating lease commitments

Total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Other		
Within one year	37,020	37,420
Between one and five years	<u>49,440</u>	<u>62,050</u>
	<u>86,460</u>	<u>99,470</u>

18 Pension and other schemes

Defined contribution pension scheme

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge for the year represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £42,565 (2021 - £36,714).

Contributions totalling £3,304 were payable to the scheme at the end of the year and are included in creditors.

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

19 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted funds					
<i>General</i>					
General	265,607	747,920	(758,075)	(89,854)	165,598
<i>Designated</i>					
Business development	50,949	-	(17,628)	12,545	45,866
Finance development	15,476	-	(3,013)	-	12,463
Communities team	23,268	-	(11,634)	11,634	23,268
Marketing and communications	7,500	-	(5,420)	8,000	10,080
IT infrastructure	6,000	-	(3,842)	6,000	8,158
Co-production	-	-	-	28,894	28,894
Admin development	-	-	-	22,781	22,781
	<u>103,193</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(41,537)</u>	<u>89,854</u>	<u>151,510</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>368,800</u>	<u>747,920</u>	<u>(799,612)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>317,108</u>
Restricted funds					
Operations	534	-	-	-	534
Community	128,044	346,522	(258,513)	-	216,053
Advocacy	<u>4,306</u>	<u>49,715</u>	<u>(3,516)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>50,505</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>132,884</u>	<u>396,237</u>	<u>(262,029)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>267,092</u>
Total funds	<u>501,684</u>	<u>1,144,157</u>	<u>(1,061,641)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>584,200</u>

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted funds					
General					
General	370,203	746,564	(731,659)	(119,501)	265,607
Designated					
Business development	-	-	-	50,949	50,949
Finance development	-	-	-	15,476	15,476
Communities team	-	-	-	23,268	23,268
Marketing and communications	-	-	-	7,500	7,500
IT infrastructure	-	-	-	6,000	6,000
	-	-	-	103,193	103,193
Total unrestricted funds	370,203	746,564	(731,659)	(16,308)	368,800
Restricted					
Operations	13,134	-	(13,134)	534	534
Community	47,813	306,976	(242,519)	15,774	128,044
Advocacy	-	10,000	(5,694)	-	4,306
Total restricted funds	60,947	316,976	(261,347)	16,308	132,884
Total funds	431,150	1,063,540	(993,006)	-	501,684

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

Transfers are made due to capital expenditure in the period.

Designated Funds:

YVC has designated funds for Strategic development (£97,193) and IT infrastructure (£6,000).

Restricted Funds:

Restricted funds represent funds received from statutory sources and grant funders where use of the funds has been specified by the funder. YVC classifies these by business area.

- Advocacy reserves are mainly from statutory sources and are predominantly to be used for advocacy in Newcastle and South Tyneside.
- Communities reserves are mainly from grant funders and are to be used in a variety of individual projects in areas such as Gateshead and South Tyneside.
- Operations reserves are predominantly for core costs.

Your Voice Counts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total funds at 31 March 2022
	General	Designated		
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	7,006	-	-	7,006
Current assets	158,592	151,510	267,092	577,194
Total net assets	165,598	151,510	267,092	584,200
Unrestricted				
	General	Designated	Restricted	Total funds at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	11,850	-	-	11,850
Net current assets/(liabilities)	253,757	103,193	132,884	489,834
Total net assets	265,607	103,193	132,884	501,684

21 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.

22 Agency arrangements

The charity distributes funds to partners under the NHS Charities Together Community Partnership Grants Programme. In the accounting period ending 31 March 2022, the charity received £47,433 and disbursed £47,433. An amount of £nil is included in creditors at the year end.



**Thank you to all
of our partners
and funders who
supported us
during 2021/2022.
We are grateful for
your support and
look forward to more
joint-working so
we can continue to
support the people
who need us.**

Baily Thomas Charitable Fund

Community Foundation Tyne and Wear and
Northumberland

Garfield Weston Foundation

Gateshead Council

Lloyds Foundation

Mencap Let's Get Digital Fund

National Lottery Community Fund

NHS Charities Together

Shears Foundation

Sir James Knott Trust

South Tyneside CCG

South Tyneside Council (Covid Community
Champions)

1989 Willan Charitable Trust

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