

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 06827297 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1128497

Report of the Trustees and
Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st March 2024
for
Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire

Richards Sandy Audit Services Limited
(Statutory Auditor)
Thorneloe House
25 Barbourne Road
Worcester
WR1 1RU

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

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for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

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**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Reference and Administrative Details
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

TRUSTEES

S Lister (Chair)
H Fenton (resigned 13.12.23)
P Y Griffith
B Griffiths
M E Jenkins
R Tyler (Treasurer)
O T Cleary (resigned 17.4.24)
J C Jones
D A Wiltshire
S J Furnival (appointed 24.1.24)

MANAGEMENT TEAM

G Thomas	Chief Executive
S Reeves	Advice Service Manager
D George	"SmartMove" Service Manager
A Limbert	Advice Services and WAN Partnership Manager
S Gregory	Advice Service Manager

COMPANY SECRETARY

G R Thomas

REGISTERED OFFICE

The Hopmarket
The Foregate
Worcester
Worcestershire
WR1 1DL

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER 06827297 (England and Wales)

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1128497

AUDITORS

Richards Sandy Audit Services Limited
(Statutory Auditor)
Thorneloe House
25 Barbourne Road
Worcester
WR1 1RU

BANKERS

Unity Trust Bank Plc
4 Brindley Place
Birmingham
B1 2HB

BANKERS

CCLA Fund Managers Limited
One Angel Lane
London
EC4R 3AB

Clydesdale Bank PLC (trading as Virgin
Money)
177 Bothwell Street
Glasgow
G2 7ER

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The Charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the prevention of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in and around Worcester City, Worcestershire, Herefordshire and surrounding areas.

We aim to:

- Provide the advice people need for the problems they face
- Improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives
- Help prevent homelessness through advice, advocacy, practical assistance and support to those in need

Significant activities

The Charity provides free, confidential, impartial and independent advice and information for the benefit of the local community and seeks to exercise a responsible influence on the development of social policies and services and to ensure individuals do not suffer through a lack of knowledge or inability to express their needs effectively. In addition, the Charity provides advice; information, practical assistance and support, through the operation of a "SmartMove" deposit guarantee scheme and "SmartLets" social lettings agency, to the single homeless and those at risk of homelessness in Worcestershire.

These services are delivered to users from our main premises in the Hopmarket and Lowesmoor in Worcester and St Owen Street in Hereford. General advice services are also provided at a number of other locations within Worcester City including at St. Richards Hospice and also at outreach locations across Herefordshire at Ross on Wye, Bromyard, Leominster, Kington and in 2023/24 at Newton Farm in South Hereford. In addition during 2023/24 'pilot outreaches' at Peterchurch in the rural south west of the county and The Hereford Veterans Support Centre were also tested as part of developing and increasing our reach to clients across Herefordshire.

The Charity also provides other services across Worcestershire, Herefordshire and for some specialist advice services or projects for specific client groups this can include clients from surrounding counties such as Gloucestershire. We provide specialist advice under contract to the Legal Aid Agency in housing law to include a Housing Possession Court Desk Scheme in Kidderminster and Redditch as well as Worcester and Hereford County Courts. We also operate our SmartMove and SmartLets schemes to provide assistance to the single homeless in a number of districts in Worcestershire. We also deliver a Macmillan welfare benefits advice service for those with a cancer diagnosis, their families and carers across Worcestershire (in partnership with Citizens Advice Wyre Forest) and in Herefordshire. Services delivered in locations other than our three main sites are generally provided at premises of partner agencies and/or through home visits to clients. In addition, the Charity provides the face to face element of the Pension Wise guidance service to eligible clients in Worcestershire, Herefordshire and the Cheltenham and Gloucester areas of Gloucestershire as part of a national contract held by Citizens Advice. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic this service was delivered from our own premises and partner locations in the main population centres of the areas covered. However at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic delivery of this service changed from a face to face service to a national telephone service to which we have contributed. During 2022/23 some face to face Pension Wise appointments were re-introduced in addition to telephone appointments. This partial delivery of face to face Pensionwise Guidance has continued into 2023/24. These face to face appointments have been delivered from our offices in Worcester and Hereford and the demand has been such that we have attracted clients from Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire and surrounding counties and Wales.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Our Service Delivery During 2023/24.

We have now established multiple channels for client to access and receive help from our advice and housing services, following the pandemic.

During 2023/24 access to our services was available as follows:

Worcester Services

- Worcestershire Adviceline, (including a facility for Worcester callers to leave a voicemail in order to receive a call back from an adviser), which is open from 10am - 4pm Monday - Friday.
- A text and call back service, where client can leave their name, postcode and the advice subject area in which they require advice (e.g. benefits debt or housing) at any time. They will then be called back within five working days to receive telephone advice and if the case is more complex or as required, a follow up appointment by telephone or face to face will be arranged. (Call backs are made by our volunteer advisers from Monday - Friday across the year except during bank holiday and between Christmas and New Year).
- An email and call back service, where the client can outline their problem. They will then be provided with information or advice by email if this possible or emailed/called back within five working days to receive further email or telephone advice. If the case is more complex or as required, (which usually happens due to the complexity of many clients' problems) a follow up appointment by telephone or face to face will be arranged. (Call backs are made by our volunteer advisers from Monday - Friday across the year except during bank holiday and between Christmas and New Year)
- An open door drop-in service for three days a week on Tuesday morning, Wednesdays afternoon and Thursday morning.
- Face to face appointments after initial contact are available five days a week and are arranged at our Hopmarket or Lowesmoor offices depending on the service the client requires.
- Appointments are also available at outreaches where funders have commissioned services such as benefits advice/casework service at St Richards Hospice, outreach locations for our Macmillan benefits casework service and SmartMove outreaches such as in Kidderminster

Herefordshire Services

- Worcestershire Adviceline, (including a facility for Worcester callers to leave a voicemail in order to receive a call back from an adviser), which is open from 10am - 4pm Monday - Friday.
- A text and call back service, where client can leave their name, postcode and the advice subject area in which they require advice (e.g. benefits debt or housing) at any time. They will then be called back within five working days to receive telephone advice and if the case is more complex or as required, a follow up appointment by telephone or face to face will be arranged. (Call backs are made by our volunteer advisers from Monday - Friday across the year except during bank holiday and between Christmas and New Year).
- An email and call back service, where the client can outline their problem. They will then be provided with information or advice by email if this possible or emailed/called back within five working days to receive further email or telephone advice. If the case is more complex or as required, (which usually happens due to the complexity of many clients' problems) a follow up appointment by telephone or face to face will be arranged. (Call backs are made by our volunteer advisers from Monday - Friday across the year except during bank holiday and between Christmas and New Year)
- An open door drop-in service for three days a week on Tuesday morning, Wednesdays afternoon and Thursday morning.
- Face to face appointments after initial contact available cross five days a week and are arranged at our Hereford Office and our outreaches in the market towns of Bromyard, Kington, Leominster, and Ross on Wye and at other outreaches where funders have commissioner services such as the Hope Centre Bromyard, outreach locations for our Macmillan benefits casework service. In addition during 2023/24 'pilot outreaches' at Peterchurch in the rural south west of the county and The Hereford Veterans Support Centre were also tested as part of developing and increasing our reach to clients across Herefordshire.

Volunteers Advisers deliver advice by phone or face to face from our offices in Worcester and Herefordshire as team working is one of the benefits of volunteering. However some volunteers still choose to volunteer from home for using the Voipfone technology we invested in during the pandemic and the new Adviceline 'Connect' technology which is accessed via computer via the internet.

Public benefit

The trustees confirm that the charity has complied with the duty in section 17(5) of the 2011 Charities Act to have due regard to guidance on public benefit when reviewing its aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Contribution of Volunteers

The Charity receives help and support in the form of voluntary assistance in advising the public and the charity's administration. Generalist advice is provided almost entirely by volunteers and without their time and commitment we would be unable to deliver this service. During the last 12 months we recruited and trained 34 new volunteers: 20 at our sites in Herefordshire and 14 in Worcester City. In total 117 volunteers contributed approximately 31,922 hours of work to the charity in 2023/24. This is roughly the equivalent of 16.6 full-time posts; we estimate the value of this help at around £623,692 per annum.

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

The Charity reviews its aims, objectives and activities each year. This is undertaken as part of an overall review of our service strategy and business plan. The review looks at the outcomes achieved from our activities and the benefits to users of our services and those we aim to help. This review helps us to ensure our aims, objectives and activities remain focused on our stated purposes. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and when planning future activities. Specifically, we consider how planned activities will contribute to our overall aims and objectives.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities

Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire (previously known as Worcester Citizens Advice Bureau & WHABAC) was brought about following the merger of Worcester CAB and Worcester Housing & Benefits Advice Centre on the 1 April 2009. The charitable company passed a special resolution on 15th December 2022 changing its name from Worcester CAB & WHABAC to Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire. The main areas of charitable activity are the provision of advice and support. Advice services are largely delivered through the provision of a Citizens Advice Service enhanced by additional projects targeted at specific groups in need and the provision of legal help in housing matters for those eligible. In addition, we provide practical assistance and support to the single homeless to secure and retain suitable accommodation. These areas of activity are complementary to each other and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

In total during the year 14,852 individuals have benefitted from our services. This exceeded last year's figure (14,155 individuals in 2022/23) by 4.9%. If we include dependents, spouses and partners, this figure of 14,852 individuals rises to over 29,950 people. Over the last 12 months the proportion of clients who are aged 50 years or over, (who represent 64% of all clients helped) has remained at a similar level to last year (65.6% in 2022/23). However, the number of clients with a disability and/or long term health condition has increased again to 50% of all clients when compared to last year's figure of 49% of all clients. We dealt with 18,682 individual enquires during the year (an increase of 9.2% compared to 2022/23) resulting in around 45,393 contacts made with or on behalf of clients including telephone contacts and those made via letter, email and face to face contacts, (an increase of 11.9% increase compared to 2022/23). Over 37,577 separate issues were recorded, (an increase of 11.3% increase compared to 2022/23), with 80% of these our top five advice areas relating to benefits, housing, debt, charitable support and financial capability/services. On the basis of these figures therefore it does appear that our clients have an increasing number of issues on which they require advice and the nature of these problems is such that they are of greater complexity which requires more help from our advisers (in terms of the contacts our advisers have with our clients contacts and/or contacts with third party organisations on behalf of our clients). A more detailed report on our main areas of activity follows below:

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
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**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

Advice Services

In addition to the general advice services provided to the public we also delivered a number of other advice services, targeted at specific client groups or those in particular circumstances. The performance of these services is outlined below:

- 1,280 individual clients received help from the Macmillan welfare benefits advice service for those with a cancer diagnosis, their families and carers across Worcestershire (in partnership with Citizens Advice Wyre Forest) and in Herefordshire. This was an increase of 8.2% compared to 2022/23 (1,183 in 2022/23). The total financial gains for clients and their families during the period was £3,634,345
- 1275 individual clients were assisted through funding from the Money Advice and Pensions Service to deliver face to face debt advice, in Worcester and Herefordshire. 1,194 of these represented new client cases during the year, (1354 new client cases were opened during 2022/23). This represented a drop on the previous year as a result of the retirement of a 0.5FTE Caseworker from 1 May 2023. As a result of a 10% decrease in funding for the national contract held by Citizens Advice with MaPS, (from which delivery is subcontracted to us), we were unable to replace this caseworker due to a recruitment freeze. Despite this the average number new client cases opened per FTE caseworker funded increased from 338 to 341, due to the increasing demand on the service. The work on this project resulted in total debts of £1,498,865 being written off or rescheduled, (£875,636 in 2022/23) and £221,017 of other financial gains being achieved by debt caseworkers and advisers as part of this funded project.
- 368 individual clients in Worcester were helped by our Money Management Adviser funded by Worcester Municipal Charities. 131 individual clients were referred by WMC Grants Committee or by our volunteer advisers to receive help relating to benefit entitlement/income maximisation, energy/water bills, finances and Crisis Support. In addition the Money Management Adviser assisted a further 237 individuals supporting them with multiple issues at our Worcester 'Open-Door Drop-in Advice Service' sessions such as Money Management, Charitable Support and Foodbank, energy/Utilities advice and benefits advice.
- 289 individuals received help at court until 31 July 2023 through the Housing Possession Court Desk (HPCD) Service and from 1 August 2023, through the Housing Loss Prevention Advice Scheme (HLPAS) at Worcester and Hereford County Court. Both of these projects were funded by the Legal Aid Agency. During the year, these projects combined amounted to a rise of 45% on the HPCD figures for 2022/23, (199 individuals in 2022/23). Both projects provided emergency help at court for clients who have rent arrears and are at risk of losing their home as a result of possession proceedings issued by both social and private landlords.
- 134 individual clients received help with housing casework funded as either Early legal Assistance (ELA) under the Housing Loss Prevention Assistance Scheme prior to a County Court possession hearing or as Controlled Work under the Legal Aid Agency Legal Help Scheme.
- 129 individual clients received help with housing and housing related issues through our Housing caseworkers funded as part of our Lottery funded outreach project which includes provision of extra capacity for housing casework that falls outside the scope of the Legal Aid Agency Legal Help scheme.
- 172 Clients were helped by our Benefits Casework Project provided in partnership with students from Worcester University Law School (with financial support from Worcester Municipal Charities). Students volunteering receive training, ongoing supervision and support to help deliver this welfare benefits casework service to clients. 172 clients received advice and assistance from the project in the year and the total new income gained for clients in the period was over £446,745 plus other total financial gains for clients (through maintaining or regaining their previous entitlement to benefits) amounting to an additional £138,156.
- 120 individuals received help with advice and assistance in entitlement and claims for disability benefits such as Personal Independence Payments, Attendance Allowance and Child Disability Living Allowance. This provided total financial benefits to clients of over £233,674. This work was funded by Citizens Advice Core Funding and the work from this project in Worcester was also supported for part of the year by funding from Worcester City Council Task and Finish group which was carried over from the last quarter of 2022/23 to help maximise clients' income and prevent debt. Overall 63% of the total clients helped lived in Worcester (with 42% of the Worcester City clients helped living in the Cathedral, Warndon, Gorse Hill and Rainbow Hill wards in Worcester City that have the highest index of multiple deprivation in Worcester) and 29% of the total clients living in Herefordshire, (with 8% from surrounding districts or postcode not recorded).
- 138 Individual clients received Benefits Advice and Casework to help them appeal decisions of the Department of Work and Pensions in relation to Universal Credit, disability benefits and incapacity benefits. This Specialist Help was provided as a result of part of the Lottery funded Project to provide outreach advice services to provide extra capacity for benefits casework with a focus on Herefordshire. As a result total financial gains through new income for clients and their family amounted to £250,376.
- An additional 83 clients also received specialist benefits advice and casework assistance in Herefordshire as a result of additional lottery funding during 2023/24 to support the additional demand for our services during the Cost of Living Crisis
- 155 individual patients and patients' family members referred to our Benefits Advisers funded by and based at St Richard's Hospice were helped with benefits advice and casework. As a result total financial gains through new income for clients and their family amounted to £429,001. In addition other financial gains for clients amounted to further £46,990 in total.

Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31st March 2024

- 116 individual vulnerable clients (for example with severe and enduring mental health problems or learning Disabilities) were helped with benefits and housing issues by our part time adviser funded by The Lasletts Charity.
- 62 families in Herefordshire with children under 5 who required financial support under the Household Support Fund (HSF4) were given Benefit and Debt Advice from October 2023 - March 2024.
- We delivered two Money management projects in 2023/24, funded by Worcestershire County Council and The Trussell Trust as follows:
 - 221 clients were helped by a full time Money Management Adviser was funded by The Trussell Trust and Worcester Foodbank to provide Debt assessments, advice on budgeting and income maximisation through benefit checks to clients referred by the Worcester Foodbank or who were issued with Foodbank Vouchers by Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire.
 - 100 clients were helped by a part time Money Management Adviser was funded to provide Debt assessments, advice on budgeting and income maximisation through benefit checks to advise referrals from Act on Energy - who work with Worcestershire County Council in the delivery of Energy Advice and energy vouchers to clients eligible for help under the Household Support Fund. This was delivered through The Worcester Advice Network, an advice partnership of Advice organisations in Worcestershire which we lead.

Pension Wise

Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire is one of 38 local Citizens Advice who have been delivering the government's Pension Wise service for the last 9 years. Launched in April 2015, Pension Wise was a new guidance service set up to help people understand their options under the pension freedoms.

In partnership with Coventry Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice Wolverhampton and Citizens Advice Worcester, Shropshire, (who lead the partnership) Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire delivers Pension Wise appointments to people aged 50 and over with a defined contribution pension.

Key statistics

For 2023/24, Pension Wise has delivered 125,562 client transactions across the service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

People using Pension Wise have remained highly satisfied with the guidance they are receiving, with satisfaction ratings remaining consistently high. For 2023/24, Citizens Advice achieved a satisfaction score of 94%.

Services for the Single Homeless:

Citizens Advice Worcester provides a number of private rented sector access schemes aimed at the prevention of homelessness among single people and childless couples; these services are centred on the "SmartMove" deposit guarantee scheme and "SmartLets" social lettings agency. The main focus of this work is in Worcester City but we also provide assistance to single homeless people in other locations in the County. These schemes provide practical assistance and ongoing support to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to secure and retain suitable accommodation. The main achievements and performance of these schemes over the year are outlined below:

- 706 individuals who were single and either homeless or threatened with homelessness were helped through advice, regarding temporary and long term housing options.
- There were 345 applicants to our private rented sector access schemes last year. All applicants received advice and assistance relating to their housing situation. In total 62 were helped to secure and settle into suitable accommodation and 31 of these were housed in properties managed by SmartLets or through the provision of a deposit guarantee bond.
- 98.5% of applicants have a level of vulnerability in addition to the risk of homelessness, most with more than one contributing issue. The most common were: a history of homelessness, a history of offending, mental ill health, drug and/or alcohol problems and poor physical health. 45 had slept rough in the 12 months before approaching SmartMove
- The SmartLets social lettings agency had 90 properties (17 HMO's and 73 self-contained flats) providing 126 units of accommodation under management at the end of March 2024.
- In total as at 31 March 2024 there were 178 tenancies/Licenses across Worcestershire where Citizens Advice Worcester had either provided a deposit guarantee bond to the landlord or was directly managing the property through the SmartLets agency

Fundraising activities

The charity does not actively solicit members of the public for donations, either directly or using a professional fund-raiser. As such the charity is not bound by any voluntary scheme for regulating fund-raising.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Total incoming resources for the year were £2,217,856 (2023: £1,744,381), an increase in total income of £473,475 compared to 2022/23. This must be clarified however on the basis that we received a Access to Justice restricted grant award of £100,000 paid in March 2024, (the first payment of a 5 year grant agreement to deliver specialist welfare benefit advice services) which will be used for expenditure for 11 months during the financial year 2024/25. Expenditure increased for the year to £1,936,011 from £1,682,193 in 2022/23.

Total funds carried forward were £2,064,393 (2023: £1,782,548) of which £1,442,122 (2023: £1,253,886) were unrestricted funds, this includes £597,126 (2023: £597,126) in fixed assets representing three social investment properties providing accommodation for the single homeless.

The future is uncertain in relation to a number of current project funding grants, such as:

- The Money and Pensions Services' Debt Advice Project (MaPSDAP) contract held by Citizens Advice, which we are subcontracted by Citizens Advice to deliver this service in Worcester City and Herefordshire is due to be recommissioned as our current contract ends on 31 March 2025. This contract has already been extended by 3 years from 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2025 and in January 2023 we were advised that the funding to Citizens Advice from The Money and Pensions Service (MaPs) would be cut by 10%, this resulted in a recruitment freeze and as one of our caseworkers retired in May of 2023, this has resulted in us permanently losing funding for 0.5 FTE caseworker.
- Our Pension Wise contract was extended for two years from a April 2022 to 31 March 2024 and again for one year from 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025. At the start of 2023/24 we are therefore unclear whether the service will be recommissioned or the contract will be extended
- Our Macmillan contracts for both Herefordshire and Worcestershire are due to end on 31 December 2024
- Our 4-year National Lottery Community Fund Grant awarded from 1 October 2021 to meet the costs of developing and delivering Citizens Advice generalist advice and specialist advice services at outreach locations in the market towns and other venues across the County of Herefordshire is due to end in September 2025. In addition, this fund also meets the costs of increasing capacity at our central Hereford office through the introduction of open-door drop-in advice sessions and increasing our capacity to deliver specialist Housing Casework and Benefits Casework with a focus on Herefordshire. This has therefore been crucial in us developing and maintaining our services in Herefordshire

Most grants relating to the provision of "core" services are awarded on an annual basis and project funding has been subject to annual renewal and extension over the last 12 months. These agreements will come to an end during 2024/25 with no certainty over their continuation.

We were however awarded a five-year Access to Justice Foundation Grant (funded by the National Lottery) of £100,000 pa from March 2024 to meet the costs of developing and delivering a Specialist Benefits Casework Service across our organisation. This aims to fund in the region of two FTE caseworkers over a five year period

The future overall financial position remains challenging and uncertainty at the end of 2023/24 has been increased as a both the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis has affected the availability of grants from some local funders for our core services. In addition there is a greater amount of competition from charitable organisations for funding - particularly from those charities that provide short term crisis support for individuals in need cope with the cost of living crisis. Similarly running costs are increasing as a result of the cost of living crisis. Trustees have for a number of years recognised the difficulties in sustaining grant funding at current levels and have continued their strategy of investment to both reduce costs and generate income from charitable activities. Most significantly this has included investing in the acquisition of suitable properties to provide accommodation for the single homeless which also generate an income from rents for the Charity to meet the running costs of the project.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Principal funding sources

The Charity is funded from a variety of sources both statutory and charitable.

The largest single source of funding was the grant from Worcester Municipal Charities CIO of £192,938 (2023: £180,316).

Worcester Municipal Charities CIO also provide rent free commercial premises which is valued at £46,240 (2023: £46,240). In addition, 68 units of accommodation for the homeless are managed by Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire on behalf of Worcester Municipal Charities. A management charge of 15% of the rent received is retained by the charity totalling £60,637 (2023: £52,538) which contributed towards the cost of our work with the single homeless. Worcester Municipal Charities are the most significant contributor to meeting the costs of the charity's core activities in Worcester. The Charity would like to acknowledge their gratitude to the continued support of Worcester Municipal Charities.

The Eveson Trust provides a funding contribution to the cost of our work with the single homeless in Worcester. In addition, The John Martin Charity funds similar work in Wychavon. Wyre Forest District Council also fund projects working with the single homeless in Wyre Forest.

Worcestershire County Council also contributed funding to the provision of core advice services delivered by the Charity as part of the Worcestershire Advice Network (WAN), this also included some additional funding to deliver provision for those in need in accordance with the Household Support Fund and to provide Money Management, Debt Assessment and Income Maximisation advice. In addition, Worcester City Council funded core services in relation to the contribution made to preventing homelessness in Worcester and specific initiatives to provide services to the single homeless.

Substantial grants were also received via Citizens Advice from the Money and Pensions Service to provide debt advice in Worcester City and Herefordshire and from the DWP for the delivery of the face to face element of the Governments Pension Wise service in Worcestershire, Herefordshire and the Cheltenham and Gloucester areas of Gloucestershire. During 2022/23 following the Covid-19 pandemic Pension Wise Guidance was delivered as part of a national telephone service, however face to face advice was introduced which we delivered at our offices in Worcester and Hereford.

A number of organisations provided funding specifically for advice work with particular client groups. These include St. Richards Hospice in Worcester, for those receiving their care and Macmillan Cancer Support for those with a cancer diagnosis and their families in Worcestershire and Herefordshire. We also continued to receive payments from the Legal Aid Agency to cover the cost of legal advice on housing matters, provided under contract in the two counties. We also receive a grant from the Laslett's Charity to advise and provide a level of support and casework to vulnerable clients with complex problems.

We were also supported by The Trussell Trust and Worcester Foodbank who currently provide funding in a project which commenced in October 2023, to deliver Money Management, Debt Assessment and Income Maximisation advice to Worcester Foodbank Clients.

Delivery of "core" advice services in Herefordshire is funded from a number of sources including Ross Town Council, Hereford City Council, Bromyard Town Council, The Hope Centre- Bromyard, the Philippa Southall Trust and also other non-restricted funding from Herefordshire Council (from sources such as the Household Support Fund, HSF for specific projects during the year). Income received relating to the "core" service in Herefordshire is "ring-fenced" to ensure expenditure is directly related to our activities in the County.

In addition, in Herefordshire, as a result of the ending of our grant funding from The Henry Smith Charity, (which had provided grant funding which supported our core activities in Herefordshire since 2017), we received an additional payment within our National Lottery Community Fund grant for 2023/24 of £74,391 to support our Outreach Project to help manage maintain our core services during the cost of living crisis to support the Herefordshire Outreach Project funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.

During 2023/24 we successfully applied for a grant from the Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund from the National Lottery to support our SmartMove and SmartLets Projects to meet the potential shortfall we had in our net rents (which contribute towards the costs of these projects) after the figures we received in Q1 due to the loss of some of our properties. The grant was therefore to ensure that we could meet the costs of delivering at our existing capacity and to meet the costs of extra staff capacity to cope with the demand for our services. The grant also included funding for staff time to complete a re-costing of all of our properties to ensure we are working as efficiently as possible and maximising our net rents which contribute to the costs of the project and thus maintain our capacity. All of these objective were successfully achieved. This was particularly important because although we commenced a new accommodation project to house single ex-offenders in Worcester at the start of 2023/24- The Accommodation for Ex Offender (AfEO Project), funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, (DLUHC) through Worcester City Council, our other accommodation Project for the Single Homeless - The Rough Sleepers Accommodation Project (RSAP - also funded by DLUHC) also ended at the end of 2023/24.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reserves policy

The Trustee Board has considered the Charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation and its future plans. It has established a policy that the unrestricted funds not committed, or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the Charity should be between three and six months' operational expenditure.

Budgeted operational expenditure for 2023/24 was £1,717,443 (2023: £1,462,197) (excluding SmartLets property costs); the level of reserves required is therefore between £429,361 and £858,722 (2023: £365,549 and £731,098). The Trustee Board reviewed the level of reserves held during the years 2017/18 and 2018/19. This review took into account the unrestricted fixed assets, consisting of social investment properties, which could be sold in the event of any serious existential threat to the Charity.

As a result of the review the Trustee Board decided to reduce the level of reserves held to nearer to the lower, 3-month figure and they reduced cash reserves through the purchase of a further social investment property which was completed during 2019/20.

The lower level of reserves held is considered by the Trustee Board to be sufficient, in the event of significant reductions in funding, to meet any outstanding commitments and maintain activities at a reasonable level, while efforts to replace lost funding and/or identify and secure alternative sources of income are undertaken. This will allow, if necessary, for a managed reduction in services and resources to minimise the impact on the Charity and its beneficiaries in the short to medium term.

Unrestricted funds currently stand at £1,442,122 (2023: 1,253,886); this includes fixed assets of £604,348 (2023: £613,872), £20,000 (2023: £20,000) designated for the replacement of IT, (this fund has not been used since the pandemic as grants were available during the pandemic for updating of IT to allow more remote working. However given that the organisation understand that Windows 10 no longer being supported from Autumn 2025 we anticipate that this fund will be needed in future). In addition we have a designated fund of £30,000 (2023 £30,000) to meet the cost of repair and redecoration of the Charity's premises.

The present level of reserves (excluding fixed assets) available to the Charity stands at £837,773 (2023: £640,014) (comprising the general fund of £525,389 (2023: £372,892), designated redundancy fund of £262,384 (2023: £217,122) and designated IT and Buildings Funds of £50,000 (2023: £50,000) which represents nearly six months budgeted expenditure, (and only three months expenditure if the designated funds are not included).

Total restricted funds as at 31 March 2024 were £622,271 (2023: £528,662), bringing total charity funds to £2,064,393 (2023: £1,782,548). The restricted fund includes £98K in relation to the Access to Justice Fund which commenced in Mar-24, together with £341K in respect of the value of leasehold property.

In addition, the Charity holds specific funds to cover possible liabilities in relation to the operation of its private rented sector access schemes, SmartMove and SmartLets to include potential losses against deposit guarantee bonds issued to landlords through the SmartMove scheme and meeting leasing commitments and any repairs for which we are responsible in relation to SmartLets properties. The value of these funds is reviewed on an annual basis in line with identified possible liabilities going forward.

The Trustee Board want to maintain healthy reserves in line with their policy, but will continue to monitor the level held, giving consideration to how they can be best used to further the Charity's objectives, both in the short and longer term. The trustees started to review their current Reserves Policy during 2022/23 in order to: (i) look at the level of cash reserves required and (ii) to assess whether some of the organisations current reserves could be invested in a form so they can also fulfil the charity's benefit. This review has been stayed at present given the uncertainty following the Covid -19 pandemic and the subsequent cost of living crisis

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The climate of austerity with cuts in public spending at both the local and national level since 2010, together with the Covid-19 pandemic and future uncertainty due to the cost of living crisis, has continued to have an impact on the Charity's core funding position and the capacity to develop new projects and services.

During the pandemic we were able to manage financially due to successful applications for additional Covid-19 funding for grants released to local authorities and community foundations in 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 the organisation again received additional unrestricted grant income from Covid-19 funding and funding to support the cost of living. In addition since 2023/24 we have also received funding through the Household Support Fund from Worcester County Council and Herefordshire Council to support specific projects that are delivered within the scope of our core service. In addition the support we received from Worcester Municipal Charities provides a strong core service, and we are supported by other local charities in Worcester. However have received reduced funding from other supportive local charities due to the difficulties they have encountered in securing income since the pandemic and cost of living crisis.

As stated in the report of the trustees for 2022/23 our plans for 2023/24 included seeking funding to cope with the continued demand for phone advice - particularly for our text and call back service in Worcester (which we introduced at the start of the pandemic in 2020/21). The organisation was able to secure funding for this from a Citizens Advice Core grant available for 1 year from July 2023, which also assisted to maintain our core services and support the volunteer service

At the start of 2023/24 we were aware that our Henry Smith Grant that met around 40% of the costs of our core Herefordshire Service in Herefordshire was ending after over 5 years of funding since 2017. The core Herefordshire service had been developed since 2017 and supported delivery of our specialist projects in Herefordshire (such as Our Money and Pensions Service Debt Advice and Casework Project) and the expansion of our outreach service through Lottery funding). We were therefore concerned what impact this would have on our services in Herefordshire given the effect of the Cost of Living Crisis. We were however successful in applying for a 1 year variation on our National Lottery Community Fund award of £74,000 for 2023/24. In addition after securing this additional grant we also received an additional Covid Underspend Grant of £43,000 for 2023/24 from Herefordshire Council to support income maximisation and debt support in addition to the continued use of premises to deliver services in Hereford.

Our plans to seek additional funding in Herefordshire have been successful to date since the end of the Henry Smith Grant and also following the award from the national Lottery Community Fund for a 4 year grant funding of £495,000 which commenced in October 2021, to meet the costs of developing and delivering Citizens Advice generalist advice and specialist advice services at outreach locations in the market towns and other venues across the County of Herefordshire.

As a result of these grants and other grant applied for and received during the year we were able to maintain our core services during 2023/24.

Over the next 12 months the Charity's initial priority will again continue to be the maintenance of "core" services at the level during 2023/24, and to maintain the increase made during 2023/24 of the amount of face to face appointments and amount of open door advice drop-in services in Worcester (three days per week funded by core funding) and Herefordshire (three days per week funded by Lottery funding) delivered during 2023/24

In addition to the maintenance of face to face services the organisation is also committed to ensure that other channels such as our telephone advice service through Worcestershire Adviceline and our text and call back service in Worcester and Herefordshire (which we introduced at the start of the pandemic in 2020/21). Our service however will include a general advice service to the public in Worcester City and Herefordshire and the continuation of the private rented sector access schemes SmartMove and SmartLets, which are focused on preventing single homelessness. We will also maintain face to face service for those clients that need this to progress their problems and prevent homelessness.

The organisation however expects funding for our core services to be a challenge over the next few years due to fewer grants available following the Covid-19 pandemic (during which the Government and other organisations released additional grant funding for the emergency need). In addition, the widely predicted increase in demand for our services due to an increase in inflation which resulted in the cost of living' crisis for those on low and medium incomes, has continued to be evidenced from our experience.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

We plan to increase the number of properties under management by our SmartLets social lettings agency over the next 12 months. We managed to sign new agreements with landlords in 2022/23 as part of our project funded by Worcester City Council for the Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme (RSAP) grant to provide accommodation units and support single people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or vulnerably housed, (including former rough sleepers), into shared and self-contained accommodation. However other landlords have decided to sell properties reducing the number of HMO's available to us, this initially continued at the start of 2023/24 however during the year we identified two other properties which we had added to our SmartLets Social Lettings agency during the year. The project workers provide advice and support to people with low care needs to sustain their accommodation as part of this project. As a result of a grant from the Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund from the National Lottery during 2023/24 we have been able to increase our capacity to assess single homeless clients housing need and provide practical help to seek housing and where appropriate, find accommodation through our SmartLets Project. In addition this funding allowed us to complete a comprehensive re-costing of all of our properties and reorganising of our SmartMove and SmartLets Projects to ensure we are working as efficiently as possible and maximising our net rents, (which contribute to the costs of the project) and thus maintain capacity in relation to both our staff support and the accommodation we manage for the single homeless. We will therefore continue to work with local landlords to increase the number of SmartLets properties further as we are expecting the increase in demand for properties for the single homeless to continue over the next 12 months.

We have also continued to review and improve SmartLets administration, and at the end of the 2023/24 we completed a transfer to new improved property management software. It is our aim to assist our Project Workers to identify clients who need assistance to maintain their tenancies (for example through advice to maximise their income and sustain tenancies in the longer term), at the earliest opportunity. We also anticipate that this will also reduce rent arrears in properties managed by SmartLets which help fund the project.

We also hope to re-engage our previous successful partnerships with Crisis and Worcester City Council, in order to look for funding opportunities to sustain and develop our advice and specialist services to prevent homelessness in Worcester City, Herefordshire and surrounding areas.

Although our contracts funded by the Money and Pensions Services via Citizens Advice have been extended to the end of 2024/25; Pension Wise has been extended to 31 March 2025 and the face to face debt advice project (MaPSDAP) has been extended to 31 March 2025, it was not clear at the end of 2023/24 whether these contracts will be extended beyond 2024/25 or recommissioned in their present format. The uncertain future of our face to face debt advice project (MaPSDAP) is a concern given that debt advice and casework has been within our top advice issues for many years.

Our Macmillan contract to provide welfare benefits advice and casework for people affected by cancer in Worcestershire and Herefordshire has been extended to the end of 2024. We will be working with Macmillan and our partners at Citizens Advice Wyre Forest in Worcestershire, to continue to successfully deliver these contracts in order to seek an extension to these services beyond 31 December 2024, and this work was ongoing at the end of 2023/24.

Since taking responsibility for delivering local citizens advice services in Herefordshire since 1 April 2017, we have received premises rent free from Herefordshire Council. There is some uncertainty over the future of these premises and our current premises in Hereford are subject to a council review of the properties within the town hall estate owned by Herefordshire Council. We are currently in discussions with Herefordshire Council in order to look at possible solutions that might be necessary following this review. We therefore intend to develop a new premises policy to secure premises that are centrally located, accessible to our clients and can be provided free by one of our partners (currently the Herefordshire Council) or are affordable over the medium to long term. Central premises based in Hereford are essential in order to deliver and coordinate our activities across Herefordshire, particularly now that we have been successful in gaining funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to develop outreach and make our services more accessible throughout all of Herefordshire.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 23 February 2009 and registered as a charity on 11 March 2009. The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and the powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. New articles were adopted by a special resolution dated 30 January 2014 and New Articles were again adopted by a special resolution dated 3 December 2020. In addition the organisation changed its charitable and company name from Citizens Advice Worcester Bureau & WHABAC to Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire by special resolution on 15 December 2022.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's articles are known as members of the Trustee Board. The maximum number of trustees is 15 who may be elected at the AGM or co-opted by the Trustee Board provided the total number of co-opted trustees does not exceed one third of the total number of trustees. Trustees are elected or appointed for a period of three years but may be re-elected.

New trustees are recruited based on an evaluation of their skills and experience against criteria set by the organisation. The Trustee Board also seeks to ensure that its composition reflects the diversity of the local community and users of the Organisation's services.

Induction and training of new trustees

New trustees are provided with an Induction Pack containing:

- Guidance on the role and responsibilities of Trustee Board members
- The memorandum and articles of association
- The most recent director's report and audited accounts
- The Charity's current business plan
- The most recent annual review report

This is followed up with an induction meeting with the chief executive and/or chair, which provides an opportunity to learn more about the work of the Charity, focus on current board priorities and assess any further training needs. New Trustees will also be invited to visit the offices when the Charity is open to the public which will allow them to better understand the day to day operation of the Charity and the delivery of its services

Organisational structure

The charity is governed by a Trustee Board of up to 15 members who meet at least quarterly to conduct normal business.

The Trustee Board is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the Charity and the Trustees carry the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire and for ensuring the Charity satisfies its legal and contractual obligations.

There is a full-time Chief Executive Officer who is responsible for ensuring the Charity delivers the services specified and that key performance indicators are met. The day to day operational management of the organisation and supervision of staff and volunteers is the responsibility of 4 Service Managers. The Chief Executive Officer and Management Team are also supported by a part time Business Administrator and a full time Financial Administrator.

Qualifying third party indemnity provisions

The Articles of Association states that, to the extent permitted by Companies Act 2006, the Trustee are indemnified out of the assets of the charity in relation to any liability incurred in their capacity as Trustees of the charity.

Related parties

The Charity is a member of Citizens Advice, the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management as well as monitoring progress against these standards. Operating policies are independently determined by the Trustee Board of Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire in order to fulfil its charitable objects and comply with the national membership requirements.

The Charity is also a member of a Homeless Link, the national membership charity for organisations who work directly with people who become homeless in England. The trustees also take active steps to maintain and develop relationships with local authorities e.g. Worcestershire County Council, Worcester City Council, other district councils within the Worcestershire, Herefordshire Council and town councils within Herefordshire. We also have relationships with a number of other organisations including the Legal Aid Agency and other charities including Macmillan Cancer Support, Crisis, Maggs Day Centre, St. Pauls Hostel, St Richards Hospice and Worcester Municipal Charities. We are the lead agency for the Worcestershire Advice Network consisting of the 4 Local Citizens Advice (LCA) in Worcestershire, North and South Worcestershire DIAL and 2 Age Concern District organisations.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Risk management

The Trustee Board consider the major risks that the charity faces on an annual basis when preparing and updating the strategic plan. Where appropriate, systems or procedures are in place to mitigate the risks identified. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to the Charity. Working to the standards to meet the Citizens Advice membership requirements, the Advice Quality Standard (AQS), the Community Legal Service Specialist Quality Mark (SQM) and other quality measures ensure a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the Charity. Policies and Procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the Charity.

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

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

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; 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 proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 13 Nov 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



S Lister - Trustee

**Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of
Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31st March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31st March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the 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 Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 20 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 charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

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 Report of the Independent Auditors 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

**Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of
Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Our 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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Obtained an understanding of the nature of the industry and sector, including the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in and how the charity is complying with the legal and regulatory framework;
- Enquired of management, and those charged with governance, about their own identification and assessment of the risks and irregularities, including known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud; and
- Discussed matters about non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessment of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

As a result of these procedures we consider the most significant laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements are the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Companies Act 2006 (and related legislation), the Charities Act 2011 (and related legislation)), and laws and regulations relating to the employment and payment of staff including, but not limited to, the Employment Rights Act 1996, the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 and the Pensions Act 2008.

We performed audit procedures to detect non-compliances which may have a material impact on the financial statements, which included reviewing the financial statement disclosures. This includes sample testing of monthly payroll records for the calculation of gross wages, payroll taxes and pension costs.

We identified the areas of the financial statements most susceptible to fraud to be management's judgement in allocating expenditure to individual restricted and unrestricted funds, including the allocation of wage costs and general staff overheads. Audit procedures performed included, but were not limited to, reviewing managements reasoning and workings behind these allocations of expenditure.

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

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

**Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of
Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, 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 charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mrs Melissa Jean Godwin (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Richards Sandy Audit Services Limited
(Statutory Auditor)
Thorneloe House
25 Barbourne Road
Worcester
WR1 1RU

Date: 22.11.24

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	4	348,876	428,713	777,589	493,005
Charitable activities	6				
SmartLets property income		354,139	-	354,139	340,417
Advice & support income		504,809	571,564	1,076,373	906,506
Investment income	5	9,755	-	9,755	4,453
Total		1,217,579	1,000,277	2,217,856	1,744,381
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	7				
Advice and support		824,257	893,186	1,717,443	1,462,197
SmartLets property		199,070	19,498	218,568	219,996
Total		1,023,327	912,684	1,936,011	1,682,193
NET INCOME		194,252	87,593	281,845	62,188
Transfers between funds	18	(6,016)	6,016	-	-
Net movement in funds		188,236	93,609	281,845	62,188
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		1,253,886	528,662	1,782,548	1,720,360
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		1,442,122	622,271	2,064,393	1,782,548

The notes form part of these financial statements

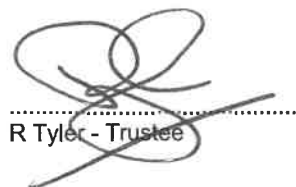
**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire (Registered number: 06827297)**

**Balance Sheet
31st March 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	13	7,222	345,513	352,735	362,259
Social investments	14	597,126	-	597,126	597,126
		<u>604,348</u>	<u>345,513</u>	<u>949,861</u>	<u>959,385</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	15	142,632	36,301	178,933	73,631
Cash at bank		806,297	248,229	1,054,526	860,671
		<u>948,929</u>	<u>284,530</u>	<u>1,233,459</u>	<u>934,302</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	16	(111,156)	(7,771)	(118,927)	(111,139)
		<u>837,773</u>	<u>276,759</u>	<u>1,114,532</u>	<u>823,163</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		<u>1,442,121</u>	<u>622,272</u>	<u>2,064,393</u>	<u>1,782,548</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		<u>1,442,121</u>	<u>622,272</u>	<u>2,064,393</u>	<u>1,782,548</u>
NET ASSETS					
		<u>1,442,121</u>	<u>622,272</u>	<u>2,064,393</u>	<u>1,782,548</u>
FUNDS	18				
Unrestricted funds				1,442,121	1,253,886
Restricted funds				622,272	528,662
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>2,064,393</u>	<u>1,782,548</u>

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

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 13/11/2024 and were signed on its behalf by:


.....
R Tyler - Trustee

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Cash Flow Statement
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	184,100	91,807
Net cash provided by operating activities		184,100	91,807
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received		9,755	4,453
Net cash provided by investing activities		9,755	4,453
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		193,855	96,260
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		860,671	764,411
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		1,054,526	860,671

The notes form part of these financial statements

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Cash Flow Statement
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	281,845	62,188
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	7,411	8,672
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	2,113	-
Interest received	(9,755)	(4,453)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(105,302)	9,279
Increase in creditors	7,788	16,121
Net cash provided by operations	184,100	91,807

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1.4.23	Cash flow	At 31.3.24
	£	£	£
Net cash			
Cash at bank	860,671	193,855	1,054,526
	<u>860,671</u>	<u>193,855</u>	<u>1,054,526</u>
Total	<u>860,671</u>	<u>193,855</u>	<u>1,054,526</u>

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

1. STATUTORY INFORMATION

Citizens Advice Worcester and Herefordshire is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales.

In the event of the charitable company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member.

The charitable company's registered number and registered office address can be found on page 1.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

BASIS OF PREPARING THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £.

INCOME

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

Income from grants (including government grants) and donations is recognised in the period in which the charity is entitled to receipt and the amount can be measured with reasonable certainty. Income from grants is only deferred when the charity has to fulfil conditions not yet met before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Rental and property management income is recognised in line with the periods to which such income relates, up to the extent that it is probable that such income is recoverable. Where recoverability of rental income is in doubt, such income is instead recognised on a cash basis.

Interest income is recognised for all interest-bearing instruments on an accrual basis.

Donated services are recognised in income at fair value at time of receipt, provided that it is practical to assess fair value. Where it is impractical to assess the fair value of donated services, they are not recognised in the financial statements.

EXPENDITURE

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Long leasehold property	- Straight line over 99 yrs, from Aug 2000
Improvements to property	- 15% on cost
Office equipment	- 20% on reducing balance

All fixed assets are initially measured at cost and depreciated as detailed above. Assets costing less than £1,000 are not capitalised.

SOCIAL INVESTMENTS IN PROPERTY

Social investments in property are held primarily for the provision of social benefits in accordance with the objectives of the charity, although rental income is received in regard to these properties.

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

SOCIAL INVESTMENTS IN PROPERTY

Social investments in property are measured at cost less and provisions for depreciation or impairment.

Social investments in property are considered to have a residual value not less than historical cost, and they are subject to a programme of repairs designed to maintain these assets to a high standard. On this basis, no depreciation is charged on these properties.

TAXATION

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

FUND ACCOUNTING

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

PENSION COSTS

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

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

Financial instruments are recognised when the charity becomes party to contractual provisions of the instrument.

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

Basic Financial Assets

Basic financial assets, which include trade and other receivables and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest.

Basic Financial Liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including trade and other payables, are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of future receipts, discounted at a market rate of interest. Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of the operations from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade payables are recognised initially at transaction.

OPERATING LEASES

Rents receivable and payable under operating leases are credited or charge to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the term of the individual leases to which they relate.

FUNDS HELD AS AGENT

Funds received as agent are not recognised as an asset in its accounts because the funds are not within its control. The receipt of funds as agent is not recognised as income nor is its distribution recognised as expenditure.

However, any fee receivable for acting as agent is recognised as income.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

3. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING JUDGEMENTS AND KEY SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical areas of judgements

The allocation of support costs between individual unrestricted and restricted funds is based on the estimated split of staff time for each individual employee of the charity. The allocation of other support costs between individual unrestricted and restricted funds includes some instances where shared overhead costs have been allocated between various restricted and unrestricted funds based on management's estimation of usage of shared facilities between such funds.

Significant judgement is applied when determining whether or not each of the grants received by the charity are subject to conditions that either link the amounts receivable to the achievement of a particular level of service provided or state that elements of the total grant award cannot be spent until future financial periods. Where grant income is considered to be received subject to such conditions, then the element of the total grant award that does not meet the criteria for recognition as at the balance sheet date is not recognised and any cash received in advance of meeting the criteria for recognition is deferred.

4. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations	2,293	1,600
Legacies	1,000	-
Grants	695,537	443,714
Donated services & facilities	78,240	46,240
Miscellaneous income	519	1,451
	<u>777,589</u>	<u>493,005</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Access to Justice Foundation - ILTA (funded by National Lottery)	100,000	-
Albert & Elizabeth Clarke Charitable Trust	-	4,000
Citizens Advice - MAPS IT	7,646	-
The Eveson Charitable Trust	13,000	11,000
The Henry Smith Charity	-	44,500
Hereford City Council	10,000	10,000
Hereford Elgar Rotary	1,000	-
Herefordshire Community Foundation - Resilience Fund	-	10,000
Herefordshire Council	13,337	-
Herefordshire Council - Talk Community	43,000	10,000
Hopmarket Charities	7,000	6,000
John Martin's Charity	13,080	12,530
Lasletts Charities	21,219	20,457
The National Lottery Community Fund - Hereford	123,948	121,517
The National Lottery Community Fund - Hereford Variation	74,391	-
The National Lottery Community Fund - CCLF	64,478	-
The Philippa Southall Trust	7,500	5,500
The Roger & Douglas Turner Charitable Trust	3,000	3,000
Worcester City Council - Crisis Grant Scheme	-	4,894
Worcester Municipal Charity	192,938	180,316
	<u>695,537</u>	<u>443,714</u>

DONATED SERVICES & FACILITIES

The Charity would also like to acknowledge their gratitude to Worcester Consolidated Municipal Charity for the provision of rent free premises at 1/2 Inglethorpe Court and substantially reduced rent and service charges at 13/15 Lowesmoor, the value of this assistance is currently estimated at £46,240 (2023: £46,240).

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

4. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

The Charity is also grateful to Herefordshire Council for the provision of rent free and service charge free premises at No.8 St. Owens Street. The value of this service is currently estimated at £32,000 (2023: £nil).

5. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank interest	<u>9,755</u>	<u>4,453</u>

6. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		2024	2023
	Activity	£	£
Rents received	SmartLets property income	354,139	340,417
Grants and contract income	Advice & support income	1,076,373	906,506
		<u>1,430,512</u>	<u>1,246,923</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bromyard & Winslow Town Council	9,999	9,999
Citizens Advice - Armed Forces Veteran's Pilot	2,000	-
Citizens Advice - Barclays	2,700	4,500
Citizens Advice - CSDF Pot 1	15,000	-
Citizens Advice - CSDF Pot 2	41,500	-
Citizens Advice – Energy Advice Project	15,750	-
Citizens Advice – MaPSDAP - Debt Advice Project	205,369	212,588
Citizens Advice - MaPS - Increasing Debt Advice Capacity	-	3,674
Citizens Advice – Pension Wise	199,169	199,366
Citizens Advice – Universal Credit - Help to Claim	-	(12,327)
Hereford Food Bank	5,000	-
Herefordshire Council - Benefit Support Service	-	4,080
The Hope Centre, Bromyard - Outreach Grant	10,000	10,000
Legal Aid Agency	38,798	31,623
Macmillan Cancer Support	126,003	124,154
Ross Town Council	10,000	10,000
St Richard's Hospice – Palliative Care	37,266	34,987
The Trussell Trust (Worcester Food Bank)	38,730	7,868
Worcester City Council - Accommodation for Ex-Offenders	71,836	-
Worcester City Council - Advice Quality Supervisor	-	20,000
Worcester City Council – Homelessness Prevention	30,000	30,000
Worcester City Council - Income Maximisation / Debt Assessment	-	40,000
Worcester City Council - Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme	38,690	37,557
Worcester Food Bank	15,000	-
Worcestershire County Council - Income Maximisation / Money Advice	-	20,000
Worcestershire County Council – WAN	131,695	90,280
Wyre Forest District Council	31,868	28,157
	<u>1,076,373</u>	<u>906,506</u>

The negative grant of £12,327 repaid to Citizens Advice relates to the clawback of the underspend of funds in relation to the Universal Credit 'Help to Claim' grant funding.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

7. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Support costs (see note 8) £
Advice and support	1,717,443
SmartLets property	218,568
	<u>1,936,011</u>

8. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Advice and support	1,705,276	12,167	1,717,443
SmartLets property	218,568	-	218,568
	<u>1,923,844</u>	<u>12,167</u>	<u>1,936,011</u>

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

			2024	2023
	Advice and support £	SmartLets property £	Total activities £	Total activities £
Wages	1,158,037	-	1,158,037	1,027,634
Social security	89,872	-	89,872	70,070
Pensions	106,397	-	106,397	97,600
Equipment and repairs	46,633	-	46,633	38,607
Insurance	10,675	-	10,675	9,569
Rent, rates and service charges	119,533	-	119,533	72,815
Telephone and postage	25,966	-	25,966	19,149
Printing and stationery	11,810	-	11,810	10,574
Advertising	3,764	-	3,764	7,812
Sundries	14,789	-	14,789	11,408
Education and training	13,302	-	13,302	5,233
Bonds written off	3,885	-	3,885	1,000
Reimbursed expenses	21,219	-	21,219	18,494
Subscriptions	2,650	-	2,650	8,406
Property rental expenses	-	218,568	218,568	219,996
Professional fees	2,309	-	2,309	1,563
Heat and light	6,239	-	6,239	8,593
IT support	48,846	-	48,846	33,419
AFEO incentives and top-ups	9,825	-	9,825	-
Depreciation	7,411	-	7,411	8,672
Loss on sale of tangible fixed assets	2,114	-	2,114	-
Auditors' remuneration	6,180	-	6,180	5,805
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	5,987	-	5,987	5,774
	<u>1,717,443</u>	<u>218,568</u>	<u>1,936,011</u>	<u>1,682,193</u>

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	6,180	5,805
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	5,987	5,774
Depreciation - owned assets	7,411	8,672
Deficit on disposal of fixed assets	2,114	-
Rents payable under operating leases (including donated services)	187,412	156,861
	<u><u> </u></u>	<u><u> </u></u>

10. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st March 2024 nor for the year ended 31st March 2023.

TRUSTEES' EXPENSES

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31st March 2024 nor for the year ended 31st March 2023.

11. STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,158,037	1,027,634
Social security costs	89,872	70,070
Other pension costs	106,397	97,600
	<u><u>1,354,306</u></u>	<u><u>1,195,304</u></u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
	52	50
Average number of employees	<u><u> </u></u>	<u><u> </u></u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

The full time equivalent is estimated to be around 44 (2023: 41).

Total remuneration (including employer NI and pensions costs) paid to key management personnel during the year was £239,019 (2023: £234,565).

12. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	344,689	148,316	493,005
Charitable activities			
SmartLets property income	340,417	-	340,417
Advice & support income	465,647	440,859	906,506
Investment income	4,453	-	4,453
Total	<u><u>1,155,206</u></u>	<u><u>589,175</u></u>	<u><u>1,744,381</u></u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Advice and support	859,102	603,095	1,462,197

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

12. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
SmartLets property	212,938	7,058	219,996
Total	1,072,040	610,153	1,682,193
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	83,166	(20,978)	62,188
Transfers between funds	5,376	(5,376)	-
Net movement in funds	88,542	(26,354)	62,188
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	1,165,342	555,018	1,720,360
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	1,253,884	528,664	1,782,548

13. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Long leasehold property £	Improvements to property £	Office equipment £	Totals £
COST				
At 1st April 2023	408,303	19,175	66,410	493,888
Disposals	-	-	(25,157)	(25,157)
At 31st March 2024	408,303	19,175	41,253	468,731
DEPRECIATION				
At 1st April 2023	62,790	19,175	49,664	131,629
Charge for year	4,485	-	2,926	7,411
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	(23,044)	(23,044)
At 31st March 2024	67,275	19,175	29,546	115,996
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31st March 2024	341,028	-	11,707	352,735
At 31st March 2023	345,513	-	16,746	362,259

14. SOCIAL INVESTMENTS

	Freehold Property £
COST	
At 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024	597,126
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31st March 2024	597,126
At 31st March 2023	597,126

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

15. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	60,417	42,054
Prepayments and accrued income	118,516	31,577
	<u>178,933</u>	<u>73,631</u>

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	6,282	4,057
Social security and other taxes	22,874	19,472
Amounts held as agent	59,424	50,377
Pension creditor	8,570	7,151
Grants repayable	7,771	4,337
Accrued expenses	13,006	10,745
Deferred income	1,000	15,000
	<u>118,927</u>	<u>111,139</u>

Deferred Income

Deferred income consists of grants received within the current financial year where either the donors have stipulated that the funding is to be used within next financial year, or where there are performance-related conditions attached.

All of the previous year's deferred income was released to the statement of financial activities within the current financial year.

17. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	16,518	10,439
Between one and five years	26,875	-
	<u>43,393</u>	<u>10,439</u>

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	389,638	194,251	(51,278)	532,611
Buildings Fund	30,000	-	-	30,000
IT Fund	20,000	-	-	20,000
Redundancy Fund	217,122	-	45,262	262,384
Social Investment property	597,126	-	-	597,126
	<u>1,253,886</u>	<u>194,251</u>	<u>(6,016)</u>	<u>1,442,121</u>
Restricted funds				
Access to Justice Foundation ILTA - Improving Lives Through Advice (funded by National Lottery)	-	98,786	-	98,786
Accommodation for Ex-Offenders Fund	-	3,484	-	3,484
Accommodation for Ex-Offenders - Incentives & Top Ups	-	17,176	-	17,176
Buildings and Office Equipment Fund	345,513	(4,485)	-	341,028
Citizens Advice - CSDF Pot 2	-	10,375	-	10,375
Citizens Advice - Pension Wise	-	(4,109)	4,109	-
Client Welfare Fund - Herefordshire	2,529	-	-	2,529
Crisis Volunteer Fund	2,995	-	(2,995)	-
Discretionary Client Crisis Fund	683	(683)	-	-
Evesham Smartmove Fund - John Martin	9,000	(58)	-	8,942
Homelessness Fund	1,146	(794)	-	352
Household Support Fund 4 - Support for Families with Children Under 5	-	2,034	-	2,034
MaPSDAP	28,966	(4,184)	-	24,782
Money and Pensions Service	5,895	-	-	5,895
The National Lottery Community Fund - Hereford	28,255	(1,663)	-	26,592
Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme	-	(4,902)	4,902	-
SmartLets Fund	42,942	(19,498)	-	23,444
SmartMove Fund	60,738	(3,885)	-	56,853
	<u>528,662</u>	<u>87,594</u>	<u>6,016</u>	<u>622,272</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,782,548</u>	<u>281,845</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,064,393</u>

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,217,579	(1,023,328)	194,251
Restricted funds			
Access to Justice Foundation ILTA - Improving Lives Through Advice (funded by National Lottery)	100,000	(1,214)	98,786
Accommodation for Ex-Offenders Fund	44,836	(41,352)	3,484
Accommodation for Ex-Offenders - Incentives & Top Ups	27,001	(9,825)	17,176
Buildings and Office Equipment Fund	-	(4,485)	(4,485)
Citizens Advice - CSDF Pot 1	15,000	(15,000)	-
Citizens Advice - CSDF Pot 2	41,500	(31,125)	10,375
Citizens Advice - Pension Wise	199,168	(203,277)	(4,109)
Core Herefordshire Fund	33,000	(33,000)	-
Core SmartMove / SmartLets Fund	13,000	(13,000)	-
Discretionary Client Crisis Fund	-	(683)	(683)
Evesham Smartmove Fund - John Martin	13,079	(13,137)	(58)
Hereford Kington Project Fund	10,000	(10,000)	-
Homelessness Fund	-	(794)	(794)
Household Support Fund 4 - Support for Families with Children Under 5	13,337	(11,303)	2,034
MaPSDAP	205,371	(209,555)	(4,184)
Money and Pensions Service - IT	7,646	(7,646)	-
The National Lottery Community Fund - Cost of Living Crisis Fund (CCLF)	39,312	(39,312)	-
The National Lottery Community Fund - Hereford	198,337	(200,000)	(1,663)
Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme	38,690	(43,592)	(4,902)
SmartLets Fund	-	(19,498)	(19,498)
SmartMove Fund	-	(3,885)	(3,885)
Training Fund	1,000	(1,000)	-
	<u>1,000,277</u>	<u>(912,683)</u>	<u>87,594</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>2,217,856</u></u>	<u><u>(1,936,011)</u></u>	<u><u>281,845</u></u>

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	284,652	83,168	21,818	389,638
Buildings Fund	30,000	-	-	30,000
Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureau	47,406	-	(47,406)	-
IT Fund	20,000	-	-	20,000
Redundancy Fund	181,144	-	35,978	217,122
Social Investment property	597,126	-	-	597,126
Social Investment property – proposed spend	5,014	-	(5,014)	-
	<u>1,165,342</u>	<u>83,168</u>	<u>5,376</u>	<u>1,253,886</u>
Restricted funds				
Buildings and Office Equipment Fund	349,998	(4,485)	-	345,513
Citizens Advice - Pension Wise	-	(510)	510	-
Citizens Advice - Remote Working Equipment Fund	5,603	-	(5,603)	-
Client Welfare Fund - Herefordshire	2,529	-	-	2,529
Crisis Volunteer Fund	3,347	-	(352)	2,995
Crowd Funding	143	(143)	-	-
Discretionary Client Crisis Fund	-	683	-	683
Evesham Smartmove Fund - John Martin	7,500	1,500	-	9,000
Homelessness Fund	2,088	(942)	-	1,146
Lottery Covid Fund	1,056	-	(1,056)	-
MaPSDAP	18,682	9,632	652	28,966
Money and Pensions Service	7,476	221	(1,802)	5,895
The National Lottery Community Fund - Hereford	33,247	(4,992)	-	28,255
Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme	-	(1,559)	1,559	-
SmartLets Fund	50,000	(7,058)	-	42,942
SmartMove Fund	61,738	(1,000)	-	60,738
Universal Credit - Help to Claim	11,611	(12,327)	716	-
	<u>555,018</u>	<u>(20,980)</u>	<u>(5,376)</u>	<u>528,662</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,720,360</u>	<u>62,188</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,782,548</u>

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,155,207	(1,072,039)	83,168
Restricted funds			
Buildings and Office Equipment Fund	-	(4,485)	(4,485)
Citizens Advice - Pension Wise	199,366	(199,876)	(510)
Crowd Funding	-	(143)	(143)
Discretionary Client Crisis Fund	4,269	(3,586)	683
Evesham Smartmove Fund - John Martin	12,530	(11,030)	1,500
Herefordshire Community Foundation			
Resilience Fund	10,000	(10,000)	-
Homelessness Fund	-	(942)	(942)
MaPSDAP	212,589	(202,957)	9,632
Money and Pensions Service	3,673	(3,452)	221
The National Lottery Community Fund - Hereford	121,517	(126,509)	(4,992)
Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme	37,557	(39,116)	(1,559)
SmartLets Fund	-	(7,058)	(7,058)
SmartMove Fund	-	(1,000)	(1,000)
Universal Credit - Help to Claim	(12,327)	-	(12,327)
	<u>589,174</u>	<u>(610,154)</u>	<u>(20,980)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,744,381</u>	<u>(1,682,193)</u>	<u>62,188</u>

DESIGNATED FUNDS

Buildings fund

The Trustee Board have designated funds towards the internal redecoration and repair costs of the properties that are leased.

Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureau

This fund represents a donation to the charity upon the closure of Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureau, the trustees had designated this donation for the purposes of delivering Citizens Advice services in Hereford.

IT fund

This fund has been established to meet the costs of replacing hardware and software relating to the IT system over a 4-5 year cycle.

Redundancy fund

This is designated to provide sufficient funds to cover the cost of redundancy.

Social Investment property

This fund has been established to hold the social investment properties, which exists to provide accommodation for the single homeless.

Social Investment property - proposed spend

This fund had been established to allow the purchase of a social investment property to provide accommodation for the single homeless. The balance had been retained to fund future repairs and renovations in the properties, such as a new kitchen and this fund has now been considered spent.

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Access to Justice Foundation ILTA - Improving Lives Through Advice (funded by National Lottery)

Funds received from the National Lottery but delivered and distributed by the Access to Justice Foundation - Improving Lives Through Advice (ATJF - ILTA), for the delivery of welfare benefits casework.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Accommodation for Ex-Offenders Fund

Funds received from Worcester City Council for delivery of Accommodation for Ex Offenders (AFEO).

Accommodation for Ex-Offenders - Incentives & Top Ups

Funds received under the AFEO contract to provide bond payments and incentives to landlords.

Buildings and Office Equipment Fund

A grant specifically made available for the capital funding of a new headquarters and the purchase of equipment.

Citizens Advice - CSDF Pot 1

Funds received via Citizens Advice Core Service Delivery Fund Pot 1 to support or increase direct service delivery capacity, to help clients through the cost of living crisis.

Citizens Advice - CSDF Pot 2

Funds received via Citizens Advice Core Service Delivery Fund Pot 2 to enable the additional remote delivery of advice to more clients via our text and call back service.

Citizens Advice - Pension Wise

Funds received via Citizens Advice from The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) to provide guidance on pensions for those in defined contribution schemes.

Citizens Advice - Remote Working Equipment Fund

This fund represents assets held which were acquired with funding received via Citizens Advice, to provide essential equipment - laptop computers, internet voipphones and complementary computer hardware - to assist staff and volunteers with remote and home working to continue delivering our services during the covid-19 Pandemic.

Client Welfare Fund - Herefordshire

This fund exists to allow small "one off" grants to be made to clients identified as in urgent financial need in Herefordshire.

Core Herefordshire Fund

Funds received from Herefordshire Council to fund volunteer operations and training supervisor and benefits caseworker.

Core SmartMove/SmartLets Fund

Funds received from The Eveson Charitable Trust to be spent on SmartMove/SmartLets activities.

Crisis Volunteer Fund

This fund represents monies for a 12- month project funded by the national charity CRISIS, to increase our capacity to meet the challenges of finding accommodation for the single homeless during the Covid-19 Pandemic. This project also provides training and support for new tenants who were previously homeless to help them maintain their tenancies.

Crowd Funding ('Advice at Home')

A dedicated fund obtained through Worcestershire County Council's Spacehive Crowdfunding page for the purchase of specified internet Voipphone equipment to enable our volunteers deliver advice from their homes and help people in Worcester with the problems they face during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Discretionary Client Crisis Fund

A restricted fund to administer and deliver a Crisis Grant Scheme to provide discretionary grants to clients presenting with an immediate crisis for which there are no immediately available statutory funds.

Evesham Smartmove Fund - John Martin

A restricted fund to cover the costs of Smartmove services delivered in the Evesham area, funded by John Martin's Charity.

Hereford Kington Project Fund

Funds received from Herefordshire Council to provide an outreach post in Kington.

Herefordshire Community Foundation Resilience Fund

A restricted grant to meet the salary costs of our benefits Herefordshire case worker and advice Session Supervisor in Q2 and Q3 to provide resilience to our core services whilst coming out of the Covid pandemic.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Homelessness Fund

Funds to allow "one off" payments to clients in emergencies, particularly to enable them to secure or retain accommodation.

Household Support Fund 4 - Support for Families with Children Under 5

Funds received from Hereford City Council from the Household Support Fund 4, for providing advice services to families with children under 5.

MaPSDAP (formerly MASDAP) - Debt Advice Project

Funds received via Citizens Advice from The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) (formerly from the Money Advice Service and FIF) to provide debt advice to clients in financial difficulty.

Money and Pensions Service - Increasing Debt Advice Capacity

Funds received via Citizens Advice from The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS), to train and employ to a Trainee Debt Caseworker to increase the future capacity of Debt Caseworkers particularly in areas where the Money and Pensions service have assessed that it is anticipated that the balance on this fund due to underspend will be returned to the grant provider in the 2024 accounting period. There is a low Debt Advice and Casework Capacity to meet in demand. This was awarded on the basis of that Herefordshire is a designated area with a particularly low capacity of FCA regulated Debt Casework Services available

Money and Pensions Service - IT

Funds received for purchasing computer equipment to delivery the MaPS Debt Advice Contract across the organisation.

The National Lottery Community Fund - Cost of Living Crisis Fund (CCLF)

Funds received from The National Lottery Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund to help the Smartmove Fund to pay for a proportion of the project's existing staff capacity costs.

The National Lottery Community Fund - Hereford

This is a restricted fund to meet the costs of developing and delivering Citizens Advice generalist advice and specialist advice services at outreach locations in the market towns and other venues across the County of Herefordshire. In addition, the fund also meets the costs of increasing capacity at our central Hereford office through the introduction of open-door drop-in advice sessions and increasing our capacity to deliver specialist Housing Casework and Benefits Casework with a focus on Herefordshire.

Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme

This is a restricted fund to meet the costs of project workers to support single people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or vulnerably housed, into shared and self-contained accommodation. The Project workers provide advice and support to people with low care needs to sustain their accommodation. The project will use existing units of accommodation managed by the organisation as well as completion of an additional 9 moves into new units of accommodation, (not previously held by the Support Provider), during the duration of the project.

SmartLets Fund

A fund to underwrite any losses with regard to leasing costs, guaranteed rent payments and eligible repair costs in relation to properties managed by the SmartLets social letting agency which cannot be met through general funds.

SmartMove Fund

A fund to underwrite losses against deposit guarantees made to landlords through the SmartMove deposit guarantee scheme to enable those on low incomes to access private rented sector accommodation.

Training Fund

Funds received for the purpose of training and development.

Universal Credit - Help to Claim

This fund represents monies received via Citizens Advice from The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to deliver advice and support to clients receiving/ applying for Universal Credit.

TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS

A transfer of £4,109 was made in the year from the unrestricted General Fund to the restricted Citizens Advice - Pension Wise Fund in order to cover the deficit on this fund.

**Citizens Advice Worcester and
Herefordshire**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS - continued

A transfer of £4,902 was also made in the year from the unrestricted General Fund to the restricted Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Fund in order to cover the deficit on this fund.

A transfer of £2,995 was made in the year from the restricted Crisis Volunteer Fund to the unrestricted General Fund. This project ceased in Jun-21 and the balance relates to unspent grant income. The funder has been contacted regarding this underspend but the charity has not received a request to return the unspent funds.

A transfer of £45,262 was made from the unrestricted General Fund to the unrestricted Redundancy Fund in order to reflect the redundancy provision as at 31 March 2024.

19. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

During the year Worcester Municipal Charities CIO provided the use of properties for no or reduced rental value to the charity. The value of the donated rent is £46,240 (2023: £46,240).

Paul Griffith a Trustee of the charity and Geraint Thomas the Chief Officer and Company Secretary are also trustees of Worcester Municipal Charities.

Several properties are managed by Worcester Citizens Advice Bureau & WHABAC on behalf of Worcester Municipal Charities CIO and more details in respect of this arrangement can be found in note 21.

20. FRC ETHICAL STANDARD - PROVISIONS AVAILABLE FOR SMALL ENTITIES

In common with many other businesses of our size and nature we use our auditors to prepare and submit returns to the tax authorities and assist with the preparation of the financial statements.

21. FUNDS RECEIVED AS AGENT

Several properties are managed by Worcester Citizens Advice Bureau & WHABAC on behalf of Worcester Municipal Charities CIO. The charity collected total rent on behalf of Worcester Municipal Charities CIO of £403,315 (2023: £349,477).

The charity retained a Management Charge of 15% of the rent received £60,637 (2023: £52,538) and retained expenses paid by the charity in relation to the running of these properties, (including security/alarm costs, utility and cleaning costs for the communal areas, window cleaning costs, gardening costs, general maintenance repairs and redecoration), totalling £81,796 (2023: £71,707). At the year end the charity owed Worcester Municipal Charities CIO £58,971 (2023: £49,924).

During the year the Charity made applications for grants from St Martins in The Fields Vicar's Relief Fund to prevent individual clients with rent arrears from becoming homeless. These grant awards were not made to individual clients by St Martin in the Fields but made to the Charity as a direct applicant, on condition that the grant amount was paid by the charity to a landlord who agreed that they would not evict a client if their rent arrears were paid in full or reduced by an agreed sum, in order to prevent homelessness. These grants from St Martin in the Fields Vicar's Relief Fund amounted to £10,890 (2023: £13,380). At the end of the year the charity held £453 (2023: £453) received as grant payments from the St Martins in The Fields Vicar's Relief Fund, that had not yet been paid to landlords.

