

SUFFOLK USER FORUM

England & Wales · Charity number 1133457

Details

Other names	SUF
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	06946785
Registered	2010-01-05
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	3 Grange Business Centre Tommy Flowers Drive Kesgrave Ipswich IP5 2BY
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Website	www.suffolkuserforum.co.uk

Activities

Objects: THE CHARITY'S OBJECTS SHALL BE, FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE OF EAST ANGLIA, THE ADVANCEMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH BY: A) IMPROVING PARTNERSHIP WORKING BETWEEN PROVIDERS AND PEOPLE WHO USE SERVICES, AND THEIR FAMILIES, B) THE SAVING OF LIVES BY ADVANCING THE PREVENTION OF SUICIDE, AND C) THE ADVANCEMENT OF CAPACITY AMONGST MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE USERS, BY THE PROMOTION OF VOLUNTEERING AND PEER SUPPORT GROUPS. THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED BY REASON OF MENTAL ILL-HEALTH OR DISABILITY BY PROVIDING SPECIALIST INFORMATION, AND BY PROMOTING SELF-DETERMINATION, EMPOWERMENT, AND ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS. THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION BY PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF MENTAL ILL HEALTH. FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS CLAUSE, 'PROVIDERS' MEANS ALL ORGANISATIONS WHETHER NHS, PRIMARY CARE, SOCIAL CARE, INDEPENDENT OR VOLUNTARY SECTOR, THAT HAVE A DIRECT OR INDIRECT (INCLUDING A COMMISSIONING) ROLE IN SUPPORTING PEOPLE WHO HAVE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS. 'EAST ANGLIA' MEANS THE COUNTIES OF SUFFOLK, NORFOLK AND ESSEX.

Activities: SUF's activities are to ensure that the voice of mental health service users is heard at all levels, including strategic boards and meetings in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. To ensure that the quality of local mental health services delivered across is informed by feedback from users of the service.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability
- **Who:** Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** EAST ANGLIA
- Essex
- Norfolk
- Suffolk

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£267,168	£271,431	-	-
2024-03-31	£326,320	£236,140	-	-
2023-03-31	£300,746	£177,646	-	-
2022-03-31	£173,768	£168,420	-	-
2021-03-31	£218,440	£176,790	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Andrew Paul Good	Chair	2022-03-02
Alison Mary Mudd		2025-04-16
Anna Tanner		2025-04-16
BRIAN PARROTT		2017-10-17
Brian Robert Turner		2022-03-02
Davide Aldrovandi		2025-04-16
Guenever Pachent		2017-11-21
Margaret Little		2024-02-07
Mark Allan Stafford-White		2021-04-28

Accounts



Impact Report

2024 - 2025



your voice for emotional
and mental health

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About Us

Suffolk User Forum (SUF) is an independent mental health user led involvement, peer support and advocacy organisation for adults.

All our staff and trustees have lived experience of mental health as a service user, family/parent carer, or mental health worker.

We make a difference because people know we understand their experiences and genuinely care.

Listening and giving people a voice is central to our work. We make positive changes happen for individuals and we help drive service improvement. As a critical friend we are respected and valued as a strategic partner that shares people's stories, trying to ensure that lived experience is at the heart of service planning, delivery, improvements, and commissioning.

We actively support and facilitate service user and family/parent carer involvement in coproduction, thus influencing decision-making about individuals' care. Valuing individuals as active citizens ensures that their lived experience becomes an essential resource for service improvement.

Our work in 2024/25 included:

- **SUF Peer Led Advocacy**
- **Healthy Together**
- **Coproduction and *Making Our Voice Count* publication**
- **Mental Health Support and Signposting**
- **Suicide Prevention**
- **Our SUF Community Members**



Welcome to our 2024/25 Impact Report

As we reflect on the past year, we are pleased to share the Suffolk User Forum (SUF) Impact Report for 2024/2025. This report outlines the highlights of the reporting year and the team's continued commitment to improving mental health services and support within our community.

We have continued our work as part of the Suffolk Advocacy Partnership this year, alongside our partners POHWER, ACE Anglia, and Suffolk Family Carers. Through this collaboration, SUF Advocates provided advocacy support to 743 mental health inpatients, helping people at a point of crisis.

Now in its third year, the Suffolk Advocacy Partnership has been extended for a further year until 31st March 2026. By working together, we help ensure that people's voices are heard and their rights respected, making a meaningful difference to their lives.

Healthy Together Peer Support continues to make a real difference, having supported over 650 individuals since its launch in 2021. By providing personalised care planning and emotional support, Healthy Together helps people living with severe mental illness (SMI) to access their physical health entitlements and work towards their wellbeing goals.

This year, we held two Stepping Forward events in Stowmarket and Ipswich, where we listened to the experiences of 56 people who had faced mental health crises and used local support services, including 111 (option 2 for mental health) and psychiatric liaison teams in A&E.

The feedback from these events is contained in our *Making Our Voice Count* Report (December 2024). This report shares individual stories and key themes in people's experiences. We are currently working with Healthwatch Suffolk to further explore people's experiences of emergency care for mental health crises, supported by key staff teams in our local acute and mental health trusts.

As we look to the year ahead, we remain firmly committed to our core values of service user leadership and personalisation. We will continue to ensure that the voices of service users and family/parent carers are at the heart of everything we do. We extend our sincere gratitude to our dedicated staff team, trustees, partners, and the wider SUF community for their unwavering support. Together, we will continue to strive for excellence in mental health services and support. Thank you for your continued support.

Guenever Pachent, Chair
and Jayne Stevens CEO



Empowering Individuals

SUF Advocacy



We have continued our role within the Suffolk Advocacy Service this year, providing peer-led mental health advocacy on inpatient wards, delivering crucial support to individuals during times of crisis.

We offer weekly drop-ins at Wedgwood House in Bury St Edmunds and Woodlands at Ipswich Hospital, along with monthly visits to Foxhall House, a secure unit in Ipswich.

Our peer-led advocacy service ensures that all inpatients, including the 57% admitted voluntarily¹ and those detained under the Mental Health Act, have access to advocacy.

By addressing common concerns and empowering patients to engage in their care, SUF not only improves individual outcomes but also contributes to systemic improvements in mental health services.

The positive impact on patients' ability to self-advocate highlights the importance of such services in fostering a more inclusive and responsive healthcare environment.

ADVOCACY OUTCOMES

194 people had their goals met better than expected.

508 people had their goals slightly met better than expected.

57 people had their goals met.

709 people said advocacy helped them have their voice heard.

163 people said advocacy increased their ability to self-advocate.

638

The number of advocacy hours delivered by SUF in 2024/25

743

The number of people SUF provided advocacy support to in 2024/25

814

The number of advocacy needs supported in 2024/25

¹ Mental Health Act Statistics, Annual Figures, 2023-24 - NHS England Digital

Empowering Individuals

Healthy Together Peer Support

This is the second year of our three-year Healthy Together contract, funded by the Suffolk and North East Essex (SNEE) Integrated Care Board. Healthy Together offers peer support to people who live with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) including Schizophrenia, Bi-Polar Disorder, and Psychosis following their Annual Health Checks by primary care practitioners and/or the Suffolk Physical Health Team in Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust for those people receiving care under secondary mental health services.

This year, the project has been extended to provide support for a small number of people living with eating disorders (professional referral only).

Drawing on our lived experience, our Healthy Together Peer Support Workers (PSWs) provide friendly and supportive peer support which is mutual, trauma-informed, and recovery-focused. Our approach is person-centred, offering people options and choices about how they wish to be supported to achieve their healthcare goals. The team work positively with people, championing the protective factors for good physical and mental health and supporting people with previously unidentified and unmet needs.

We have supported over 650 people since the initial pilot project in 2021. This is approximately 20% of people living with an SMI in East and West Suffolk.²

Outcomes for people receiving Healthy Together Peer Support in 2024/25:

We provided Healthy Together Peer Support to **252** people and received **183** new referrals across **265** pathways

We supported 72 people with personal health budgets, funding services like decluttering, dental care, weight loss, addiction support, and wellbeing tools.

92% of referred people use the support and reach their health goals.

"I've had support workers before but honestly no one has come close to you. You've been there for my meetings. I cannot fault you and it blows me away that you understand."

Service User Quote

Feedback received from 50% of beneficiaries with 98% being positive

2. Total numbers of people with an SMI in East and West Suffolk is c. 3500

Partnership for Positive Change

Partnership for Positive Change

Working with Suffolk County Council, supporting their people at the heart of care transformation

This year, we have made significant strides in supporting Suffolk County Council Adult Social Care with the implementation of their "People at the Heart of Care" strategy. Led by our Deputy CEO, we have worked closely with over 50 individuals in our adult mental health My Voice and My Home groups, SUF has successfully co-produced and provided involvement opportunities for various aspects of the transformation programme.

Coproduction is a collaborative process where people work as equals to make shared decisions and create inclusive services. Guided by our principles, active involvement of service users and carers, regular reporting, shared understanding, equality, and inclusion, we ensure everyone is an equal partner in driving positive change. We also provide adequate time for meaningful collaboration.

People at the Heart of Care Strategy

The "People at the Heart of Care" strategy is an initiative aimed at transforming the way Adult Social Care services are provided. The strategy emphasises working closely with individuals to support them in living well and outlines a framework for all the transformation work being done. A key priority is to support independence, helping people to live well, and to receive early help and support.

My Voice and My Home Groups

The My Voice and My Home groups have played a crucial role in supporting key areas of transformation. The My Voice Focus Groups have explored the Cassius digital care technology in collaboration with Suffolk County Council. This exploration included examining how digital support can enhance people's lives and support their independence. Various types of care technology, such as video calling, Alexa, reminder clocks, ring doorbells, and smartwatches, were evaluated. Service users highlighted the benefits and challenges of using banking apps, AI chat functions, and meditation and relaxation apps. They also expressed concerns about the reliability of chatbots and the need for an escalation process.

Partnership for Positive Change

The My Home Focus Groups have been involved in planning meetings and facilitating coproduction for the tender for Supported Housing recommissioning. Service users and family/parent carers have had an opportunity to contribute to the tender process, with their feedback being included within the tender specification, contributing to the selection criteria for future support providers, and exploring how lived experience can be included within the selection process. Together, people have emphasised the importance of supported housing providers delivering flexible support at the right time, ensuring people feel safe and supported, and maximising their independence and connections with family and local networks.

Working with Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT)

We have been involved in various initiatives with NSFT, including the Mortality review, learning from deaths, development of the Carers Charter, and the Inpatient 3-year strategy "Lived Experience and Coproduction for Inpatient Settings."

As this reporting year ends, we are beginning to start work with the Integrated Care System (ICS), NSFT, and Suffolk County Council, focusing on Section 117 of the Mental Health Act, looking at statutory aftercare support for people being discharged from hospital back home to their local communities. Additionally, our Deputy CEO has supported the NSFT 111 mental health option and the NSFT pathway redesign for inpatient and community settings.

SUF Supporting the Lived Experience Group

Suffolk User Forum (SUF) has been actively supporting the Lived Experience Group (LEG), a sub-group to the Mental Health Collaborative Committee (MHCC). The LEG aligns with the MHCC and meets one week ahead of the MHCC meetings. The group is still in its infancy and as it is developed, the aim is to ensure that lived experience is integrated into the collaborative's decision-making process and that it is the golden thread running through all stages.

This year, we have revised the LEG's Terms of Reference. They emphasise the importance of coproduction and the involvement of service users and family/parent carers through membership in the LEG. The group focuses on ensuring equality and inclusion, and regular reporting to the MHCC.

SUF's support for the Lived Experience Group has been instrumental in ensuring collaboration between service providers and service users, whilst supporting the ICB to progress recruitment to the group, broadening its membership and lived experience.

Partnership for Positive Change

Making Our Voice Count

Making Our Voice Count (MOVC) is our series of feedback reports on service user and family/parent carer experiences of adult mental health and wellbeing services in East and West Suffolk. Our reports provide service user and family/parent carer feedback, accompanied by statistical information, alongside anonymised personal stories that describe people's experiences and views.

Our MOVC initiative is a cornerstone of our commitment to listening to and acting upon the voices of those who use our services. Each report is meticulously compiled to ensure that it reflects the diverse experiences and perspectives of our service users and their families.

Our reports this year focused on reporting the experiences of service users and family/parent carers regarding emergency mental health services and support in East and West Suffolk. We gathered feedback from 56 people at two *Stepping Forward* events held in Stowmarket and Kesgrave in 2024 and contributed to a report presented directly to the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

In terms of crisis care, key areas of feedback included:

- Mixed experiences within primary care and challenges in accessing support from mental health practitioners.
- Positive experiences and quick ambulance response times, but difficulties getting through to 111 (option 2 for mental health) and a lack of empathy from call handlers.
- Mixed experiences at Ipswich Accident and Emergency (A&E), including support from Psychiatric liaison, with lengthy wait times; however, more positive feedback was received from West Suffolk Hospital A&E.
- People shared positive experiences of the support provided by the voluntary sector. However, there was also disappointment about the loss of some important voluntary services this year, following the closure of several local charities.



Partnership for Positive Change

At the end of this year we reported to CQC feedback from 121 people who were inpatients on Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trusts (NSFT) acute wards in 2024/25, including feedback from the wider involvement of SUF and family/parent carers who have been bereaved by suicide in the Learning from Deaths Action Plan Management Group. We included our involvement in the scrutinising of Prevention of Future Death notices related to Coroner findings; the lived experience and coproduction for inpatient settings; our contribution to the carers charter and NSFT Learning from deaths review.

In terms of outcomes for inpatients on acute wards feedback showed an improvement on 2023/24 data, with 63% of inpatients in 2024/25 reporting positive outcomes, praising staff for being helpful, compassionate, empathetic, and kind. However, there remained inconsistency on inpatient service provision, with 33% of inpatients reporting negative feedback, including concerns about the rude attitude of some consultants, unhelpful night staff, and lack of activities.

Negative experiences with discharge planning have continued since our detailed Discharge MOVC report in 2022, highlighting issues such as chaotic and poorly communicated discharge plans. This remains a critical area for coproduction and service improvement. We will continue to report on this and advocate for improvement in discharge planning, ensuring that the voices of service users are heard and acted upon.

Image Below - Caroline Donovan, Chief Executive of NSFT was the guest speaker at our 2024 AGM.



Promoting Mental Wellbeing

The Difference Made by Our Signposting for Support

Our mission is to ensure that individuals have access to the support they need, especially during challenging times. One of the key ways we achieve this is through our signposting for support services. This report highlights the significant impact these services have had over the past year.

Our 2024/25 Statistics

- On average every month we have 154 individual visits to our signposting and support pages.
- From April 2024 to March 2025, we had nearly 2,000 people visit our support directory and 27,000 visits to our website overall
- This year, our social media presence has grown significantly:
 - Facebook: 1.7k likes and 1999 followers.
 - X: 2,299 followers
 - LinkedIn: 643 followers
 - YouTube: 17 subscribers. 263 views on HT videos 12 and 454 views on LISTEN for suicide prevention.



Signposting A - Z

Enhancing Access to Support

Our signposting for support services have been instrumental in guiding individuals to the appropriate resources and services. By providing clear and accessible information, we have empowered people to seek help and support when they need it most. This has been particularly important for those experiencing mental health challenges, as timely access to support can make a significant difference in their recovery journey.

Key Achievements

Increased Awareness and Engagement

Over the past year, we have seen a substantial increase in the number of individuals accessing our signposting services. This is reflected in the rise in active website users, with 27K users engaging with our content. The top pages visited include the SUF homepage, Suffolk County Council – Customer First, Healthy Together Peer Support and getting emergency help for your mental health.

Positive Feedback from Service Users

Feedback from people who have used our signposting services has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have expressed gratitude for the clear and concise information provided, which has helped them navigate the often-complex landscape of mental health services.

Promoting Mental Wellbeing

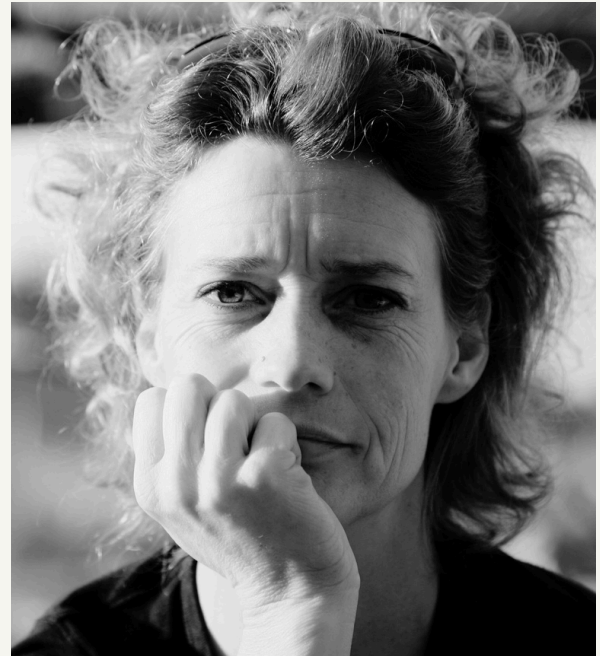
Lived Experience Journey 1: Accessing Mental Health Support

Adeel was struggling with severe anxiety. They told us that he found our signposting page for emergency mental health support.

The clear instructions and contact information provided enabled them to quickly access the help they needed, leading to a significant improvement in their mental health.

"The information was so clear and easy to follow. I was able to get the help I needed quickly, and it made a huge difference in my recovery."

Adeel, Service User



Lived Experience Journey 2: Navigating Health Services

Jennifer was unsure about the process for accessing health services. She used our signposting page to find information about her SMI Annual Physical Health Check. This guidance together with our Healthy Together video helped her understand the steps involved and encouraged Jennifer to attend her appointment, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.

"I didn't know where to start, but the signposting page guided me through the process. It was a relief to have clear information, and it helped me take the necessary steps for my health."

Jennifer, Service User

Suicide Prevention

Every year, on the 10th of September, World Suicide Prevention Day brings people and organisations together to raise awareness about suicide, bereavement by suicide, and its prevention.

As a mental health user-led charity, we understand that when personal problems become overwhelming, it can be incredibly difficult for individuals to seek help. Many people remain silent about their struggles, finding it nearly impossible to talk about suicidal feelings. Feelings of shame, fear of letting loved ones down, and a sense of isolation can make these emotions even more challenging to manage.

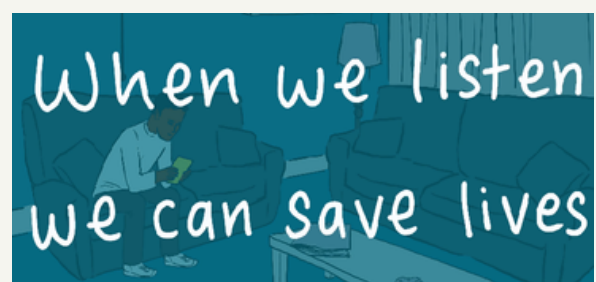
We understand the importance of creating a safe and non-judgmental space where people can talk openly about their feelings. It is important for friends, family, and professionals to feel confident in listening and offering support. Often, people worry about saying the wrong thing and are afraid to ask if someone is considering suicide.



We work to empower people to ask questions like, "What's happening for you right now?" and "Are you having thoughts of ending your life?" Listening and understanding are essential for building connections and offering hope and reassurance.

We have developed several resources to help individuals manage difficult feelings and support others in distress. Our *Thrive with Five* booklets promote self-care, while our *LISTEN for Suicide Prevention* booklet and coproduced LISTEN for suicide prevention video offers step-by-step guidance for friends, family, community members, and professionals to feel more confident in preventing suicide.

To watch our co-produced video "LISTEN for Suicide Prevention," please visit <https://youtu.be/8E6hNCiiyWA>.



L	Listen and validate concerns. Look at crisis/care plan and general options
I	Involve and Inform the service user and carer of the immediate options available
S	Shared understanding achieved and Safety issues established
T	Time. Be clear about your availability and be aware of your Tone of voice
E	Empathise and Encourage responsibility then Evaluate what has been agreed
N	Next steps made clear. Never end the contact without a plan

Suicide Prevention

Thinking about suicide?

Worried about someone?

Download the award-winning Stay Alive app

It's free and can help you and others stay safe from suicide

stayalive.app

Visit the Suicide Prevention Hub
prevent-suicide.org.uk/prevention-hub

In the app:

- Advice
- Helplines and chat
- Safety plans
- Wellness Plan
- Staying safe guide

Google Play

Download on the App Store

Suffolk user forum

GRASSROOTS SUICIDE PREVENTION

In 2014 we supported Grassroots with their innovative Stay Alive App for suicide prevention, making a strong business case to the East and West Clinical Commissioning Groups to bring the Stay Alive app to Suffolk. Without additional funding we have continued to provide regular updates to Grassroots to keep the app current for our Suffolk community.

In 2014, our first year with Stay Alive, we supported just over 500 people.

As this reporting year ends in March 2025, the Stay Alive app has supported 4,467 individuals in Suffolk with suicide prevention, including significant use in Ipswich, Stowmarket, Sutton, and Bury St Edmunds.

Through open communication, providing our LISTEN and Stay Alive resources, we deliver significant suicide prevention support, helping those in need. Remember, you are not alone, and there is always hope. Reach out for support.

Through open communication, providing our LISTEN and Stay Alive resources, we deliver significant suicide prevention support, helping those in need. Remember, you are not alone, and there is always hope. Reach out for support.

880,000+
downloads since the app
was launched in 2014

208
countries and territories with
Stay Alive users

22
languages are available

Building Community

Our SUF Community Members

The ethos of Suffolk User Forum (SUF) is deeply rooted in our commitment to mental health service users and their families. As a user-led organisation driven by lived experiences, SUF members are the cornerstone of our mission and vision. Our members' insights and perspectives are invaluable in shaping our initiatives and ensuring that our efforts are truly reflective of the needs and aspirations of our community. SUF members bring a wealth of knowledge and firsthand experience that enriches our understanding of mental health challenges and solutions. Our members' active participation in coproduction opportunities, events, and discussions fosters a collaborative environment where every voice is heard and valued.

By sharing stories and advocating for change, SUF members help us create a more inclusive and supportive space for everyone. Your contributions are not just important; they are essential to our growth and success as an organisation committed to making a positive impact.

Being a SUF member is important to me. SUF's support has been invaluable in my recovery journey. SUF's commitment to valuing my lived experiences and advocating for change has created a positive and inclusive environment for SUF members.

Member Quote

”



Our Membership in 2024/25

500 Individual members

49 group members with a reach of over 43,662 people

The SUF Team and Trustees

Team Development

This year has also seen significant development within the staff team. We appointed Emily Geen as Administrative Officer in February 2024, who, by the end of the year, achieved excellent results in professional development, qualifying in Sage 2 and Sage 3, and was promoted to Finance and Administrative Officer.

Additionally, we strengthened our leadership team with the appointment of James Woolnough to the post of Deputy CEO.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Louise Biddiscombe for her hard work and excellent management of the Healthy Together team and wish her the best of luck in her new role with Community Action Suffolk.

In July 2024, we celebrated the appointment and promotion of Chloe Newman to Healthy Together Manager, and in October 2024, we appointed Felicity French as Communications Lead.

These developments have significantly strengthened SUF, supporting our continued project work with mental health service users.



Emily

James

Chloe

Felicity



Anna

Alison

Davide

Trustees

The Trustees commitment to good governance and transparency remains strong.

Annually, SUF trustees dedicate over 3000+ hours volunteering for SUF, contributing significantly to our mission and strategic objectives. Trustees' efforts have been invaluable in raising awareness about mental health and building valuable relationships within our networks and community.

As the year ends, we bid farewell to Robert Nesbitt, company Secretary for the last five years, recognising his steady presence and significant contributions to SUF.



Robert

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to 2025/26, we remain committed to service user leadership, personalisation, peer support, and coproduction. Working with Suffolk County Council and the NHS, we aim to strengthen the voice of mental health service users in Suffolk.

Our goal is to expand our mental health user-led network, ensuring that the voice of lived experience informs and shapes both new and existing mental health services. By placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of service improvement and development, we strive to create impactful changes.

Our key priorities are:

Funding

Our top priority is to secure sustainable, long-term funding (three years or more) to ensure ongoing service delivery and support to SUF beneficiaries. This includes specific project work and promoting the voices of individuals living with mental ill health, as well as the shared interests of mental health service users collaboratively.



Partnership and User Voice

Strengthening local partnerships to support the County Council and the Integrated Care System (ICS) in their statutory responsibilities for mental health service user involvement, coproduction, information, assistance, and advocacy. This includes ensuring that the voice of lived experience is a central theme throughout the collaborative and its subgroups. Additionally, delivering key coproduction events, publishing service user feedback, and promoting service user priority areas for mental health improvement.



Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, we remain committed to improving outcomes for people in mental health crises by strengthening our peer-led advocacy services and growing the reach of the SUF Healthy Together Peer Support programme. This involves growing new partnerships within primary care and promoting the healthcare rights and wellbeing goals of people living with severe mental illness and severe eating disorders.

In 2025/26, we plan to deliver three Stepping Forward events focused on coproduction with SUF members. These events will be instrumental in developing a SUF strategy for the next three years, ensuring that the needs and ambitions of our members are at the forefront of our planning.

By engaging directly with SUF members, we aim to gather valuable insights and feedback that will shape our future direction and enhance the services we provide.

These events will serve as a platform for open dialogue, collaboration, and the sharing of ideas, ultimately leading to a strategy that truly reflects the voices and aspirations of our community.

We remain committed to working with people across all of our communities and underrepresented groups.

Group discussions were vivid and interesting, and I felt that I could really contribute and make a difference.

Service User Quote

SUF Stepping Forward events have been life changing. The focus on coproduction ensures our voices shape the services we rely on. These events provide a platform for open dialogue and collaboration, making me feel valued and empowered."

Service User Quote

SUF's in-person events have been invaluable. The interaction, sharing, communicating, and mutual education have been illuminating.

Service User Quote

Final Thoughts

To our Community Members

We would like to thank our SUF membership, service users and family/parent carers who have supported us during this year. Thank you for trusting us, for sharing your very individual experiences with us and for working in coproduction with us. Together we are stronger and can make a difference. We look forward to working together in 2025/26.



To our Trustees

We would like to thank all our trustees for their volunteering time, continued commitment, and outstanding support. You have actively supported us to achieve our strategic objectives, bringing a more diverse range of skills, lived experience and knowledge, helping us raise awareness about SUF and mental health, building valuable relationships within our networks, partnerships, community and ultimately our work supporting others.

To our Funders

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our funders and donors who are fundamental to the financial stability of our charity. Thank you to Suffolk County Council, Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board and to those of you in our SUF community, who are friends of SUF, choosing to give generously through your personal donations. Thank you for being our partner, for your generosity, confidence, and appreciation of our support to vulnerable people and mental health service users.





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Suffolk User Forum



@SUFMentalWealth



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**Suffolk User Forum (SUF)
is a Registered Company
Number 06946785 and a
Charity Number 1133457**

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COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06946785

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1133457

Suffolk User Forum
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited independently examined accounts
31 March 2025

Suffolk User Forum
Company Limited by Guarantee
Financial statements
Year ended 31 March 2025

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Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report)

Year ended 31 March 2025

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Chair's report

The chair's report is disclosed in the Impact Report accompanying these financial statements.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Suffolk User Forum
Charity registration number	1133457
Company registration number	06946785
Principal office and registered office	3 Grange Business Centre Kesgrave Ipswich IP5 2BY

The trustees

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

- G Pachent (Chair)
- D Aldrovandi (Appointed 16/04/2025)
- A Good
- M Little
- A Mudd (Appointed 16/04/2025)
- B Parrott
- M Stafford-White
- A Tanner (Appointed 16/04/2025)
- B Turner
- M Blowers (Passed 08/05/2024)
- R Nesbitt (Resigned 31/03/2025)
- J Stern (Resigned 31/07/2025)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Chief Executive Officer	J Stevens
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank 9-11 Queen Street Ipswich IP1 1SW Suffolk Building Society Mutual House 2 Princes Street Ipswich IP1 1QT Nationwide Building Society Nationwide House Pipers Way Swindon Wiltshire SN38 1NW Charity Bank Fosse House 182 High Street Tonbridge TN9 1BE Unity Trust Bank 1 Ropemaker St London EC2Y 9AW
Company secretary	R Nesbitt (Resigned 27/03/2025)
Independent examiner	A Robinson FCA Lovewell Blake LLP Chartered accountants First Floor Suite 2 Hillside Business Park Bury St Edmunds IP32 7EA

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Objectives and activities

Suffolk User Forum, also referred to as SUF, a term used throughout these accounts, voices the views of mental health service users and their family/parent carers in the East and West of Suffolk. SUF is an independent, user led mental health charity, also known as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO). Everyone involved in the charity has lived experience of mental health as a service user, family carer or worker.

SUF delivers engagement, involvement, coproduction, peer support and inpatient mental health advocacy services. SUF gives mental health service users a powerful and unified voice for their experiences of care and support, promoting individuals' rights, options and choices for care and support for both physical and mental health.

The charity works with service providers and commissioners to try to ensure that the voices of lived experience are central to improving emotional wellbeing and mental health services in East and West Suffolk. This is achieved through the charity's engagement, peer support and advocacy roles, which alongside supporting people, prioritises the gathering and recording of people's experiences of services. By connecting areas of individual feedback together, the charity draws together key themes and emerging trends in people's mental health experiences. These are regularly reported in the SUF publication titled 'Making our Voice Count' which is presented to providers, commissioners and to strategic partners, to assist with decision making and to promote coproduction, so that providers and commissioners can understand and actively respond to the current lived experience of people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Objectives and activities *(continued)*

Mission, vision, and values

SUF's mission is to be an inclusive and trusted mental health user-led network that values, promotes, and strengthens the user voice for positive change, independence, legal rights, choice, and control.

SUF's vision is to continue to be the leading organisation for adults in Suffolk championing equal and valued partnerships between mental health service users, commissioners, and providers, combining mutual strengths and experience to improve services, achieving positive emotional wellbeing and mental health for all.

SUF's values were coproduced at the SUF AGM in 2018:

1. We are open, honest, and trustworthy.
2. We are inclusive and have people at our heart.
3. We are caring and compassionate.
4. We speak out and together we make a difference.

Charitable Objectives

SUF can help people in Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex. We have five main objectives.

- a) To promote partnership working between service providers, including the NHS and Social Care, service users and family/parent carers.
- b) To promote suicide prevention initiatives.
- c) To provide advocacy services, peer support and information to empower people to make their own decisions.
- d) To promote better understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- e) To promote volunteering and peer support.

Public Benefit

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit when setting the objectives for the year.

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

Achievements and performance

The achievements and performance are described further in the Impact Report accompanying these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Financial review

The charity's income in 2024/25 was £267,168 (2023/24: £326,320) of which £143,120 (2023/24: £198,790) related to project restricted activities. The charity's expenditure in 2024/25 was £271,431 (2023/24: £236,140) of which £198,734 (2023/24: £176,315) related to project restricted activities. The result is a net deficit of £4,263 (2023/24: surplus of £90,180) for the year.

Principal funding sources

The charity's core income is received under a funding agreement with Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk & North East Essex NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) via a shared fund called the Mental Health Pooled Fund. This fund has now ended and been replaced by the Aligned Fund.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's policy is to invest any surplus funds in savings accounts, up to a maximum of the guaranteed £85,000 in any one account. The charity has a Business Deposit Account with the Suffolk Building Society and with the Nationwide Building Society. SUF also has accounts with the Charity Bank and from 2024/25 United Trust Bank.

Reserves policy

The Trustees are committed to providing the highest possible service levels. To ensure the charity's financial stability, the Trustees have decided to maintain reserves equivalent to at least six months' operating costs. Our revised policy includes the following allocations:

- General reserves equivalent to six months' projected operating expenditure: £154,768.
- Redundancy and statutory notice costs: £45,902.
- IT and office equipment replacement costs: £16,567
- Designated funds for expenditure in 2025-2027: £108,950
- Restricted funds for service user expenses: £3,451.

This equates to £329,638 for 2024/25 (2023/24: £188,923). As of 31 March 2025, unrestricted funds stand at £329,761 (2023/24: £291,918).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Plans for future periods

Trustees continue to be committed to further developing service user leadership, involvement, personalisation, peer support and coproduction working together with our local statutory partners, Suffolk County Council and NHS, supporting the developing Integrated Care System (ICS), and promoting the mental health service user voice.

We will continue to grow our mental health user led network to ensure the voice of lived experience informs and shapes new and existing mental health services, placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of suicide prevention, service improvement and development.

More detail on how this will be achieved is contained in the impact report accompanying these accounts.

There have been no significant post balance sheet events (events after the year-end) that have had significant impact on the charity.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Structure, governance, and management

Suffolk User Forum is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on the 29th June 2009 and registered as a charity (registered number 1133457) on the 5th January 2010.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which sets out the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. The liability of the members is limited.

Trustee Board

The directors of Suffolk User Forum are known as trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles of Association are known as members of the Trustee Board.

Recruitment to Suffolk User Forum's Trustee Board seeks to ensure that the organisation's desire to remain service user-led is appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Trustee body.

All trustees are either UK nationals or have a lawful right to live and work in England. No trustees are politically exposed in the UK or elsewhere (they are not MPs, Members of a local Council or similar).

Currently, 80% of the SUF Trustee Board has used or currently uses mental health services as a service user or family/parent carer. The charity is described as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) as over 75% of its trustees and 100% of its staff have lived experience of mental ill health. The charity works within the ethos of the social model of disability.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustee Board

Business and public sector, mental health and social care, and family/parent carer and service user skills remain well represented on the Trustee Board. Trustees also have skills in law and in community and voluntary services development. Recruitment has been supported by robust policy and procedures. SUF advertises vacancies for new trustees through the SUF website and social media, Reach Volunteering, Suffolk Volunteering and through its wider networks and partnerships.

The Trustee Board actively encourages and welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds, particularly welcoming applications from ethnic minority communities as they continue to be under-represented on the Board.

Potential trustees are invited to meet SUF trustees and the chief executive to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. All applicants are asked to apply (using the SUF application form) to the Trustee Board.

Applications are shortlisted by the Chair of Trustees in partnership with at least one other Trustee, establishing a recruitment team supported by the Company Secretary. An interview is conducted by this recruitment team which writes an Interview Report.

This report is submitted at the earliest board meeting for a board discussion and a decision made regarding suitability for appointment. Trustees are appointed by the Trustee Board initially until the next annual members' meeting when the appointment is put to a vote. Trustees normally serve a term of three years before reappointment at the next annual members' meeting.

Trustee Induction and Training

All new Trustees receive governance and business documentation relevant to their role, induction, and training.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

New trustees are provided with essential documents to support them in their role. These include:

1. The obligations of the Trustee Board members including the Declaration of Interests, Code of Conduct and Agreement, trustees' roles, and a self-reported skills audit, to inform the board's overall skills report, which is regularly reviewed by the board to ensure a balance of knowledge and skills across the Trustee Board, and to inform the board's annual training plan for trustees.
2. The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity include the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Suffolk User Forum.
3. A copy of all partnership and funding agreements, including those with Suffolk County Council, the Suffolk and North East Essex NHS ICB for Healthy Together and the Suffolk Advocacy Service lead partner POhWER.
4. Copies of contract review Meetings.
5. Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
6. The charity's aims and objectives.
7. The current business/operational plan.
8. The current structure of the organisation including staff.
9. The current project plans and reports.
10. The latest SUF publication including the regular service user feedback reports titled 'Making our Voice Count'.
11. This documentation is supported by a Trustee Induction programme which provides forums for wider discussion regarding the governing documents, explanation of aims and objectives and of the charity's business and action plan, including strategic plans. All new trustees are encouraged to complete on-line training provided in Suffolk by Community Action Suffolk as part of their induction, to ensure they understand their trustee role and responsibilities.

The SUF new Trustee induction programme includes receiving information about key SUF policies and procedures which include:

1. The SUF Information Governance framework which underpins our registration with NHS Digital, including confidentiality, data, and cyber security, data protection, and the SUF Privacy Statement.
2. Equality and Diversity.
3. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.
4. Health and Safety including, lone working, near miss policy and risk management.
5. Comments, Compliments, and Complaints.
6. Social Value Strategy.
7. Environmental Strategy.
8. The SUF Staff and Volunteer Handbook.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Structure, governance, and management *(continued)*

Risk assessment

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and holds a Risk Register that is reviewed at least four times a year at board meetings to ensure that the board is satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. Risk assessment and mitigations inform the Charity's Business Continuity Plan, the robustness of which is tested through regular business continuity exercises.

Independent examiner reappointment

A resolution to appoint A Robinson FCA of Lovewell Blake LLP as independent examiner will be proposed at the next AGM.

Small company provisions

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

The trustees' annual report was approved on 20/11/2025 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



G Pachent
(Chair)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Suffolk User Forum

Year ended 31 March 2025

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), balance sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

Abigail Robinson

A Robinson FCA
Independent Examiner

Lovewell Blake LLP
Chartered accountants
First Floor Suite
2 Hillside Business Park
Bury St Edmunds
IP32 7EA
24/11/2025

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2025

			2025		2024
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	116,518	143,120	259,638	321,328
Investment income	6	7,530	–	7,530	4,992
Total income		<u>124,048</u>	<u>143,120</u>	<u>267,168</u>	<u>326,320</u>
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	7	72,697	198,734	271,431	236,140
Total expenditure		<u>72,697</u>	<u>198,734</u>	<u>271,431</u>	<u>236,140</u>
Net (expenditure)/income before transfer of funds		51,351	(55,614)	(4,263)	90,180
Transfers between funds		(13,508)	13,508	–	–
Net movement in funds		<u>37,843</u>	<u>(42,106)</u>	<u>(4,263)</u>	<u>90,180</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		291,918	86,466	378,384	288,204
Total funds carried forward		<u>329,761</u>	<u>44,360</u>	<u>374,121</u>	<u>378,384</u>

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

The notes on pages 13 to 22 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance sheet

31 March 2025

	Note	2025		2024	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	11		7,089		9,414
Current assets					
Debtors	12	11,600		11,800	
Cash at bank and in hand		360,575		360,993	
		372,175		372,793	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(5,143)		(3,823)	
Net current assets			367,032		368,970
Total assets less current liabilities			374,121		378,384
Net assets			374,121		378,384
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds			44,360		86,466
Unrestricted funds			329,761		291,918
Total charity funds	16		374,121		378,384

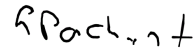
For the year ending 31 March 2025 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

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

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

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 20/11/2025, and are signed on behalf of the board by:


G Pachent
(Chair)

Company registration number: 06946785

The notes on pages 13 to 22 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2025

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The operational address and registered office is 3 Grange Business Centre, Kesgrave, Ipswich, IP5 2BY.

2. Statement of compliance

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

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

Going concern

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

The Trustees confirm that the charity is a going concern when taking into account all financial and non-financial risks.

Income tax

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

Fund accounting

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

Designated funds where necessary, are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

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

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Income

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

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

Expenditure

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

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

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable, and consistent basis.

Operating leases

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

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation

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

Computer equipment	-	25% straight line
Office furniture	-	25% straight line

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Financial instruments

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

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

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

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company if it is wound up during the time that he or she is a member, or within one period afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before the time at which he or she ceases to be a member and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required not exceeding £10.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £
Donations			
Donations	1,064	–	1,064
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	115,454	–	115,454
NHS CCG and ICB Income	–	114,927	114,927
POhWER	–	28,193	28,193
	<u>116,518</u>	<u>143,120</u>	<u>259,638</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Donations			
Donations	301	–	301
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	111,712	–	111,712
NHS CCG and ICB Income	10,525	165,062	175,587
POhWER	–	33,728	33,728
	<u>122,538</u>	<u>198,790</u>	<u>321,328</u>

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Interest received	<u>7,530</u>	<u>7,530</u>	<u>4,992</u>	<u>4,992</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

7. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £
Staff costs	31,517	166,658	198,175
Staff and volunteer expenses	9,359	—	9,359
Support costs	31,821	32,076	63,897
	<u>72,697</u>	<u>198,734</u>	<u>271,431</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Staff costs	5,659	156,535	162,194
Staff and volunteer expenses	9,149	1,700	10,849
Support costs	45,017	18,080	63,097
	<u>59,825</u>	<u>176,315</u>	<u>236,140</u>

Analysis of support costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Office rent	13,487	13,084
Rates	1,964	1,803
Light and heat	2,088	3,377
Telephone	2,676	2,499
Payroll bureau	766	649
Computer and website costs	7,370	8,944
Equipment hire	1,069	1,612
Postage and stationery	1,948	1,919
Repairs and renewals	1,784	1,143
Marketing	13,380	14,821
Insurance	3,573	3,007
Depreciation	3,782	3,298
Trustees' expenses	211	647
Sundry expenses	4,065	1,946
Legal and professional fees	2,482	1,894
Independent examination fee	3,252	2,454
	<u>63,897</u>	<u>63,097</u>

8. Net (expenditure)/income

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

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>3,782</u>	<u>3,298</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

9. Staff costs

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	183,254	151,087
Social security costs	12,238	9,380
Pension costs	2,683	1,727
	<u>198,175</u>	<u>162,194</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 7 (2023/24: 5).

Travel expenses were paid during in the period amounting to £216 (2023/24: £706), with none of the Trustees being paid expenses as users.

10. Trustee remuneration and expenses

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer. The Trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2023/24: £Nil). The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions) received by senior management for their services to the charity was £56,029 (2023/24: £56,001).

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Office furniture £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	30,727	2,582	33,309
Additions	<u>1,241</u>	<u>216</u>	<u>1,457</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>31,968</u>	<u>2,798</u>	<u>34,766</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	21,709	2,186	23,895
Charge for the year	<u>3,635</u>	<u>147</u>	<u>3,782</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>25,344</u>	<u>2,333</u>	<u>27,677</u>
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2025	<u>6,624</u>	<u>465</u>	<u>7,089</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>9,018</u>	<u>396</u>	<u>9,414</u>

12. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	—	8,447
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>11,600</u>	<u>3,353</u>
	<u>11,600</u>	<u>11,800</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,515	979
Accruals and deferred income	3,358	2,844
Social security and other taxes	270	—
	<u>5,143</u>	<u>3,823</u>

14. Deferred income

	2025	2024
	£	£
At 1 April 2024	—	6,970
Amount released to income	—	(6,970)
At 31 March 2025	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>

Deferred income relates to conditional grant income received in the year on behalf of projects being completed in following years.

15. Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £2,683 (2023/24: £1,727).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

16. Analysis of charitable funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds					
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	3,597	–	(146)	–	3,451
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	3,925	–	–	–	3,925
Healthy Together Peer					
Support	–	114,927	(114,098)	–	829
Personal Health Budgets	32,453	–	(12,442)	–	20,011
Advocacy	–	28,193	(41,701)	13,508	–
Suffolk Cemeteries Metal					
Fund	15,000	–	(5,980)	–	9,020
Healthy Hearts Together	30,745	–	(24,367)	–	6,378
	<u>86,466</u>	<u>143,120</u>	<u>(198,734)</u>	<u>13,508</u>	<u>44,360</u>

Unrestricted funds

General Fund	<u>291,918</u>	<u>124,048</u>	<u>(72,697)</u>	<u>(13,508)</u>	<u>329,761</u>
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	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	–	(1,093)	–	3,597
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	12,908	114,927	(123,910)	–	3,925
Personal Health Budgets	28,905	–	3,548	–	32,453
Suicide Prevention	1,714	–	(1,714)	–	–
Advocacy	–	33,728	(33,756)	28	–
Suffolk Cemeteries Metal					
Fund	–	–	–	15,000	15,000
Healthy Hearts Together	–	50,135	(19,390)	–	30,745
	<u>48,963</u>	<u>198,790</u>	<u>(176,315)</u>	<u>15,028</u>	<u>86,466</u>

Unrestricted funds

General Fund	<u>239,241</u>	<u>127,530</u>	<u>(59,825)</u>	<u>(15,028)</u>	<u>291,918</u>
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Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

The Mental Health Services User expenses - is funded by the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group; West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Suffolk County Council, through the Suffolk Mental Health Pooled Fund, SUF have agreed to hold and administer an amount of now less than £5,000 on behalf of Suffolk County Council and the Integrated Care System.

SCC Waveney Peer Support was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. Subsequent to the year end it has been agreed that the balance will be repaid to Suffolk County Council.

Healthy Together - Peer Support (Formerly Personal Health Budgets) is funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG following the transfer from the Healthy Together project to support people with severe mental illness.

Healthy Hearts Together was funded by NHS Suffolk & North East Essex ICB to work on Cardiovascular Disease and severe mental illness. As at the year end date there is an underspend of £6,378 and the charity is awaiting confirmation from the funders on how to repurpose this money in 2025/2026.

The following projects are complete:

Advocacy was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. This is a three year contract ending 31 March 2025 with POhWER as the lead partner. During the year the £13,508 overspend was made up from general funds.

Healthy Together was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG to support a restricted to support people with severe mental illness and is now fully complete, having merged into the Healthy Together - Peer Support following consultation and agreement with the fund provider.

Suffolk Cemeteries Metal Fund was funded to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF and is now fully complete.

17. Analysis of net assets between funds

As at 31 March 2025

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £
Tangible fixed assets	7,089	–	7,089
Net current assets	322,672	44,360	367,032
Net Assets	<u>329,761</u>	<u>44,360</u>	<u>374,121</u>

As at 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	9,414	–	9,414
Net current assets	282,504	86,466	368,970
Net Assets	<u>291,918</u>	<u>86,466</u>	<u>378,384</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

18. Operating lease commitments

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Not later than 1 year	13,628	11,250
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	5,377	21,383
	<u>19,005</u>	<u>32,633</u>

19. Related parties

The Trustees confirm that there were no related party transactions in this or the prior period.



Impact Report

2024 - 2025



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About Us

Suffolk User Forum (SUF) is an independent mental health user led involvement, peer support and advocacy organisation for adults.

All our staff and trustees have lived experience of mental health as a service user, family/parent carer, or mental health worker.

We make a difference because people know we understand their experiences and genuinely care.

Listening and giving people a voice is central to our work. We make positive changes happen for individuals and we help drive service improvement. As a critical friend we are respected and valued as a strategic partner that shares people's stories, trying to ensure that lived experience is at the heart of service planning, delivery, improvements, and commissioning.

We actively support and facilitate service user and family/parent carer involvement in coproduction, thus influencing decision-making about individuals' care. Valuing individuals as active citizens ensures that their lived experience becomes an essential resource for service improvement.

Our work in 2024/25 included:

- **SUF Peer Led Advocacy**
- **Healthy Together**
- **Coproduction and *Making Our Voice Count* publication**
- **Mental Health Support and Signposting**
- **Suicide Prevention**
- **Our SUF Community Members**



Welcome to our 2024/25 Impact Report

As we reflect on the past year, we are pleased to share the Suffolk User Forum (SUF) Impact Report for 2024/2025. This report outlines the highlights of the reporting year and the team's continued commitment to improving mental health services and support within our community.

We have continued our work as part of the Suffolk Advocacy Partnership this year, alongside our partners POHWER, ACE Anglia, and Suffolk Family Carers. Through this collaboration, SUF Advocates provided advocacy support to 743 mental health inpatients, helping people at a point of crisis.

Now in its third year, the Suffolk Advocacy Partnership has been extended for a further year until 31st March 2026. By working together, we help ensure that people's voices are heard and their rights respected, making a meaningful difference to their lives.

Healthy Together Peer Support continues to make a real difference, having supported over 650 individuals since its launch in 2021. By providing personalised care planning and emotional support, Healthy Together helps people living with severe mental illness (SMI) to access their physical health entitlements and work towards their wellbeing goals.

This year, we held two Stepping Forward events in Stowmarket and Ipswich, where we listened to the experiences of 56 people who had faced mental health crises and used local support services, including 111 (option 2 for mental health) and psychiatric liaison teams in A&E.

The feedback from these events is contained in our *Making Our Voice Count* Report (December 2024). This report shares individual stories and key themes in people's experiences. We are currently working with Healthwatch Suffolk to further explore people's experiences of emergency care for mental health crises, supported by key staff teams in our local acute and mental health trusts.

As we look to the year ahead, we remain firmly committed to our core values of service user leadership and personalisation. We will continue to ensure that the voices of service users and family/parent carers are at the heart of everything we do. We extend our sincere gratitude to our dedicated staff team, trustees, partners, and the wider SUF community for their unwavering support. Together, we will continue to strive for excellence in mental health services and support. Thank you for your continued support.

Guenever Pachent, Chair
and Jayne Stevens CEO



Empowering Individuals

SUF Advocacy



We have continued our role within the Suffolk Advocacy Service this year, providing peer-led mental health advocacy on inpatient wards, delivering crucial support to individuals during times of crisis.

We offer weekly drop-ins at Wedgwood House in Bury St Edmunds and Woodlands at Ipswich Hospital, along with monthly visits to Foxhall House, a secure unit in Ipswich.

Our peer-led advocacy service ensures that all inpatients, including the 57% admitted voluntarily¹ and those detained under the Mental Health Act, have access to advocacy.

By addressing common concerns and empowering patients to engage in their care, SUF not only improves individual outcomes but also contributes to systemic improvements in mental health services.

The positive impact on patients' ability to self-advocate highlights the importance of such services in fostering a more inclusive and responsive healthcare environment.

ADVOCACY OUTCOMES

194 people had their goals met better than expected.

508 people had their goals slightly met better than expected.

57 people had their goals met.

709 people said advocacy helped them have their voice heard.

163 people said advocacy increased their ability to self-advocate.

638

The number of advocacy hours delivered by SUF in 2024/25

743

The number of people SUF provided advocacy support to in 2024/25

814

The number of advocacy needs supported in 2024/25

¹ Mental Health Act Statistics, Annual Figures, 2023-24 - NHS England Digital

Empowering Individuals

Healthy Together Peer Support

This is the second year of our three-year Healthy Together contract, funded by the Suffolk and North East Essex (SNEE) Integrated Care Board. Healthy Together offers peer support to people who live with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) including Schizophrenia, Bi-Polar Disorder, and Psychosis following their Annual Health Checks by primary care practitioners and/or the Suffolk Physical Health Team in Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust for those people receiving care under secondary mental health services.

This year, the project has been extended to provide support for a small number of people living with eating disorders (professional referral only).

Drawing on our lived experience, our Healthy Together Peer Support Workers (PSWs) provide friendly and supportive peer support which is mutual, trauma-informed, and recovery-focused. Our approach is person-centred, offering people options and choices about how they wish to be supported to achieve their healthcare goals. The team work positively with people, championing the protective factors for good physical and mental health and supporting people with previously unidentified and unmet needs.

We have supported over 650 people since the initial pilot project in 2021. This is approximately 20% of people living with an SMI in East and West Suffolk.²

Outcomes for people receiving Healthy Together Peer Support in 2024/25:

We provided Healthy Together Peer Support to **252** people and received **183** new referrals across **265** pathways

We supported 72 people with personal health budgets, funding services like decluttering, dental care, weight loss, addiction support, and wellbeing tools.

92% of referred people use the support and reach their health goals.

"I've had support workers before but honestly no one has come close to you. You've been there for my meetings. I cannot fault you and it blows me away that you understand."

Service User Quote

Feedback received from 50% of beneficiaries with 98% being positive

2. Total numbers of people with an SMI in East and West Suffolk is c. 3500

Partnership for Positive Change

Partnership for Positive Change

Working with Suffolk County Council, supporting their people at the heart of care transformation

This year, we have made significant strides in supporting Suffolk County Council Adult Social Care with the implementation of their "People at the Heart of Care" strategy. Led by our Deputy CEO, we have worked closely with over 50 individuals in our adult mental health My Voice and My Home groups, SUF has successfully co-produced and provided involvement opportunities for various aspects of the transformation programme.

Coproduction is a collaborative process where people work as equals to make shared decisions and create inclusive services. Guided by our principles, active involvement of service users and carers, regular reporting, shared understanding, equality, and inclusion, we ensure everyone is an equal partner in driving positive change. We also provide adequate time for meaningful collaboration.

People at the Heart of Care Strategy

The "People at the Heart of Care" strategy is an initiative aimed at transforming the way Adult Social Care services are provided. The strategy emphasises working closely with individuals to support them in living well and outlines a framework for all the transformation work being done. A key priority is to support independence, helping people to live well, and to receive early help and support.

My Voice and My Home Groups

The My Voice and My Home groups have played a crucial role in supporting key areas of transformation. The My Voice Focus Groups have explored the Cassius digital care technology in collaboration with Suffolk County Council. This exploration included examining how digital support can enhance people's lives and support their independence. Various types of care technology, such as video calling, Alexa, reminder clocks, ring doorbells, and smartwatches, were evaluated. Service users highlighted the benefits and challenges of using banking apps, AI chat functions, and meditation and relaxation apps. They also expressed concerns about the reliability of chatbots and the need for an escalation process.

Partnership for Positive Change

The My Home Focus Groups have been involved in planning meetings and facilitating coproduction for the tender for Supported Housing recommissioning. Service users and family/parent carers have had an opportunity to contribute to the tender process, with their feedback being included within the tender specification, contributing to the selection criteria for future support providers, and exploring how lived experience can be included within the selection process. Together, people have emphasised the importance of supported housing providers delivering flexible support at the right time, ensuring people feel safe and supported, and maximising their independence and connections with family and local networks.

Working with Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT)

We have been involved in various initiatives with NSFT, including the Mortality review, learning from deaths, development of the Carers Charter, and the Inpatient 3-year strategy "Lived Experience and Coproduction for Inpatient Settings."

As this reporting year ends, we are beginning to start work with the Integrated Care System (ICS), NSFT, and Suffolk County Council, focusing on Section 117 of the Mental Health Act, looking at statutory aftercare support for people being discharged from hospital back home to their local communities. Additionally, our Deputy CEO has supported the NSFT 111 mental health option and the NSFT pathway redesign for inpatient and community settings.

SUF Supporting the Lived Experience Group

Suffolk User Forum (SUF) has been actively supporting the Lived Experience Group (LEG), a sub-group to the Mental Health Collaborative Committee (MHCC). The LEG aligns with the MHCC and meets one week ahead of the MHCC meetings. The group is still in its infancy and as it is developed, the aim is to ensure that lived experience is integrated into the collaborative's decision-making process and that it is the golden thread running through all stages.

This year, we have revised the LEG's Terms of Reference. They emphasise the importance of coproduction and the involvement of service users and family/parent carers through membership in the LEG. The group focuses on ensuring equality and inclusion, and regular reporting to the MHCC.

SUF's support for the Lived Experience Group has been instrumental in ensuring collaboration between service providers and service users, whilst supporting the ICB to progress recruitment to the group, broadening its membership and lived experience.

Partnership for Positive Change

Making Our Voice Count

Making Our Voice Count (MOVC) is our series of feedback reports on service user and family/parent carer experiences of adult mental health and wellbeing services in East and West Suffolk. Our reports provide service user and family/parent carer feedback, accompanied by statistical information, alongside anonymised personal stories that describe people's experiences and views.

Our MOVC initiative is a cornerstone of our commitment to listening to and acting upon the voices of those who use our services. Each report is meticulously compiled to ensure that it reflects the diverse experiences and perspectives of our service users and their families.

Our reports this year focused on reporting the experiences of service users and family/parent carers regarding emergency mental health services and support in East and West Suffolk. We gathered feedback from 56 people at two *Stepping Forward* events held in Stowmarket and Kesgrave in 2024 and contributed to a report presented directly to the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

In terms of crisis care, key areas of feedback included:

- Mixed experiences within primary care and challenges in accessing support from mental health practitioners.
- Positive experiences and quick ambulance response times, but difficulties getting through to 111 (option 2 for mental health) and a lack of empathy from call handlers.
- Mixed experiences at Ipswich Accident and Emergency (A&E), including support from Psychiatric liaison, with lengthy wait times; however, more positive feedback was received from West Suffolk Hospital A&E.
- People shared positive experiences of the support provided by the voluntary sector. However, there was also disappointment about the loss of some important voluntary services this year, following the closure of several local charities.



Partnership for Positive Change

At the end of this year we reported to CQC feedback from 121 people who were inpatients on Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trusts (NSFT) acute wards in 2024/25, including feedback from the wider involvement of SUF and family/parent carers who have been bereaved by suicide in the Learning from Deaths Action Plan Management Group. We included our involvement in the scrutinising of Prevention of Future Death notices related to Coroner findings; the lived experience and coproduction for inpatient settings; our contribution to the carers charter and NSFT Learning from deaths review.

In terms of outcomes for inpatients on acute wards feedback showed an improvement on 2023/24 data, with 63% of inpatients in 2024/25 reporting positive outcomes, praising staff for being helpful, compassionate, empathetic, and kind. However, there remained inconsistency on inpatient service provision, with 33% of inpatients reporting negative feedback, including concerns about the rude attitude of some consultants, unhelpful night staff, and lack of activities.

Negative experiences with discharge planning have continued since our detailed Discharge MOVC report in 2022, highlighting issues such as chaotic and poorly communicated discharge plans. This remains a critical area for coproduction and service improvement. We will continue to report on this and advocate for improvement in discharge planning, ensuring that the voices of service users are heard and acted upon.

Image Below - Caroline Donovan, Chief Executive of NSFT was the guest speaker at our 2024 AGM.



Promoting Mental Wellbeing

The Difference Made by Our Signposting for Support

Our mission is to ensure that individuals have access to the support they need, especially during challenging times. One of the key ways we achieve this is through our signposting for support services. This report highlights the significant impact these services have had over the past year.

Our 2024/25 Statistics

- On average every month we have 154 individual visits to our signposting and support pages.
- From April 2024 to March 2025, we had nearly 2,000 people visit our support directory and 27,000 visits to our website overall
- This year, our social media presence has grown significantly:
 - Facebook: 1.7k likes and 1999 followers.
 - X: 2,299 followers
 - LinkedIn: 643 followers
 - YouTube: 17 subscribers. 263 views on HT videos 12 and 454 views on LISTEN for suicide prevention.



Signposting A - Z

Enhancing Access to Support

Our signposting for support services have been instrumental in guiding individuals to the appropriate resources and services. By providing clear and accessible information, we have empowered people to seek help and support when they need it most. This has been particularly important for those experiencing mental health challenges, as timely access to support can make a significant difference in their recovery journey.

Key Achievements

Increased Awareness and Engagement

Over the past year, we have seen a substantial increase in the number of individuals accessing our signposting services. This is reflected in the rise in active website users, with 27K users engaging with our content. The top pages visited include the SUF homepage, Suffolk County Council – Customer First, Healthy Together Peer Support and getting emergency help for your mental health.

Positive Feedback from Service Users

Feedback from people who have used our signposting services has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have expressed gratitude for the clear and concise information provided, which has helped them navigate the often-complex landscape of mental health services.

Promoting Mental Wellbeing

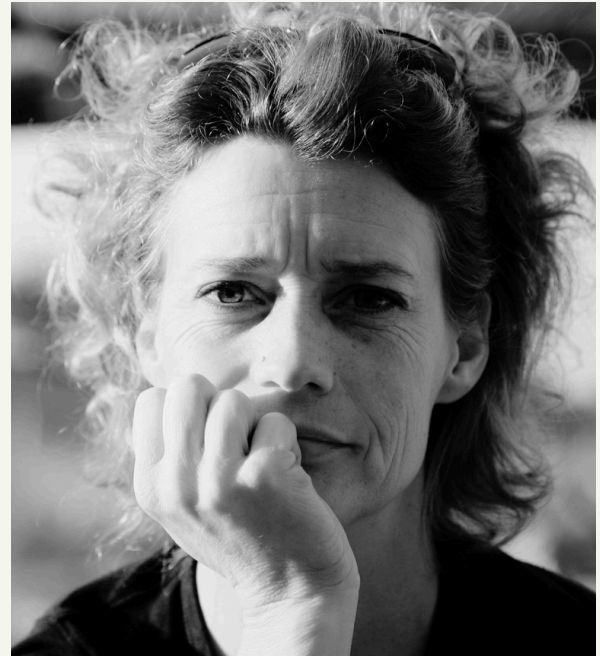
Lived Experience Journey 1: Accessing Mental Health Support

Adeel was struggling with severe anxiety. They told us that he found our signposting page for emergency mental health support.

The clear instructions and contact information provided enabled them to quickly access the help they needed, leading to a significant improvement in their mental health.

"The information was so clear and easy to follow. I was able to get the help I needed quickly, and it made a huge difference in my recovery."

Adeel, Service User



Lived Experience Journey 2: Navigating Health Services

Jennifer was unsure about the process for accessing health services. She used our signposting page to find information about her SMI Annual Physical Health Check. This guidance together with our Healthy Together video helped her understand the steps involved and encouraged Jennifer to attend her appointment, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.

"I didn't know where to start, but the signposting page guided me through the process. It was a relief to have clear information, and it helped me take the necessary steps for my health."

Jennifer, Service User

Suicide Prevention

Every year, on the 10th of September, World Suicide Prevention Day brings people and organisations together to raise awareness about suicide, bereavement by suicide, and its prevention.

As a mental health user-led charity, we understand that when personal problems become overwhelming, it can be incredibly difficult for individuals to seek help. Many people remain silent about their struggles, finding it nearly impossible to talk about suicidal feelings. Feelings of shame, fear of letting loved ones down, and a sense of isolation can make these emotions even more challenging to manage.

We understand the importance of creating a safe and non-judgmental space where people can talk openly about their feelings. It is important for friends, family, and professionals to feel confident in listening and offering support. Often, people worry about saying the wrong thing and are afraid to ask if someone is considering suicide.



We work to empower people to ask questions like, "What's happening for you right now?" and "Are you having thoughts of ending your life?" Listening and understanding are essential for building connections and offering hope and reassurance.

We have developed several resources to help individuals manage difficult feelings and support others in distress. Our *Thrive with Five* booklets promote self-care, while our *LISTEN for Suicide Prevention* booklet and coproduced LISTEN for suicide prevention video offers step-by-step guidance for friends, family, community members, and professionals to feel more confident in preventing suicide.

To watch our co-produced video "LISTEN for Suicide Prevention," please visit <https://youtu.be/8E6hNCiiyWA>.



L	Listen and validate concerns. Look at crisis/care plan and general options
I	Involve and Inform the service user and carer of the immediate options available
S	Shared understanding achieved and Safety issues established
T	Time. Be clear about your availability and be aware of your Tone of voice
E	Empathise and Encourage responsibility then Evaluate what has been agreed
N	Next steps made clear. Never end the contact without a plan

Suicide Prevention

Thinking about suicide?

Worried about someone?

Download the award-winning Stay Alive app

It's free and can help you and others stay safe from suicide

stayalive.app

Visit the Suicide Prevention Hub
prevent-suicide.org.uk/prevention-hub

In the app:

- Advice
- Helplines and chat
- Safety plans
- Wellness Plan
- Staying safe guide

Google Play

Download on the App Store

GRASSROOTS SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suffolk water forum

In 2014 we supported Grassroots with their innovative Stay Alive App for suicide prevention, making a strong business case to the East and West Clinical Commissioning Groups to bring the Stay Alive app to Suffolk. Without additional funding we have continued to provide regular updates to Grassroots to keep the app current for our Suffolk community.

In 2014, our first year with Stay Alive, we supported just over 500 people.

As this reporting year ends in March 2025, the Stay Alive app has supported 4,467 individuals in Suffolk with suicide prevention, including significant use in Ipswich, Stowmarket, Sutton, and Bury St Edmunds.

Through open communication, providing our LISTEN and Stay Alive resources, we deliver significant suicide prevention support, helping those in need. Remember, you are not alone, and there is always hope. Reach out for support.

Through open communication, providing our LISTEN and Stay Alive resources, we deliver significant suicide prevention support, helping those in need. Remember, you are not alone, and there is always hope. Reach out for support.

880,000+
 downloads since the app
 was launched in 2014

208
 countries and territories with
 Stay Alive users

22
 languages are available

Building Community

Our SUF Community Members

The ethos of Suffolk User Forum (SUF) is deeply rooted in our commitment to mental health service users and their families. As a user-led organisation driven by lived experiences, SUF members are the cornerstone of our mission and vision. Our members' insights and perspectives are invaluable in shaping our initiatives and ensuring that our efforts are truly reflective of the needs and aspirations of our community. SUF members bring a wealth of knowledge and firsthand experience that enriches our understanding of mental health challenges and solutions. Our members' active participation in coproduction opportunities, events, and discussions fosters a collaborative environment where every voice is heard and valued.

By sharing stories and advocating for change, SUF members help us create a more inclusive and supportive space for everyone. Your contributions are not just important; they are essential to our growth and success as an organisation committed to making a positive impact.

Being a SUF member is important to me. SUF's support has been invaluable in my recovery journey. SUF's commitment to valuing my lived experiences and advocating for change has created a positive and inclusive environment for SUF members.

Member Quote

”



Our Membership in 2024/25

500 Individual members

49 group members with a reach of over 43,662 people

The SUF Team and Trustees

Team Development

This year has also seen significant development within the staff team. We appointed Emily Geen as Administrative Officer in February 2024, who, by the end of the year, achieved excellent results in professional development, qualifying in Sage 2 and Sage 3, and was promoted to Finance and Administrative Officer.

Additionally, we strengthened our leadership team with the appointment of James Woolnough to the post of Deputy CEO.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Louise Biddiscombe for her hard work and excellent management of the Healthy Together team and wish her the best of luck in her new role with Community Action Suffolk.

In July 2024, we celebrated the appointment and promotion of Chloe Newman to Healthy Together Manager, and in October 2024, we appointed Felicity French as Communications Lead.

These developments have significantly strengthened SUF, supporting our continued project work with mental health service users.



Emily

James

Chloe

Felicity



Anna

Alison

Davide

Trustees

The Trustees commitment to good governance and transparency remains strong.

Annually, SUF trustees dedicate over 3000+ hours volunteering for SUF, contributing significantly to our mission and strategic objectives. Trustees' efforts have been invaluable in raising awareness about mental health and building valuable relationships within our networks and community.

As the year ends, we bid farewell to Robert Nesbitt, company Secretary for the last five years, recognising his steady presence and significant contributions to SUF.



Robert

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to 2025/26, we remain committed to service user leadership, personalisation, peer support, and coproduction. Working with Suffolk County Council and the NHS, we aim to strengthen the voice of mental health service users in Suffolk.

Our goal is to expand our mental health user-led network, ensuring that the voice of lived experience informs and shapes both new and existing mental health services. By placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of service improvement and development, we strive to create impactful changes.

Our key priorities are:

Funding

Our top priority is to secure sustainable, long-term funding (three years or more) to ensure ongoing service delivery and support to SUF beneficiaries. This includes specific project work and promoting the voices of individuals living with mental ill health, as well as the shared interests of mental health service users collaboratively.



Partnership and User Voice

Strengthening local partnerships to support the County Council and the Integrated Care System (ICS) in their statutory responsibilities for mental health service user involvement, coproduction, information, assistance, and advocacy. This includes ensuring that the voice of lived experience is a central theme throughout the collaborative and its subgroups. Additionally, delivering key coproduction events, publishing service user feedback, and promoting service user priority areas for mental health improvement.



Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, we remain committed to improving outcomes for people in mental health crises by strengthening our peer-led advocacy services and growing the reach of the SUF Healthy Together Peer Support programme. This involves growing new partnerships within primary care and promoting the healthcare rights and wellbeing goals of people living with severe mental illness and severe eating disorders.

In 2025/26, we plan to deliver three Stepping Forward events focused on coproduction with SUF members. These events will be instrumental in developing a SUF strategy for the next three years, ensuring that the needs and ambitions of our members are at the forefront of our planning.

By engaging directly with SUF members, we aim to gather valuable insights and feedback that will shape our future direction and enhance the services we provide.

These events will serve as a platform for open dialogue, collaboration, and the sharing of ideas, ultimately leading to a strategy that truly reflects the voices and aspirations of our community.

We remain committed to working with people across all of our communities and underrepresented groups.

Group discussions were vivid and interesting, and I felt that I could really contribute and make a difference.

Service User Quote

SUF Stepping Forward events have been life changing. The focus on coproduction ensures our voices shape the services we rely on. These events provide a platform for open dialogue and collaboration, making me feel valued and empowered."

Service User Quote

SUF's in-person events have been invaluable. The interaction, sharing, communicating, and mutual education have been illuminating.

Service User Quote

Final Thoughts

To our Community Members

We would like to thank our SUF membership, service users and family/parent carers who have supported us during this year. Thank you for trusting us, for sharing your very individual experiences with us and for working in coproduction with us. Together we are stronger and can make a difference. We look forward to working together in 2025/26.



To our Trustees

We would like to thank all our trustees for their volunteering time, continued commitment, and outstanding support. You have actively supported us to achieve our strategic objectives, bringing a more diverse range of skills, lived experience and knowledge, helping us raise awareness about SUF and mental health, building valuable relationships within our networks, partnerships, community and ultimately our work supporting others.

To our Funders

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our funders and donors who are fundamental to the financial stability of our charity. Thank you to Suffolk County Council, Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board and to those of you in our SUF community, who are friends of SUF, choosing to give generously through your personal donations. Thank you for being our partner, for your generosity, confidence, and appreciation of our support to vulnerable people and mental health service users.





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Suffolk User Forum



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Charity Number 1133457**

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

Dear Sirs

Financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

The following representations are made on the basis of enquires with those individuals, including management and staff, with relevant knowledge and experience such as we consider necessary in connection with your independent examination of the charitable company's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. These enquiries have included inspection of supporting documentation where appropriate and are sufficient to satisfy ourselves that we can make each of the following representations. All representations are made to the best of our knowledge and belief.

General

We acknowledge that the work performed by you is substantially less in scope than an audit performed in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and that you do not express an audit opinion.

We confirm that the charitable company qualifies as small in accordance with the conditions set out in chapter 1 of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

We confirm that the charitable company was entitled to exemption under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011, being that gross income for the year does not exceed £1m or £250,000 if gross assets exceed £3.26m, from the requirement to have its financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 audited. We also confirm that the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the financial year in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

We confirm we have declared all income, including legacies, of which we are aware at the year end, whether received during the year or following the year end.

We have fulfilled our responsibilities as trustees, as set out in the terms of our engagement letter dated 5 October 2022 under the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011, for preparing financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for making accurate representations to you.

All the transactions undertaken by the charitable company have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records.

All the accounting records have been made available to you for the purpose of your independent examination. We have provided you with unrestricted access to all appropriate persons within the charitable company, and with all other records and related information requested, including minutes of all management and trustees' meetings and correspondence with The Charity Commission.

The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

Internal control and fraud

We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control systems to prevent and detect fraud and error, and we believe that we have appropriately fulfilled these responsibilities. We have disclosed to you the results of our risk assessment that the financial statements may be misstated as a result of fraud.

We have disclosed to you all instances of known or suspected fraud affecting the entity involving those individuals, including management and employees, who have a significant role in internal control or others that have a material effect on the financial statements.

We have also disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by current or former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Assets and liabilities

The charitable company has satisfactory title to all assets and there are no liens or encumbrances on the charitable company's assets, except for those that are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

All actual liabilities, contingent liabilities and guarantees given to third parties have been recorded or disclosed as appropriate.

We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value and, where relevant, the fair value measurements or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.

Accounting estimates

The methods, data and significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, and their related disclosures, are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement and disclosure that is reasonable in the context of the applicable financial reporting framework.

Bank accounts

We have disclosed to you all bank accounts operated by the charitable company.

Legal claims

We have disclosed to you all claims in connection with litigation that have been, or are expected to be, received and such matters, as appropriate, have been properly accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements.

Laws and regulations

We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

Related parties

Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements. We have disclosed to you all relevant information concerning such relationships and transactions and are not aware of any other matters which require disclosure in order to comply with legislative and accounting standards requirements.

Serious incidents

We confirm that no serious incident reports have been submitted to the Charity Commission, nor any events considered for submission, during the year or in the period to the date of signing of the balance sheet.

Subsequent events

All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements which require adjustment or disclosure have been properly accounted for and disclosed.

Going concern

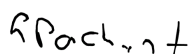
We believe that the charitable company's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis, on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the charitable company's needs. We also confirm our plans for future action(s) required to enable the charitable company to continue as a going concern are feasible. We have considered a period of twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

Grants and donations

All grants, donations and other income, the receipt of which is subject to specific terms or conditions, have been notified to you. There have been no breaches of terms or conditions in the application of such income.

Each trustee has taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that you are aware of that information.

Yours faithfully



.....
Signed on behalf of the board of trustees of Suffolk User Forum

Date: 20/11/2025
.....

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06946785

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1133457

Suffolk User Forum
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited independently examined accounts
31 March 2025

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2025

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Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report)

Year ended 31 March 2025

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Chair's report

The chair's report is disclosed in the Impact Report accompanying these financial statements.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Suffolk User Forum
Charity registration number	1133457
Company registration number	06946785
Principal office and registered office	3 Grange Business Centre Kesgrave Ipswich IP5 2BY

The trustees

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

- G Pachent (Chair)
- D Aldrovandi (Appointed 16/04/2025)
- A Good
- M Little
- A Mudd (Appointed 16/04/2025)
- B Parrott
- M Stafford-White
- A Tanner (Appointed 16/04/2025)
- B Turner
- M Blowers (Passed 08/05/2024)
- R Nesbitt (Resigned 31/03/2025)
- J Stern (Resigned 31/07/2025)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Chief Executive Officer	J Stevens
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank 9-11 Queen Street Ipswich IP1 1SW Suffolk Building Society Mutual House 2 Princes Street Ipswich IP1 1QT Nationwide Building Society Nationwide House Pipers Way Swindon Wiltshire SN38 1NW Charity Bank Fosse House 182 High Street Tonbridge TN9 1BE Unity Trust Bank 1 Ropemaker St London EC2Y 9AW
Company secretary	R Nesbitt (Resigned 27/03/2025)
Independent examiner	A Robinson FCA Lovewell Blake LLP Chartered accountants First Floor Suite 2 Hillside Business Park Bury St Edmunds IP32 7EA

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Objectives and activities

Suffolk User Forum, also referred to as SUF, a term used throughout these accounts, voices the views of mental health service users and their family/parent carers in the East and West of Suffolk. SUF is an independent, user led mental health charity, also known as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO). Everyone involved in the charity has lived experience of mental health as a service user, family carer or worker.

SUF delivers engagement, involvement, coproduction, peer support and inpatient mental health advocacy services. SUF gives mental health service users a powerful and unified voice for their experiences of care and support, promoting individuals' rights, options and choices for care and support for both physical and mental health.

The charity works with service providers and commissioners to try to ensure that the voices of lived experience are central to improving emotional wellbeing and mental health services in East and West Suffolk. This is achieved through the charity's engagement, peer support and advocacy roles, which alongside supporting people, prioritises the gathering and recording of people's experiences of services. By connecting areas of individual feedback together, the charity draws together key themes and emerging trends in people's mental health experiences. These are regularly reported in the SUF publication titled 'Making our Voice Count' which is presented to providers, commissioners and to strategic partners, to assist with decision making and to promote coproduction, so that providers and commissioners can understand and actively respond to the current lived experience of people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Objectives and activities *(continued)*

Mission, vision, and values

SUF's mission is to be an inclusive and trusted mental health user-led network that values, promotes, and strengthens the user voice for positive change, independence, legal rights, choice, and control.

SUF's vision is to continue to be the leading organisation for adults in Suffolk championing equal and valued partnerships between mental health service users, commissioners, and providers, combining mutual strengths and experience to improve services, achieving positive emotional wellbeing and mental health for all.

SUF's values were coproduced at the SUF AGM in 2018:

1. We are open, honest, and trustworthy.
2. We are inclusive and have people at our heart.
3. We are caring and compassionate.
4. We speak out and together we make a difference.

Charitable Objectives

SUF can help people in Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex. We have five main objectives.

- a) To promote partnership working between service providers, including the NHS and Social Care, service users and family/parent carers.
- b) To promote suicide prevention initiatives.
- c) To provide advocacy services, peer support and information to empower people to make their own decisions.
- d) To promote better understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- e) To promote volunteering and peer support.

Public Benefit

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit when setting the objectives for the year.

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

Achievements and performance

The achievements and performance are described further in the Impact Report accompanying these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Financial review

The charity's income in 2024/25 was £267,168 (2023/24: £326,320) of which £143,120 (2023/24: £198,790) related to project restricted activities. The charity's expenditure in 2024/25 was £271,431 (2023/24: £236,140) of which £198,734 (2023/24: £176,315) related to project restricted activities. The result is a net deficit of £4,263 (2023/24: surplus of £90,180) for the year.

Principal funding sources

The charity's core income is received under a funding agreement with Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk & North East Essex NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) via a shared fund called the Mental Health Pooled Fund. This fund has now ended and been replaced by the Aligned Fund.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's policy is to invest any surplus funds in savings accounts, up to a maximum of the guaranteed £85,000 in any one account. The charity has a Business Deposit Account with the Suffolk Building Society and with the Nationwide Building Society. SUF also has accounts with the Charity Bank and from 2024/25 United Trust Bank.

Reserves policy

The Trustees are committed to providing the highest possible service levels. To ensure the charity's financial stability, the Trustees have decided to maintain reserves equivalent to at least six months' operating costs. Our revised policy includes the following allocations:

- General reserves equivalent to six months' projected operating expenditure: £154,768.
- Redundancy and statutory notice costs: £45,902.
- IT and office equipment replacement costs: £16,567
- Designated funds for expenditure in 2025-2027: £108,950
- Restricted funds for service user expenses: £3,451.

This equates to £329,638 for 2024/25 (2023/24: £188,923). As of 31 March 2025, unrestricted funds stand at £329,761 (2023/24: £291,918).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Plans for future periods

Trustees continue to be committed to further developing service user leadership, involvement, personalisation, peer support and coproduction working together with our local statutory partners, Suffolk County Council and NHS, supporting the developing Integrated Care System (ICS), and promoting the mental health service user voice.

We will continue to grow our mental health user led network to ensure the voice of lived experience informs and shapes new and existing mental health services, placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of suicide prevention, service improvement and development.

More detail on how this will be achieved is contained in the impact report accompanying these accounts.

There have been no significant post balance sheet events (events after the year-end) that have had significant impact on the charity.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Structure, governance, and management

Suffolk User Forum is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on the 29th June 2009 and registered as a charity (registered number 1133457) on the 5th January 2010.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which sets out the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. The liability of the members is limited.

Trustee Board

The directors of Suffolk User Forum are known as trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles of Association are known as members of the Trustee Board.

Recruitment to Suffolk User Forum's Trustee Board seeks to ensure that the organisation's desire to remain service user-led is appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Trustee body.

All trustees are either UK nationals or have a lawful right to live and work in England. No trustees are politically exposed in the UK or elsewhere (they are not MPs, Members of a local Council or similar).

Currently, 80% of the SUF Trustee Board has used or currently uses mental health services as a service user or family/parent carer. The charity is described as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) as over 75% of its trustees and 100% of its staff have lived experience of mental ill health. The charity works within the ethos of the social model of disability.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustee Board

Business and public sector, mental health and social care, and family/parent carer and service user skills remain well represented on the Trustee Board. Trustees also have skills in law and in community and voluntary services development. Recruitment has been supported by robust policy and procedures. SUF advertises vacancies for new trustees through the SUF website and social media, Reach Volunteering, Suffolk Volunteering and through its wider networks and partnerships.

The Trustee Board actively encourages and welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds, particularly welcoming applications from ethnic minority communities as they continue to be under-represented on the Board.

Potential trustees are invited to meet SUF trustees and the chief executive to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. All applicants are asked to apply (using the SUF application form) to the Trustee Board.

Applications are shortlisted by the Chair of Trustees in partnership with at least one other Trustee, establishing a recruitment team supported by the Company Secretary. An interview is conducted by this recruitment team which writes an Interview Report.

This report is submitted at the earliest board meeting for a board discussion and a decision made regarding suitability for appointment. Trustees are appointed by the Trustee Board initially until the next annual members' meeting when the appointment is put to a vote. Trustees normally serve a term of three years before reappointment at the next annual members' meeting.

Trustee Induction and Training

All new Trustees receive governance and business documentation relevant to their role, induction, and training.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

New trustees are provided with essential documents to support them in their role. These include:

1. The obligations of the Trustee Board members including the Declaration of Interests, Code of Conduct and Agreement, trustees' roles, and a self-reported skills audit, to inform the board's overall skills report, which is regularly reviewed by the board to ensure a balance of knowledge and skills across the Trustee Board, and to inform the board's annual training plan for trustees.
2. The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity include the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Suffolk User Forum.
3. A copy of all partnership and funding agreements, including those with Suffolk County Council, the Suffolk and North East Essex NHS ICB for Healthy Together and the Suffolk Advocacy Service lead partner POhWER.
4. Copies of contract review Meetings.
5. Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
6. The charity's aims and objectives.
7. The current business/operational plan.
8. The current structure of the organisation including staff.
9. The current project plans and reports.
10. The latest SUF publication including the regular service user feedback reports titled 'Making our Voice Count'.
11. This documentation is supported by a Trustee Induction programme which provides forums for wider discussion regarding the governing documents, explanation of aims and objectives and of the charity's business and action plan, including strategic plans. All new trustees are encouraged to complete on-line training provided in Suffolk by Community Action Suffolk as part of their induction, to ensure they understand their trustee role and responsibilities.

The SUF new Trustee induction programme includes receiving information about key SUF policies and procedures which include:

1. The SUF Information Governance framework which underpins our registration with NHS Digital, including confidentiality, data, and cyber security, data protection, and the SUF Privacy Statement.
2. Equality and Diversity.
3. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.
4. Health and Safety including, lone working, near miss policy and risk management.
5. Comments, Compliments, and Complaints.
6. Social Value Strategy.
7. Environmental Strategy.
8. The SUF Staff and Volunteer Handbook.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2025

Structure, governance, and management *(continued)*

Risk assessment

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and holds a Risk Register that is reviewed at least four times a year at board meetings to ensure that the board is satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. Risk assessment and mitigations inform the Charity's Business Continuity Plan, the robustness of which is tested through regular business continuity exercises.

Independent examiner reappointment

A resolution to appoint A Robinson FCA of Lovewell Blake LLP as independent examiner will be proposed at the next AGM.

Small company provisions

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

The trustees' annual report was approved on 20/11/2025 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



G Pachent
(Chair)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Suffolk User Forum

Year ended 31 March 2025

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), balance sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

Abigail Robinson

A Robinson FCA
Independent Examiner

Lovewell Blake LLP
Chartered accountants
First Floor Suite
2 Hillside Business Park
Bury St Edmunds
IP32 7EA
24/11/2025

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2025

			2025		2024
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	116,518	143,120	259,638	321,328
Investment income	6	7,530	–	7,530	4,992
Total income		<u>124,048</u>	<u>143,120</u>	<u>267,168</u>	<u>326,320</u>
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	7	72,697	198,734	271,431	236,140
Total expenditure		<u>72,697</u>	<u>198,734</u>	<u>271,431</u>	<u>236,140</u>
Net (expenditure)/income before transfer of funds		51,351	(55,614)	(4,263)	90,180
Transfers between funds		(13,508)	13,508	–	–
Net movement in funds		<u>37,843</u>	<u>(42,106)</u>	<u>(4,263)</u>	<u>90,180</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		291,918	86,466	378,384	288,204
Total funds carried forward		<u>329,761</u>	<u>44,360</u>	<u>374,121</u>	<u>378,384</u>

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

The notes on pages 13 to 22 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance sheet

31 March 2025

	Note	2025		2024	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	11		7,089		9,414
Current assets					
Debtors	12	11,600		11,800	
Cash at bank and in hand		360,575		360,993	
		372,175		372,793	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(5,143)		(3,823)	
Net current assets			367,032		368,970
Total assets less current liabilities			374,121		378,384
Net assets			374,121		378,384
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds			44,360		86,466
Unrestricted funds			329,761		291,918
Total charity funds	16		374,121		378,384

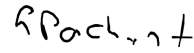
For the year ending 31 March 2025 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

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

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

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 20/11/2025, and are signed on behalf of the board by:


G Pachent
(Chair)

Company registration number: 06946785

The notes on pages 13 to 22 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2025

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The operational address and registered office is 3 Grange Business Centre, Kesgrave, Ipswich, IP5 2BY.

2. Statement of compliance

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

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

Going concern

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

The Trustees confirm that the charity is a going concern when taking into account all financial and non-financial risks.

Income tax

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

Fund accounting

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

Designated funds where necessary, are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

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

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Income

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

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

Expenditure

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

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

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable, and consistent basis.

Operating leases

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

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation

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

Computer equipment	-	25% straight line
Office furniture	-	25% straight line

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Financial instruments

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

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

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

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company if it is wound up during the time that he or she is a member, or within one period afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before the time at which he or she ceases to be a member and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required not exceeding £10.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £
Donations			
Donations	1,064	–	1,064
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	115,454	–	115,454
NHS CCG and ICB Income	–	114,927	114,927
POhWER	–	28,193	28,193
	<u>116,518</u>	<u>143,120</u>	<u>259,638</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Donations			
Donations	301	–	301
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	111,712	–	111,712
NHS CCG and ICB Income	10,525	165,062	175,587
POhWER	–	33,728	33,728
	<u>122,538</u>	<u>198,790</u>	<u>321,328</u>

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Interest received	<u>7,530</u>	<u>7,530</u>	<u>4,992</u>	<u>4,992</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

7. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £
Staff costs	31,517	166,658	198,175
Staff and volunteer expenses	9,359	—	9,359
Support costs	31,821	32,076	63,897
	<u>72,697</u>	<u>198,734</u>	<u>271,431</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Staff costs	5,659	156,535	162,194
Staff and volunteer expenses	9,149	1,700	10,849
Support costs	45,017	18,080	63,097
	<u>59,825</u>	<u>176,315</u>	<u>236,140</u>

Analysis of support costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Office rent	13,487	13,084
Rates	1,964	1,803
Light and heat	2,088	3,377
Telephone	2,676	2,499
Payroll bureau	766	649
Computer and website costs	7,370	8,944
Equipment hire	1,069	1,612
Postage and stationery	1,948	1,919
Repairs and renewals	1,784	1,143
Marketing	13,380	14,821
Insurance	3,573	3,007
Depreciation	3,782	3,298
Trustees' expenses	211	647
Sundry expenses	4,065	1,946
Legal and professional fees	2,482	1,894
Independent examination fee	3,252	2,454
	<u>63,897</u>	<u>63,097</u>

8. Net (expenditure)/income

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

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>3,782</u>	<u>3,298</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

9. Staff costs

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	183,254	151,087
Social security costs	12,238	9,380
Pension costs	2,683	1,727
	<u>198,175</u>	<u>162,194</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 7 (2023/24: 5).

Travel expenses were paid during in the period amounting to £216 (2023/24: £706), with none of the Trustees being paid expenses as users.

10. Trustee remuneration and expenses

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer. The Trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2023/24: £Nil). The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions) received by senior management for their services to the charity was £56,029 (2023/24: £56,001).

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Office furniture £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	30,727	2,582	33,309
Additions	<u>1,241</u>	<u>216</u>	<u>1,457</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>31,968</u>	<u>2,798</u>	<u>34,766</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	21,709	2,186	23,895
Charge for the year	<u>3,635</u>	<u>147</u>	<u>3,782</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>25,344</u>	<u>2,333</u>	<u>27,677</u>
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2025	<u>6,624</u>	<u>465</u>	<u>7,089</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>9,018</u>	<u>396</u>	<u>9,414</u>

12. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	—	8,447
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>11,600</u>	<u>3,353</u>
	<u>11,600</u>	<u>11,800</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,515	979
Accruals and deferred income	3,358	2,844
Social security and other taxes	270	–
	<u>5,143</u>	<u>3,823</u>

14. Deferred income

	2025	2024
	£	£
At 1 April 2024	–	6,970
Amount released to income	–	(6,970)
At 31 March 2025	<u>–</u>	<u>–</u>

Deferred income relates to conditional grant income received in the year on behalf of projects being completed in following years.

15. Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £2,683 (2023/24: £1,727).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

16. Analysis of charitable funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds					
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	3,597	–	(146)	–	3,451
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	3,925	–	–	–	3,925
Healthy Together Peer					
Support	–	114,927	(114,098)	–	829
Personal Health Budgets	32,453	–	(12,442)	–	20,011
Advocacy	–	28,193	(41,701)	13,508	–
Suffolk Cemeteries Metal					
Fund	15,000	–	(5,980)	–	9,020
Healthy Hearts Together	30,745	–	(24,367)	–	6,378
	<u>86,466</u>	<u>143,120</u>	<u>(198,734)</u>	<u>13,508</u>	<u>44,360</u>

Unrestricted funds

General Fund	<u>291,918</u>	<u>124,048</u>	<u>(72,697)</u>	<u>(13,508)</u>	<u>329,761</u>
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	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	–	(1,093)	–	3,597
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	12,908	114,927	(123,910)	–	3,925
Personal Health Budgets	28,905	–	3,548	–	32,453
Suicide Prevention	1,714	–	(1,714)	–	–
Advocacy	–	33,728	(33,756)	28	–
Suffolk Cemeteries Metal					
Fund	–	–	–	15,000	15,000
Healthy Hearts Together	–	50,135	(19,390)	–	30,745
	<u>48,963</u>	<u>198,790</u>	<u>(176,315)</u>	<u>15,028</u>	<u>86,466</u>

Unrestricted funds

General Fund	<u>239,241</u>	<u>127,530</u>	<u>(59,825)</u>	<u>(15,028)</u>	<u>291,918</u>
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Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

The Mental Health Services User expenses - is funded by the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group; West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Suffolk County Council, through the Suffolk Mental Health Pooled Fund, SUF have agreed to hold and administer an amount of now less than £5,000 on behalf of Suffolk County Council and the Integrated Care System.

SCC Waveney Peer Support was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. Subsequent to the year end it has been agreed that the balance will be repaid to Suffolk County Council.

Healthy Together - Peer Support (Formerly Personal Health Budgets) is funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG following the transfer from the Healthy Together project to support people with severe mental illness.

Healthy Hearts Together was funded by NHS Suffolk & North East Essex ICB to work on Cardiovascular Disease and severe mental illness. As at the year end date there is an underspend of £6,378 and the charity is awaiting confirmation from the funders on how to repurpose this money in 2025/2026.

The following projects are complete:

Advocacy was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. This is a three year contract ending 31 March 2025 with POhWER as the lead partner. During the year the £13,508 overspend was made up from general funds.

Healthy Together was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG to support a restricted to support people with severe mental illness and is now fully complete, having merged into the Healthy Together - Peer Support following consultation and agreement with the fund provider.

Suffolk Cemeteries Metal Fund was funded to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF and is now fully complete.

17. Analysis of net assets between funds

As at 31 March 2025

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £
Tangible fixed assets	7,089	–	7,089
Net current assets	322,672	44,360	367,032
Net Assets	<u>329,761</u>	<u>44,360</u>	<u>374,121</u>

As at 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	9,414	–	9,414
Net current assets	282,504	86,466	368,970
Net Assets	<u>291,918</u>	<u>86,466</u>	<u>378,384</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

18. Operating lease commitments

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Not later than 1 year	13,628	11,250
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	5,377	21,383
	<u>19,005</u>	<u>32,633</u>

19. Related parties

The Trustees confirm that there were no related party transactions in this or the prior period.



Impact Report

2024 - 2025



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About Us

Suffolk User Forum (SUF) is an independent mental health user led involvement, peer support and advocacy organisation for adults.

All our staff and trustees have lived experience of mental health as a service user, family/parent carer, or mental health worker.

We make a difference because people know we understand their experiences and genuinely care.

Listening and giving people a voice is central to our work. We make positive changes happen for individuals and we help drive service improvement. As a critical friend we are respected and valued as a strategic partner that shares people's stories, trying to ensure that lived experience is at the heart of service planning, delivery, improvements, and commissioning.

We actively support and facilitate service user and family/parent carer involvement in coproduction, thus influencing decision-making about individuals' care. Valuing individuals as active citizens ensures that their lived experience becomes an essential resource for service improvement.

Our work in 2024/25 included:

- **SUF Peer Led Advocacy**
- **Healthy Together**
- **Coproduction and *Making Our Voice Count* publication**
- **Mental Health Support and Signposting**
- **Suicide Prevention**
- **Our SUF Community Members**



Welcome to our 2024/25 Impact Report

As we reflect on the past year, we are pleased to share the Suffolk User Forum (SUF) Impact Report for 2024/2025. This report outlines the highlights of the reporting year and the team's continued commitment to improving mental health services and support within our community.

We have continued our work as part of the Suffolk Advocacy Partnership this year, alongside our partners POHWER, ACE Anglia, and Suffolk Family Carers. Through this collaboration, SUF Advocates provided advocacy support to 743 mental health inpatients, helping people at a point of crisis.

Now in its third year, the Suffolk Advocacy Partnership has been extended for a further year until 31st March 2026. By working together, we help ensure that people's voices are heard and their rights respected, making a meaningful difference to their lives.

Healthy Together Peer Support continues to make a real difference, having supported over 650 individuals since its launch in 2021. By providing personalised care planning and emotional support, Healthy Together helps people living with severe mental illness (SMI) to access their physical health entitlements and work towards their wellbeing goals.

This year, we held two Stepping Forward events in Stowmarket and Ipswich, where we listened to the experiences of 56 people who had faced mental health crises and used local support services, including 111 (option 2 for mental health) and psychiatric liaison teams in A&E.

The feedback from these events is contained in our *Making Our Voice Count* Report (December 2024). This report shares individual stories and key themes in people's experiences. We are currently working with Healthwatch Suffolk to further explore people's experiences of emergency care for mental health crises, supported by key staff teams in our local acute and mental health trusts.

As we look to the year ahead, we remain firmly committed to our core values of service user leadership and personalisation. We will continue to ensure that the voices of service users and family/parent carers are at the heart of everything we do. We extend our sincere gratitude to our dedicated staff team, trustees, partners, and the wider SUF community for their unwavering support. Together, we will continue to strive for excellence in mental health services and support. Thank you for your continued support.

Guenever Pachent, Chair
and Jayne Stevens CEO



Empowering Individuals

SUF Advocacy



We have continued our role within the Suffolk Advocacy Service this year, providing peer-led mental health advocacy on inpatient wards, delivering crucial support to individuals during times of crisis.

We offer weekly drop-ins at Wedgwood House in Bury St Edmunds and Woodlands at Ipswich Hospital, along with monthly visits to Foxhall House, a secure unit in Ipswich.

Our peer-led advocacy service ensures that all inpatients, including the 57% admitted voluntarily¹ and those detained under the Mental Health Act, have access to advocacy.

By addressing common concerns and empowering patients to engage in their care, SUF not only improves individual outcomes but also contributes to systemic improvements in mental health services.

The positive impact on patients' ability to self-advocate highlights the importance of such services in fostering a more inclusive and responsive healthcare environment.

ADVOCACY OUTCOMES

194 people had their goals met better than expected.

508 people had their goals slightly met better than expected.

57 people had their goals met.

709 people said advocacy helped them have their voice heard.

163 people said advocacy increased their ability to self-advocate.

638

The number of advocacy hours delivered by SUF in 2024/25

743

The number of people SUF provided advocacy support to in 2024/25

814

The number of advocacy needs supported in 2024/25

¹ Mental Health Act Statistics, Annual Figures, 2023-24 - NHS England Digital

Empowering Individuals

Healthy Together Peer Support

This is the second year of our three-year Healthy Together contract, funded by the Suffolk and North East Essex (SNEE) Integrated Care Board. Healthy Together offers peer support to people who live with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) including Schizophrenia, Bi-Polar Disorder, and Psychosis following their Annual Health Checks by primary care practitioners and/or the Suffolk Physical Health Team in Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust for those people receiving care under secondary mental health services.

This year, the project has been extended to provide support for a small number of people living with eating disorders (professional referral only).

Drawing on our lived experience, our Healthy Together Peer Support Workers (PSWs) provide friendly and supportive peer support which is mutual, trauma-informed, and recovery-focused. Our approach is person-centred, offering people options and choices about how they wish to be supported to achieve their healthcare goals. The team work positively with people, championing the protective factors for good physical and mental health and supporting people with previously unidentified and unmet needs.

We have supported over 650 people since the initial pilot project in 2021. This is approximately 20% of people living with an SMI in East and West Suffolk.²

Outcomes for people receiving Healthy Together Peer Support in 2024/25:

We provided Healthy Together Peer Support to **252** people and received **183** new referrals across **265** pathways

We supported 72 people with personal health budgets, funding services like decluttering, dental care, weight loss, addiction support, and wellbeing tools.

92% of referred people use the support and reach their health goals.

"I've had support workers before but honestly no one has come close to you. You've been there for my meetings. I cannot fault you and it blows me away that you understand."

Service User Quote

Feedback received from 50% of beneficiaries with 98% being positive

2. Total numbers of people with an SMI in East and West Suffolk is c. 3500

Partnership for Positive Change

Partnership for Positive Change

Working with Suffolk County Council, supporting their people at the heart of care transformation

This year, we have made significant strides in supporting Suffolk County Council Adult Social Care with the implementation of their "People at the Heart of Care" strategy. Led by our Deputy CEO, we have worked closely with over 50 individuals in our adult mental health My Voice and My Home groups, SUF has successfully co-produced and provided involvement opportunities for various aspects of the transformation programme.

Coproduction is a collaborative process where people work as equals to make shared decisions and create inclusive services. Guided by our principles, active involvement of service users and carers, regular reporting, shared understanding, equality, and inclusion, we ensure everyone is an equal partner in driving positive change. We also provide adequate time for meaningful collaboration.

People at the Heart of Care Strategy

The "People at the Heart of Care" strategy is an initiative aimed at transforming the way Adult Social Care services are provided. The strategy emphasises working closely with individuals to support them in living well and outlines a framework for all the transformation work being done. A key priority is to support independence, helping people to live well, and to receive early help and support.

My Voice and My Home Groups

The My Voice and My Home groups have played a crucial role in supporting key areas of transformation. The My Voice Focus Groups have explored the Cassius digital care technology in collaboration with Suffolk County Council. This exploration included examining how digital support can enhance people's lives and support their independence. Various types of care technology, such as video calling, Alexa, reminder clocks, ring doorbells, and smartwatches, were evaluated. Service users highlighted the benefits and challenges of using banking apps, AI chat functions, and meditation and relaxation apps. They also expressed concerns about the reliability of chatbots and the need for an escalation process.

Partnership for Positive Change

The My Home Focus Groups have been involved in planning meetings and facilitating coproduction for the tender for Supported Housing recommissioning. Service users and family/parent carers have had an opportunity to contribute to the tender process, with their feedback being included within the tender specification, contributing to the selection criteria for future support providers, and exploring how lived experience can be included within the selection process. Together, people have emphasised the importance of supported housing providers delivering flexible support at the right time, ensuring people feel safe and supported, and maximising their independence and connections with family and local networks.

Working with Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT)

We have been involved in various initiatives with NSFT, including the Mortality review, learning from deaths, development of the Carers Charter, and the Inpatient 3-year strategy "Lived Experience and Coproduction for Inpatient Settings."

As this reporting year ends, we are beginning to start work with the Integrated Care System (ICS), NSFT, and Suffolk County Council, focusing on Section 117 of the Mental Health Act, looking at statutory aftercare support for people being discharged from hospital back home to their local communities. Additionally, our Deputy CEO has supported the NSFT 111 mental health option and the NSFT pathway redesign for inpatient and community settings.

SUF Supporting the Lived Experience Group

Suffolk User Forum (SUF) has been actively supporting the Lived Experience Group (LEG), a sub-group to the Mental Health Collaborative Committee (MHCC). The LEG aligns with the MHCC and meets one week ahead of the MHCC meetings. The group is still in its infancy and as it is developed, the aim is to ensure that lived experience is integrated into the collaborative's decision-making process and that it is the golden thread running through all stages.

This year, we have revised the LEG's Terms of Reference. They emphasise the importance of coproduction and the involvement of service users and family/parent carers through membership in the LEG. The group focuses on ensuring equality and inclusion, and regular reporting to the MHCC.

SUF's support for the Lived Experience Group has been instrumental in ensuring collaboration between service providers and service users, whilst supporting the ICB to progress recruitment to the group, broadening its membership and lived experience.

Partnership for Positive Change

Making Our Voice Count

Making Our Voice Count (MOVC) is our series of feedback reports on service user and family/parent carer experiences of adult mental health and wellbeing services in East and West Suffolk. Our reports provide service user and family/parent carer feedback, accompanied by statistical information, alongside anonymised personal stories that describe people's experiences and views.

Our MOVC initiative is a cornerstone of our commitment to listening to and acting upon the voices of those who use our services. Each report is meticulously compiled to ensure that it reflects the diverse experiences and perspectives of our service users and their families.

Our reports this year focused on reporting the experiences of service users and family/parent carers regarding emergency mental health services and support in East and West Suffolk. We gathered feedback from 56 people at two *Stepping Forward* events held in Stowmarket and Kesgrave in 2024 and contributed to a report presented directly to the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

In terms of crisis care, key areas of feedback included:

- Mixed experiences within primary care and challenges in accessing support from mental health practitioners.
- Positive experiences and quick ambulance response times, but difficulties getting through to 111 (option 2 for mental health) and a lack of empathy from call handlers.
- Mixed experiences at Ipswich Accident and Emergency (A&E), including support from Psychiatric liaison, with lengthy wait times; however, more positive feedback was received from West Suffolk Hospital A&E.
- People shared positive experiences of the support provided by the voluntary sector. However, there was also disappointment about the loss of some important voluntary services this year, following the closure of several local charities.



Partnership for Positive Change

At the end of this year we reported to CQC feedback from 121 people who were inpatients on Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trusts (NSFT) acute wards in 2024/25, including feedback from the wider involvement of SUF and family/parent carers who have been bereaved by suicide in the Learning from Deaths Action Plan Management Group. We included our involvement in the scrutinising of Prevention of Future Death notices related to Coroner findings; the lived experience and coproduction for inpatient settings; our contribution to the carers charter and NSFT Learning from deaths review.

In terms of outcomes for inpatients on acute wards feedback showed an improvement on 2023/24 data, with 63% of inpatients in 2024/25 reporting positive outcomes, praising staff for being helpful, compassionate, empathetic, and kind. However, there remained inconsistency on inpatient service provision, with 33% of inpatients reporting negative feedback, including concerns about the rude attitude of some consultants, unhelpful night staff, and lack of activities.

Negative experiences with discharge planning have continued since our detailed Discharge MOVC report in 2022, highlighting issues such as chaotic and poorly communicated discharge plans. This remains a critical area for coproduction and service improvement. We will continue to report on this and advocate for improvement in discharge planning, ensuring that the voices of service users are heard and acted upon.

Image Below - Caroline Donovan, Chief Executive of NSFT was the guest speaker at our 2024 AGM.



Promoting Mental Wellbeing

The Difference Made by Our Signposting for Support

Our mission is to ensure that individuals have access to the support they need, especially during challenging times. One of the key ways we achieve this is through our signposting for support services. This report highlights the significant impact these services have had over the past year.

Our 2024/25 Statistics

- On average every month we have 154 individual visits to our signposting and support pages.
- From April 2024 to March 2025, we had nearly 2,000 people visit our support directory and 27,000 visits to our website overall
- This year, our social media presence has grown significantly:
 - Facebook: 1.7k likes and 1999 followers.
 - X: 2,299 followers
 - LinkedIn: 643 followers
 - YouTube: 17 subscribers. 263 views on HT videos 12 and 454 views on LISTEN for suicide prevention.



Signposting A - Z

Enhancing Access to Support

Our signposting for support services have been instrumental in guiding individuals to the appropriate resources and services. By providing clear and accessible information, we have empowered people to seek help and support when they need it most. This has been particularly important for those experiencing mental health challenges, as timely access to support can make a significant difference in their recovery journey.

Key Achievements

Increased Awareness and Engagement

Over the past year, we have seen a substantial increase in the number of individuals accessing our signposting services. This is reflected in the rise in active website users, with 27K users engaging with our content. The top pages visited include the SUF homepage, Suffolk County Council – Customer First, Healthy Together Peer Support and getting emergency help for your mental health.

Positive Feedback from Service Users

Feedback from people who have used our signposting services has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have expressed gratitude for the clear and concise information provided, which has helped them navigate the often-complex landscape of mental health services.

Promoting Mental Wellbeing

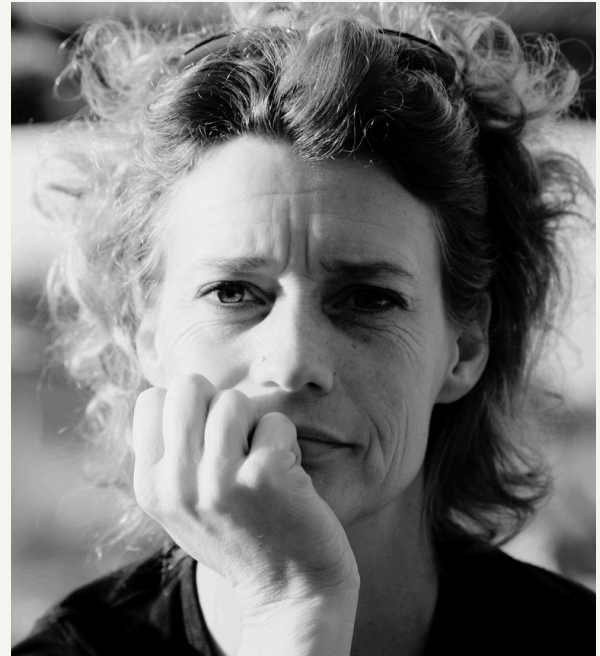
Lived Experience Journey 1: Accessing Mental Health Support

Adeel was struggling with severe anxiety. They told us that he found our signposting page for emergency mental health support.

The clear instructions and contact information provided enabled them to quickly access the help they needed, leading to a significant improvement in their mental health.

"The information was so clear and easy to follow. I was able to get the help I needed quickly, and it made a huge difference in my recovery."

Adeel, Service User



Lived Experience Journey 2: Navigating Health Services

Jennifer was unsure about the process for accessing health services. She used our signposting page to find information about her SMI Annual Physical Health Check. This guidance together with our Healthy Together video helped her understand the steps involved and encouraged Jennifer to attend her appointment, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.

"I didn't know where to start, but the signposting page guided me through the process. It was a relief to have clear information, and it helped me take the necessary steps for my health."

Jennifer, Service User

Suicide Prevention

Every year, on the 10th of September, World Suicide Prevention Day brings people and organisations together to raise awareness about suicide, bereavement by suicide, and its prevention.

As a mental health user-led charity, we understand that when personal problems become overwhelming, it can be incredibly difficult for individuals to seek help. Many people remain silent about their struggles, finding it nearly impossible to talk about suicidal feelings. Feelings of shame, fear of letting loved ones down, and a sense of isolation can make these emotions even more challenging to manage.

We understand the importance of creating a safe and non-judgmental space where people can talk openly about their feelings. It is important for friends, family, and professionals to feel confident in listening and offering support. Often, people worry about saying the wrong thing and are afraid to ask if someone is considering suicide.



We work to empower people to ask questions like, "What's happening for you right now?" and "Are you having thoughts of ending your life?" Listening and understanding are essential for building connections and offering hope and reassurance.

We have developed several resources to help individuals manage difficult feelings and support others in distress. Our *Thrive with Five* booklets promote self-care, while our *LISTEN for Suicide Prevention* booklet and coproduced LISTEN for suicide prevention video offers step-by-step guidance for friends, family, community members, and professionals to feel more confident in preventing suicide.

To watch our co-produced video "LISTEN for Suicide Prevention," please visit <https://youtu.be/8E6hNCiiyWA>.



L	Listen and validate concerns. Look at crisis/care plan and general options
I	Involve and Inform the service user and carer of the immediate options available
S	Shared understanding achieved and Safety issues established
T	Time. Be clear about your availability and be aware of your Tone of voice
E	Empathise and Encourage responsibility then Evaluate what has been agreed
N	Next steps made clear. Never end the contact without a plan

Suicide Prevention

Thinking about suicide?

Worried about someone?

Download the award-winning Stay Alive app

It's free and can help you and others stay safe from suicide

stayalive.app

Visit the Suicide Prevention Hub
prevent-suicide.org.uk/prevention-hub

In the app:

- Advice
- Helplines and chat
- Safety plans
- Wellness Plan
- Staying safe guide

Available on Google Play and the App Store

GRASSROOTS SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suffolk Water Forum

In 2014 we supported Grassroots with their innovative Stay Alive App for suicide prevention, making a strong business case to the East and West Clinical Commissioning Groups to bring the Stay Alive app to Suffolk. Without additional funding we have continued to provide regular updates to Grassroots to keep the app current for our Suffolk community.

In 2014, our first year with Stay Alive, we supported just over 500 people.

As this reporting year ends in March 2025, the Stay Alive app has supported 4,467 individuals in Suffolk with suicide prevention, including significant use in Ipswich, Stowmarket, Sutton, and Bury St Edmunds.

Through open communication, providing our LISTEN and Stay Alive resources, we deliver significant suicide prevention support, helping those in need. Remember, you are not alone, and there is always hope. Reach out for support.

Through open communication, providing our LISTEN and Stay Alive resources, we deliver significant suicide prevention support, helping those in need. Remember, you are not alone, and there is always hope. Reach out for support.

880,000+
downloads since the app
was launched in 2014

208
countries and territories with
Stay Alive users

22
languages are available

Building Community

Our SUF Community Members

The ethos of Suffolk User Forum (SUF) is deeply rooted in our commitment to mental health service users and their families. As a user-led organisation driven by lived experiences, SUF members are the cornerstone of our mission and vision. Our members' insights and perspectives are invaluable in shaping our initiatives and ensuring that our efforts are truly reflective of the needs and aspirations of our community. SUF members bring a wealth of knowledge and firsthand experience that enriches our understanding of mental health challenges and solutions. Our members' active participation in coproduction opportunities, events, and discussions fosters a collaborative environment where every voice is heard and valued.

By sharing stories and advocating for change, SUF members help us create a more inclusive and supportive space for everyone. Your contributions are not just important; they are essential to our growth and success as an organisation committed to making a positive impact.

Being a SUF member is important to me. SUF's support has been invaluable in my recovery journey. SUF's commitment to valuing my lived experiences and advocating for change has created a positive and inclusive environment for SUF members.

Member Quote

”



Our Membership in 2024/25

500 Individual members

49 group members with a reach of over 43,662 people

The SUF Team and Trustees

Team Development

This year has also seen significant development within the staff team. We appointed Emily Geen as Administrative Officer in February 2024, who, by the end of the year, achieved excellent results in professional development, qualifying in Sage 2 and Sage 3, and was promoted to Finance and Administrative Officer.

Additionally, we strengthened our leadership team with the appointment of James Woolnough to the post of Deputy CEO.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Louise Biddiscombe for her hard work and excellent management of the Healthy Together team and wish her the best of luck in her new role with Community Action Suffolk.

In July 2024, we celebrated the appointment and promotion of Chloe Newman to Healthy Together Manager, and in October 2024, we appointed Felicity French as Communications Lead.

These developments have significantly strengthened SUF, supporting our continued project work with mental health service users.



Emily

James

Chloe

Felicity



Anna

Alison

Davide

Trustees

The Trustees commitment to good governance and transparency remains strong.

Annually, SUF trustees dedicate over 3000+ hours volunteering for SUF, contributing significantly to our mission and strategic objectives. Trustees' efforts have been invaluable in raising awareness about mental health and building valuable relationships within our networks and community.

As the year ends, we bid farewell to Robert Nesbitt, company Secretary for the last five years, recognising his steady presence and significant contributions to SUF.



Robert

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to 2025/26, we remain committed to service user leadership, personalisation, peer support, and coproduction. Working with Suffolk County Council and the NHS, we aim to strengthen the voice of mental health service users in Suffolk.

Our goal is to expand our mental health user-led network, ensuring that the voice of lived experience informs and shapes both new and existing mental health services. By placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of service improvement and development, we strive to create impactful changes.

Our key priorities are:

Funding

Our top priority is to secure sustainable, long-term funding (three years or more) to ensure ongoing service delivery and support to SUF beneficiaries. This includes specific project work and promoting the voices of individuals living with mental ill health, as well as the shared interests of mental health service users collaboratively.



Partnership and User Voice

Strengthening local partnerships to support the County Council and the Integrated Care System (ICS) in their statutory responsibilities for mental health service user involvement, coproduction, information, assistance, and advocacy. This includes ensuring that the voice of lived experience is a central theme throughout the collaborative and its subgroups. Additionally, delivering key coproduction events, publishing service user feedback, and promoting service user priority areas for mental health improvement.



Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, we remain committed to improving outcomes for people in mental health crises by strengthening our peer-led advocacy services and growing the reach of the SUF Healthy Together Peer Support programme. This involves growing new partnerships within primary care and promoting the healthcare rights and wellbeing goals of people living with severe mental illness and severe eating disorders.

In 2025/26, we plan to deliver three Stepping Forward events focused on coproduction with SUF members. These events will be instrumental in developing a SUF strategy for the next three years, ensuring that the needs and ambitions of our members are at the forefront of our planning.

By engaging directly with SUF members, we aim to gather valuable insights and feedback that will shape our future direction and enhance the services we provide.

These events will serve as a platform for open dialogue, collaboration, and the sharing of ideas, ultimately leading to a strategy that truly reflects the voices and aspirations of our community.

We remain committed to working with people across all of our communities and underrepresented groups.

Group discussions were vivid and interesting, and I felt that I could really contribute and make a difference.

Service User Quote

SUF Stepping Forward events have been life changing. The focus on coproduction ensures our voices shape the services we rely on. These events provide a platform for open dialogue and collaboration, making me feel valued and empowered."

Service User Quote

SUF's in-person events have been invaluable. The interaction, sharing, communicating, and mutual education have been illuminating.

Service User Quote

Final Thoughts

To our Community Members

We would like to thank our SUF membership, service users and family/parent carers who have supported us during this year. Thank you for trusting us, for sharing your very individual experiences with us and for working in coproduction with us. Together we are stronger and can make a difference. We look forward to working together in 2025/26.



To our Trustees

We would like to thank all our trustees for their volunteering time, continued commitment, and outstanding support. You have actively supported us to achieve our strategic objectives, bringing a more diverse range of skills, lived experience and knowledge, helping us raise awareness about SUF and mental health, building valuable relationships within our networks, partnerships, community and ultimately our work supporting others.

To our Funders

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our funders and donors who are fundamental to the financial stability of our charity. Thank you to Suffolk County Council, Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board and to those of you in our SUF community, who are friends of SUF, choosing to give generously through your personal donations. Thank you for being our partner, for your generosity, confidence, and appreciation of our support to vulnerable people and mental health service users.





01473 907087



hello@suffolkuserforum.co.uk



Suffolk User Forum



@SUFMentalWealth



www.suffolkuserforum.co.uk



**The New Hollies
Unit 3, Grange Business
Centre, Kesgrave, Ipswich
Suffolk, IP5 2BY**



**Suffolk User Forum (SUF)
is a Registered Company
Number 06946785 and a
Charity Number 1133457**

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

Dear Sirs

Financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

The following representations are made on the basis of enquires with those individuals, including management and staff, with relevant knowledge and experience such as we consider necessary in connection with your independent examination of the charitable company's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. These enquiries have included inspection of supporting documentation where appropriate and are sufficient to satisfy ourselves that we can make each of the following representations. All representations are made to the best of our knowledge and belief.

General

We acknowledge that the work performed by you is substantially less in scope than an audit performed in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and that you do not express an audit opinion.

We confirm that the charitable company qualifies as small in accordance with the conditions set out in chapter 1 of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

We confirm that the charitable company was entitled to exemption under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011, being that gross income for the year does not exceed £1m or £250,000 if gross assets exceed £3.26m, from the requirement to have its financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 audited. We also confirm that the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the financial year in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

We confirm we have declared all income, including legacies, of which we are aware at the year end, whether received during the year or following the year end.

We have fulfilled our responsibilities as trustees, as set out in the terms of our engagement letter dated 5 October 2022 under the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011, for preparing financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for making accurate representations to you.

All the transactions undertaken by the charitable company have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records.

All the accounting records have been made available to you for the purpose of your independent examination. We have provided you with unrestricted access to all appropriate persons within the charitable company, and with all other records and related information requested, including minutes of all management and trustees' meetings and correspondence with The Charity Commission.

The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

Internal control and fraud

We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control systems to prevent and detect fraud and error, and we believe that we have appropriately fulfilled these responsibilities. We have disclosed to you the results of our risk assessment that the financial statements may be misstated as a result of fraud.

We have disclosed to you all instances of known or suspected fraud affecting the entity involving those individuals, including management and employees, who have a significant role in internal control or others that have a material effect on the financial statements.

We have also disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by current or former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Assets and liabilities

The charitable company has satisfactory title to all assets and there are no liens or encumbrances on the charitable company's assets, except for those that are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

All actual liabilities, contingent liabilities and guarantees given to third parties have been recorded or disclosed as appropriate.

We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value and, where relevant, the fair value measurements or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.

Accounting estimates

The methods, data and significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, and their related disclosures, are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement and disclosure that is reasonable in the context of the applicable financial reporting framework.

Bank accounts

We have disclosed to you all bank accounts operated by the charitable company.

Legal claims

We have disclosed to you all claims in connection with litigation that have been, or are expected to be, received and such matters, as appropriate, have been properly accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements.

Laws and regulations

We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

Related parties

Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements. We have disclosed to you all relevant information concerning such relationships and transactions and are not aware of any other matters which require disclosure in order to comply with legislative and accounting standards requirements.

Serious incidents

We confirm that no serious incident reports have been submitted to the Charity Commission, nor any events considered for submission, during the year or in the period to the date of signing of the balance sheet.

Subsequent events

All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements which require adjustment or disclosure have been properly accounted for and disclosed.

Going concern

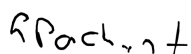
We believe that the charitable company's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis, on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the charitable company's needs. We also confirm our plans for future action(s) required to enable the charitable company to continue as a going concern are feasible. We have considered a period of twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

Grants and donations

All grants, donations and other income, the receipt of which is subject to specific terms or conditions, have been notified to you. There have been no breaches of terms or conditions in the application of such income.

Each trustee has taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that you are aware of that information.

Yours faithfully



.....
Signed on behalf of the board of trustees of Suffolk User Forum

Date: 20/11/2025
.....

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06946785

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1133457

Suffolk User Forum
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited independently examined accounts
31 March 2024

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

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Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)	12
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Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report)

Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Chair's report

The chair's report is disclosed in the Impact Report accompanying these financial statements.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Suffolk User Forum
Charity registration number	1133457
Company registration number	06946785
Principal office and registered office	3 Grange Business Centre Kesgrave Ipswich IP5 2BY

The trustees

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

G Pachent (Chair)
A Good
M Little (Appointed 07/02/2024)
R Nesbitt
B Parrott
M Stafford-White
J Stern
B Turner
M Blowers (Passed 08/05/2024)
J Everett (Resigned 07/08/2023)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Chief executive officer	J Stevens
Solicitors	Clements Solicitors 2nd Floor 20 Queen Street Ipswich IP1 1SS
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank 9-11 Queen Street Ipswich IP1 1SW Suffolk Building Society Mutual House 2 Princes Street Ipswich IP1 1QT Nationwide Building Society Nationwide House Pipers Way Swindon Wiltshire SN38 1NW Charity Bank Fosse House 182 High Street Tonbridge TN9 1BE Unity Trust Bank 1 Ropemaker St London EC2Y 9AW
Company secretary	R Nesbitt
Independent examiner	L Thurston FCCA Lovewell Blake LLP Chartered accountants First Floor Suite 2 Hillside Business Park Bury St Edmunds IP32 7EA

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and activities

Suffolk User Forum, also referred to as SUF, a term used throughout these accounts, voices the views of mental health service users and their family/parent carers in the East and West of Suffolk. SUF is an independent, user led mental health charity, also known as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO). Everyone involved in the charity has lived experience of mental health as a service user, family carer or worker.

SUF delivers engagement, involvement, coproduction, peer support and inpatient mental health advocacy services. SUF gives mental health service users a powerful and unified voice for their experiences of care and support, promoting individuals' rights, options and choices for care and support for both physical and mental health.

The charity works with service providers and commissioners to try to ensure that the voices of lived experience are central to improving emotional wellbeing and mental health services in East and West Suffolk. This is achieved through the charity's engagement, peer support and advocacy roles, which alongside supporting people, prioritises the gathering and recording of people's experiences of services. By connecting areas of individual feedback together, the charity draws together key themes and emerging trends in people's mental health experiences. These are regularly reported in the SUF publication titled 'Making our Voice Count' which is presented to providers, commissioners and to strategic partners, to assist with decision making and to promote coproduction, so that providers and commissioners can understand and actively respond to the current lived experience of people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs.

The trustees confirm that the charity is a going concern when taking into account all financial and non-financial risks.

There have been no significant post balance sheet events (events after the year-end) that have had significant impact on the charity.

No related party transactions have been identified by trustees. (Also known as related party dealings, these refer to any financial or business activity between related parties. 'Related parties' refer to a company and its subsidiaries, associates, directors, officers, spouses, and relatives of directors, or shareholders.)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and activities *(continued)*

Mission, vision, and values

SUF's mission is to be an inclusive and trusted mental health user-led network that values, promotes, and strengthens the user voice for positive change, independence, legal rights, choice, and control.

SUF's vision is to continue to be the leading organisation for adults in Suffolk championing equal and valued partnerships between mental health service users, commissioners, and providers, combining mutual strengths and experience to improve services, achieving positive emotional wellbeing and mental health for all.

SUF's values were coproduced at the SUF AGM in 2018:

1. We are open, honest, and trustworthy.
2. We are inclusive and have people at our heart.
3. We are caring and compassionate.
4. We speak out and together we make a difference.

Charitable Objectives

SUF can help people in Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex. We have five main objectives.

- a) To promote partnership working between service providers, including the NHS and Social Care, service users and family/parent carers.
- b) To promote suicide prevention initiatives.
- c) To provide advocacy services, peer support and information to empower people to make their own decisions.
- d) To promote better understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- e) To promote volunteering and peer support.

Public Benefit

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on Public Benefit including, The Public Benefit Requirement (PB1), Running a Charity (PB2) and Reporting (PB3).

Achievements and performance

The achievements and performance are described further in the Impact Report accompanying these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Financial review

The charity's income in 2023/24 was £326,320 (2022/23: £300,746) of which £198,790 (2022/23: £176,962) related to project restricted activities. The charity's expenditure in 2023/24 was £236,140 (2022/23: £177,646) of which £176,315 (2022/23: £135,246) related to project restricted activities. The net surplus of £90,180 (2022/23: £123,100) has continued to contribute to the charity's general reserves.

Principal funding sources

The charity's core income is received under a funding agreement with Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk & North East Essex NHS Integrated Care Board (SNEE ICB) via a shared fund called the Mental Health Pooled Fund. This funding agreement is administered by Suffolk County Council. The Mental Health Pooled Fund was due to end by 31st March 2024 but has been extended until 31st March 2025 to enable a review of the fund to take place. SUF's core funding for 2023/24 was confirmed for one year. At the end of this reporting period a further year's core funding via has been agreed for 2024/25.

As the reporting year 2023/24 commences, SUF is pleased to report that the advocacy partnership made up of POhWER, Ace Anglia, Suffolk Family Carers and Suffolk User Forum has continued.

This partnership is commissioned to deliver advocacy services to people in Suffolk for three years (from 01.04.22), with the opportunity for a further two years' funding. As a partnership, we work together as a unified and stronger voice, with greater influence to make an even bigger difference to people's lives.

We are proud to report that following the success of our Healthy Together pilot, SUF was awarded three-year funding for Healthy Together Peer Support commencing in 2023/24. Healthy Together was expanded to offer support to people who receive their Severe Mental Illness (SMI) Annual Health Checks by primary care practitioners. Healthy Together delivers peer support and personalised care planning, providing emotional and practical help for people living with SMI, to help access their physical health entitlements and achieve wellbeing goals.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's policy is to invest any surplus funds in savings accounts, up to a maximum of the guaranteed £85,000 in any one account. The charity has a Business Deposit Account with the Suffolk Building Society and with the Nationwide Building Society. SUF also has accounts with the Charity Bank and (from 2024/25) United Trust Bank.

Reserves policy

The Trustees remain committed to providing the maximum possible service levels. The Trustees have continued to retain SUF reserves during this financial year to provide the charity with reserves equal to at least six months' operating costs. It is our revised policy to maintain current general reserves equivalent to six months projected operating expenditure, plus redundancy and statutory notice costs of £35,222 and £12,000 to replace IT equipment. This equates to £188,923 (2022/23: £199,822).

Reserves on unrestricted funds on 31 March 2024 are £291,918 (2022/23: £239,241). The Trustee board will review the reserves policy during the forthcoming year, aiming to increase income in the coming year as and where appropriate.

Financial reserves are SUF's savings, helping to strengthen the charity and its sustainability. They help SUF to pay for activities that donors will not fund or handle unplanned events. They also provide additional operating funds over and above the core funding provided by the Mental Health Pooled Fund. General reserves must be built up from unrestricted income; any surplus on a restricted project is tied to the same restrictions as the original project and may not be transferred to unrestricted funds without the donors' consent.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Plans for future periods

Trustees continue to be committed to further developing service user leadership, involvement, personalisation, peer support and coproduction working together with our local statutory partners, Suffolk County Council and NHS, supporting the developing Integrated Care System (ICS), and promoting the mental health service user voice.

We will continue to grow our mental health user led network to ensure the voice of lived experience informs and shapes new and existing mental health services, placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of suicide prevention, service improvement and development.

Our key priorities for the next period include:

1. Funding

Trustees' top priority is to secure sustainable, long-term funding (three years+) to ensure ongoing service delivery and support to beneficiaries, through specific project work, alongside promoting the voices of individual people living with mental ill health, and the shared interests of mental health service users collaboratively.

As the reporting year closes, the board of trustees are pleased to report that our core funding has been confirmed for a further year (2024/25). The charity is strengthened through having secured medium to long term funding (three+ years) for peer led advocacy services, funded for a minimum of three years (up to 31st March 2025), with the opportunity for an additional two years until 31st March 2027.

In April 2023 SUF won a tender bid for the delivery of outreach peer support to people living with severe mental illness (SMI), which had been piloted over the previous 18 months through the Healthy Together Project. The successful bid secured funds for Healthy Together Peer Support for a further three years up to 31st March 2026.

2. Partnership and user voice

2.1 To continue to strengthen our local partnerships, supporting the County Council and the newly formed Integrated Care System (ICS) to discharge their statutory responsibilities for mental health service user involvement, coproduction, information, assistance, and advocacy in relation to adult mental health service users. This includes supporting the new ICS and Mental Health Collaborative Committee to ensure that the voice of lived experience is a golden thread through the collaborative and its subgroups.

2.2 Relaunching SUF's Stepping Forward events with services users and family/parent carers to listen to their experiences of mental health services.

2.3 Making Our Voice Count: continuing to raise people's voices and lived experience to ensure that mental health services, organisations and policies are led and shaped by the people best placed to know what works.

2.4 To continue actively promoting service user priority areas for mental health improvement. These include:

- Raising and promoting LISTEN as a universal model for personalised care, suicide prevention and coproduction.
- Championing improved discharge planning for people transitioning from secondary mental health services to primary care support.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

- Focusing on the experiences of mental health service users and family/parent carers when in Accident & Emergency and with Psychiatric Liaison.

3. Project delivery

- 3.1 To continue to help deliver good outcomes for people at a time of mental health crisis through our peer led advocacy service, working as a partner within the Suffolk Advocacy Service.
- 3.2 To continue to deliver and develop the SUF Healthy Together Peer Support, helping deliver good outcomes for people, growing new partnerships within primary care, promoting the healthcare rights and goals of people living with severe mental illness (SMI), which includes the following diagnoses: Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, and Psychosis.

4. People in our communities

- 4.1 To work across all communities and protected characteristics with regard to groups where there is evidence of under-representation and/or greater discrimination.
- 4.2 To develop our skills and capacity to support service user leadership and volunteer roles within our charity. Supporting people to gain skills and self-confidence as active citizens, building capacity to increase our support to people living with mental distress and mental health needs.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Structure, governance, and management

Suffolk User Forum is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on the 29th June 2009 and registered as a charity (registered number 1133457) on the 5th January 2010.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which sets out the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. The liability of the members is limited.

Trustee Board

The directors of Suffolk User Forum are known as trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles of Association are known as members of the Trustee Board. Recruitment to Suffolk User Forum's Trustee Board seeks to ensure that the organisation's desire to remain service user-led is appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Trustee body.

All trustees are UK nationals. No trustees are politically exposed in the UK or elsewhere (they are not MPs, Members of a local Council or similar).

Currently 75% of the SUF Trustee Board has used or currently use mental health services as a service user or family/parent carer. The charity is described as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) as 75% of its trustees and 100% of its staff have lived experience of mental ill health. The charity works within the ethos of the social model of disability.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustee Board

Business and public sector, mental health and social care, and family/parent carer and service user skills remain well represented on the Trustee Board. Trustees also have skills in law and in community and voluntary services development. Recruitment has been supported by robust policy and procedures. SUF advertises vacancies for new trustees through the SUF website and social media, Reach Volunteering, Suffolk Volunteering and through its wider networks and partnerships.

The Trustee Board actively encourages and welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds, particularly welcoming applications from ethnic minority communities and women, as they are currently underrepresented on the Trustee Board.

Potential trustees are invited to meet SUF trustees and the chief executive to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. All applicants are asked to apply (using the SUF application form) to the Trustee Board.

Applications are shortlisted by the Chair of Trustees in partnership with at least one other Trustee, establishing a recruitment team supported by the Company Secretary. An interview is conducted by this recruitment team which writes an Interview Report. This report is submitted at the earliest board meeting for a board discussion and a decision made regarding suitability for appointment. Trustees are appointed by the Trustee Board initially until the next annual members' meeting when the appointment is put to a vote. Trustees normally serve a term of three years before reappointment at the next annual members' meeting.

Trustee Induction and Training

All new Trustees receive governance and business documentation relevant to their role, induction, and training.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

New trustees are provided with essential documents to support them in their role. These include.

1. The obligations of the Trustee Board members including the Declaration of Interests, Code of Conduct and Agreement, trustees' roles, and a self-reported skills audit, to inform the board's overall skills report, which is regularly reviewed by the board to ensure a balance of knowledge and skills across the Trustee Board, and to inform the board's annual training plan for trustees.
2. The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity include the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Suffolk User Forum.
3. A copy of all partnership and funding agreements, including those with Suffolk County Council, the Suffolk and North East Essex NHS ICB for Healthy Together and the Suffolk Advocacy Service lead partner POhWER.
4. Copies of contract review Meetings.
5. Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
6. The charity's aims and objectives.
7. The current business/operational plan.
8. The current structure of the organisation including staff.
9. The current project plans and reports.
10. The latest SUF publication including the regular service user feedback reports titled 'Making our Voice Count'.
11. This documentation is supported by a Trustee Induction programme which provides forums for wider discussion regarding the governing documents, explanation of aims and objectives and of the charity's business and action plan, including strategic plans. All new trustees are encouraged to complete on-line training provided in Suffolk by Community Action Suffolk as part of their induction, to ensure they understand their trustee role and responsibilities.

The SUF new trustee induction programme includes receiving information about key SUF policies and procedures which include:

1. The SUF Information Governance framework which underpins our registration with NHS Digital, including confidentiality, data, and cyber security, data protection, and the SUF Privacy Statement.
2. Equality and Diversity.
3. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.
4. Health and Safety including, lone working, near miss policy and risk management.
5. Comments, Compliments, and Complaints.
6. Social Value Strategy.
7. Environmental Strategy.
8. The SUF Staff and Volunteer Handbook.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Structure, governance, and management *(continued)*

Risk assessment

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and holds a Risk Register that is reviewed at least four times a year at board meetings to ensure that the board is satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. Risk assessment and mitigations inform the Charity's Business Continuity Plan, the robustness of which is tested through regular business continuity exercises.

The charity has not received any correspondence from HMRC requesting the preparation of a corporation tax return (CT600e).

Independent examiner reappointment

A resolution to appoint L Thurston FCCA of Lovewell Blake LLP as independent examiner will be proposed at the next AGM.

Small company provisions

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

The trustees' annual report was approved on 12/11/2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



G Pachent
(Chair)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Suffolk User Forum

Year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), balance sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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



L Thurston FCCA
Independent Examiner

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

12/11/2024

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted funds	2024 Restricted funds	Total funds	2023 Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	122,538	198,790	321,328	299,711
Investment income	6	4,992	–	4,992	1,035
Total income		<u>127,530</u>	<u>198,790</u>	<u>326,320</u>	<u>300,746</u>
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	7	59,825	176,315	236,140	177,646
Total expenditure		<u>59,825</u>	<u>176,315</u>	<u>236,140</u>	<u>177,646</u>
Net income before transfer of funds		67,705	22,475	90,180	123,100
Transfers between funds		(15,028)	15,028	–	–
Net movement in funds		<u>52,677</u>	<u>37,503</u>	<u>90,180</u>	<u>123,100</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		239,241	48,963	288,204	165,104
Total funds carried forward		<u>291,918</u>	<u>86,466</u>	<u>378,384</u>	<u>288,204</u>

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

The notes on pages 14 to 23 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance sheet

31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	11		9,414		5,292
Current assets					
Debtors	12	11,800		15,347	
Cash at bank and in hand		360,993		277,922	
		372,793		293,269	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(3,823)		(10,357)	
Net current assets			368,970		282,912
Total assets less current liabilities			378,384		288,204
Net assets			378,384		288,204
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds			86,466		48,963
Unrestricted funds			291,918		239,241
Total charity funds	16		378,384		288,204

For the year ending 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

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

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

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 12/11/2024....., and are signed on behalf of the board by:



G Pachent
(Chair)

Company registration number: 06946785

The notes on pages 14 to 23 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The operational address and registered office is 3 Grange Business Centre, Kesgrave, Ipswich, IP5 2BY.

2. Statement of compliance

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

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

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

Going concern

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

Income tax

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

Fund accounting

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

Designated funds where necessary, are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

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

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Income

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

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Expenditure

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

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable, and consistent basis.

Operating leases

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

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

An increase in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of a revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, unless it reverses a charge for impairment that has previously been recognised as expenditure within the statement of financial activities. A decrease in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, except to which it offsets any previous revaluation gain, in which case the loss is shown within other recognised gains and losses on the statement of financial activities.

Depreciation

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

Computer equipment	-	25% straight line
Office furniture	-	25% straight line

Financial instruments

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

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

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

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

When contributions are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the end of the reporting date in which the employees render the related service, the liability is measured on a discounted present value basis. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as an expense in the period in which it arises.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

4. Limited by guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company if it is wound up during the time that he or she is a member, or within one period afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before the time at which he or she ceases to be a member and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required not exceeding £10.

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Donations			
Donations	301	–	301
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	111,712	–	111,712
NHS West Suffolk CCG	–	–	–
NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG	–	114,927	114,927
NHS England	10,525	–	10,525
POhWER	–	33,728	33,728
NHS Suffolk & North East Essex ICB	–	50,135	50,135
	<u>122,538</u>	<u>198,790</u>	<u>321,328</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations			
Donations	15,335	–	15,335
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	107,414	–	107,414
NHS West Suffolk CCG	–	34,657	34,657
NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG	–	60,486	60,486
NHS England	–	48,500	48,500
POhWER	–	33,319	33,319
NHS Suffolk & North East Essex ICB	–	–	–
	<u>122,749</u>	<u>176,962</u>	<u>299,711</u>

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Building society interest	<u>4,992</u>	<u>4,992</u>	<u>1,035</u>	<u>1,035</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

7. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Staff costs	5,659	156,535	162,194
Staff and volunteer expenses	9,149	1,700	10,849
Support costs	45,017	18,080	63,097
	<u>59,825</u>	<u>176,315</u>	<u>236,140</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Staff costs	1,032	126,345	127,377
Staff and volunteer expenses	3,992	1,360	5,352
Support costs	37,376	7,541	44,917
	<u>42,400</u>	<u>135,246</u>	<u>177,646</u>

Analysis of support costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Office rent	13,084	12,906
Rates	1,803	1,018
Light and heat	3,377	2,079
Telephone	2,499	2,252
Payroll bureau	649	592
Computer and website costs	8,944	11,262
Equipment hire	1,612	1,904
Postage and stationery	1,919	1,783
Repairs and renewals	1,143	661
Marketing	14,821	–
Insurance	3,007	1,726
Depreciation	3,298	2,376
Trustees' expenses	647	646
Sundry expenses	1,946	591
Legal and professional fees	1,894	2,301
Independent examination fee	2,454	2,820
	<u>63,097</u>	<u>44,917</u>

8. Net income

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>3,298</u>	<u>2,376</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

9. Staff costs

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	151,087	119,493
Social security costs	9,380	6,553
Pension costs	1,727	1,331
	<u>162,194</u>	<u>127,377</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 5 (2022/23: 5).

Travel expenses were paid during in the period amounting to £706 (2022/23: £856), with none of the Trustees being paid expenses as users.

10. Trustee remuneration and expenses

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. The trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2022/23: £Nil). The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions) received by senior management for their services to the charity was £52,822 (2022/23: £50,777).

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Office furniture £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	23,733	2,431	26,164
Additions	6,994	426	7,420
Disposals	—	(275)	(275)
At 31 March 2024	<u>30,727</u>	<u>2,582</u>	<u>33,309</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	18,533	2,339	20,872
Charge for the year	3,176	122	3,298
Disposals	—	(275)	(275)
At 31 March 2024	<u>21,709</u>	<u>2,186</u>	<u>23,895</u>
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2024	<u>9,018</u>	<u>396</u>	<u>9,414</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>5,200</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>5,292</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

12. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	8,447	–
Prepayments and accrued income	3,353	15,347
	<u>11,800</u>	<u>15,347</u>

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	979	983
Accruals and deferred income	2,844	9,374
	<u>3,823</u>	<u>10,357</u>

14. Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April 2023	6,970	158,643
Amount released to income	(6,970)	(158,643)
Amount deferred in year	–	6,970
At 31 March 2024	<u>–</u>	<u>6,970</u>

Deferred income relates to conditional grant income received in the year on behalf of projects being completed in following years.

15. Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £1,727 (2022/23: £1,331).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

16. Analysis of charitable funds

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	–	(1,093)	–	3,597
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	12,908	114,927	(123,910)	–	3,925
Personal Health Budgets	28,905	–	3,548	–	32,453
Suicide Prevention	1,714	–	(1,714)	–	–
Advocacy	–	33,728	(33,756)	28	–
Suffolk Cemeteries Metal					
Fund	–	–	–	15,000	15,000
Healthy Hearts Together	–	50,135	(19,390)	–	30,745
	<u>48,963</u>	<u>198,790</u>	<u>(176,315)</u>	<u>15,028</u>	<u>86,466</u>

Unrestricted funds

General Fund	<u>239,241</u>	<u>127,530</u>	<u>(59,825)</u>	<u>(15,028)</u>	<u>291,918</u>
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	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds					
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	–	–	–	4,690
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	–	143,643	(101,830)	(28,905)	12,908
Personal Health Budgets	–	–	–	28,905	28,905
Suicide Prevention	1,714	–	–	–	1,714
Advocacy	–	33,319	(33,416)	97	–
	<u>7,150</u>	<u>176,962</u>	<u>(135,246)</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>48,963</u>

Unrestricted funds

General Fund	<u>157,954</u>	<u>123,784</u>	<u>(42,400)</u>	<u>(97)</u>	<u>239,241</u>
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The Mental Health Services User expenses - is funded by the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group; West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Suffolk County Council, through the Suffolk Mental Health Pooled Fund, SUF have agreed to hold and administer an amount of now less than £5,000 on behalf of Suffolk County Council and the Integrated Care System.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

SCC Waveney Peer Support was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. Subsequent to the year end it has been agreed that the balance will be repaid to Suffolk County Council.

Healthy Together was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. During the year it was agreed to transfer the remaining balance to a new project called Personal Health Budgets.

Personal Health Budgets was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG following the transfer from the Healthy Together project to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Suicide Prevention was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Advocacy was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. This is a three year contract with POhWER as the lead partner.

Suffolk Cemeteries Metal Fund was funded to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Healthy Hearts Together was funded by NHS Suffolk & North East Essex ICB to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

17. Analysis of net assets between funds

As at 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	9,414	–	9,414
Net current assets	282,504	86,466	368,970
Net Assets	<u>291,918</u>	<u>86,466</u>	<u>378,384</u>

As at 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	5,292	–	5,292
Net current assets	233,949	48,963	282,128
Net Assets	<u>239,241</u>	<u>48,963</u>	<u>287,420</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

18. Operating lease commitments

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
Not later than 1 year	11,250	13,080
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	21,383	–
	<u>32,633</u>	<u>13,080</u>

19. Related parties

Other than elsewhere disclosed in the accounts, there were no related party transactions in this or the prior period.

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06946785

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1133457

**Suffolk User Forum
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited financial statements
31 March 2023**



Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2023

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Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report)

Year ended 31 March 2023

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

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Chair's report

Over the years, much of Suffolk User Forum's (SUF's) work listening to service users and their families has been about their experiences of NHS services. In 2022/23, SUF was pleased to be asked by Suffolk County Council (SCC) to engage with mental health (MH) service users about their interactions with SCC social workers and provide written feedback to SCC on the quality of their services as experienced by service users. It has been pleasing to see SCC genuinely interested in learning about service users' experiences, willing to listen and take action even when service user feedback has been negative. Working in partnership with SCC and with service users, we look forward to collecting more feedback about MH social work services in 2023/24, highlighting the good practice and areas in need of improvement.

The new statutory NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care System (SNEE ICS) is also very keen for coproduced service user feedback to be a golden thread woven into all its decisions. SUF has been contributing to the development of SNEE's systems, including its MH Collaborative, and expects, together with service users, to participate more extensively in the Collaborative in 2023/24.

We are really pleased that advocacy for voluntary MH patients (distinct from patients detained under the Mental Health Act who have the legal right to advocacy) has been included in the three-year advocacy contract for Suffolk Advocacy Services, led by the charity POHWER, since it is so important that all inpatients, whether detained or not, have someone who will help them voice their wants and needs.

We are particularly pleased that SUF is contracted to provide peer-led advocacy to patients in Woodlands, Wedgwood House and Foxhall House. Helping people voice their concerns and take control of their lives is core SUF business.

Healthy Together is another project which helps people with severe mental illness, psychosis, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia in this case, voice their concerns and take control of their own lives. SUF developed this project with the NHS and received further pilot funding in 2022/23. The stories of how private and public sector organisations have given service users the run around for straightforward requests, e.g. getting the sink fixed in rented accommodation, booking appointments for utility services, or booking GP appointments, are shocking. Healthy Together has made a real difference to people's lives in enabling people to get these sorts of problems fixed. And then, relieved of burdensome everyday life stresses, service users have been free to attend their health appointments and improve their lives in this way as well.

2022/23, with its high rate of inflation and cost of living crises, has been a burden on MH service users and their families, and on SUF staff. SUF staff are conscious of the stress on service users and the need to be supportive. The Trustee Board is conscious of our obligation regarding the wellbeing of staff, and we have been able in 2022/23 to increase basic pay levels and to remunerate some additional work. It is pleasing to see in 2023 some signs of longer-term funding and indeed some small allowances for inflation.

We also wish to recognise in this report the hard work of our staff team: their contributions to SUF members and service users and their commitment to our charity. Our person centred Advocacy and Healthy Together work relies entirely on the staff team, led from the front by our indomitable chief executive. We also say a very big thank you to our funders and donors without whom SUF would not be here. And finally, thank you to our excellent volunteer trustees who hold the legal responsibility for SUF, ensuring that SUF carries out its functions in the interests of our beneficiaries, complies with our governing document and the law, ensuring good governance and accountability.

With best wishes,



Guenever Pachent, SUF Chair


Jayne Stevens, CEO

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Suffolk User Forum
Charity registration number	1133457
Company registration number	06946785
Principal office and registered office	3 Grange Business Centre Kesgrave Ipswich IP5 2BY

The trustees

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

G Pachent (Chair)
M Blowers
A Good
R Nesbitt
B Parrott
M Stafford-White
J Stern
B Turner
J Everett (Resigned 07/08/2023)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Chief executive officer	J Stevens
Solicitors	Clements Solicitors 2nd Floor 20 Queen Street Ipswich IP1 1SS
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank 9-11 Queen Street Ipswich IP1 1SW Ipswich Building Society Unit 22 Sailmakers Shopping Centre Ipswich IP1 3BB Nationwide Building Society 48 Tavern Street Ipswich IP1 3DL
Company secretary	R Nesbitt
Independent examiner	L Thurston FCCA Lovewell Blake LLP Chartered accountants First Floor Suite 2 Hillside Business Park Bury St Edmunds IP32 7EA

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Objectives and activities

Suffolk User Forum, also referred to as SUF, with either term used throughout these accounts, voices the views of mental health service users and their family/parent carers in the East and West of Suffolk. SUF is an independent, user led mental health charity, also known as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO). Everyone involved in the charity has lived experience of mental health as a service user, family carer or worker.

SUF delivers engagement, involvement, coproduction, peer support and inpatient mental health advocacy services. SUF gives mental health service users a powerful and unified voice for their experiences of care and support, promoting individuals' rights, options and choices for care and support for both physical and mental health.

The charity works with service providers and commissioners to try to ensure that the voices of lived experience are central to improving emotional wellbeing and mental health services in East and West Suffolk. This is achieved through the charity's engagement, peer support and advocacy roles, which alongside supporting people, prioritises the gathering and recording of people's experiences of services. By connecting areas of individual feedback together, the charity draws together key themes and emerging trends in mental health experience. These are regularly reported in the SUF publication titled 'Making Our Voice Count' which is presented to providers, commissioners and to strategic partners, to assist with decision making and to promote coproduction, so that providers and commissioners can understand and actively respond to the current lived experience of people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs.

SUF's mission is to be an inclusive and trusted mental health user-led network that values, promotes, and strengthens the user voice for positive change, independence, rights, choice, and control.

SUF's vision is to continue to be the leading organisation in Suffolk, championing equal and valued partnerships between mental health service users, commissioners, and providers; combining mutual strengths and experience to improve services, achieving positive emotional and mental health for all.

Charitable Objectives

SUF can help and work with people in Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex. We have five main charitable objectives.

- a) To promote partnership working between service providers, including the NHS and Social Care, service users and family/parent carers.
- b) To promote suicide prevention initiatives.
- c) To provide advocacy services, peer support and information to empower people to make their own decisions.
- d) To promote better understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- e) To promote volunteering and peer support.

Public Benefit

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on Public Benefit including, The Public Benefit Requirement (PB1), Running a Charity (PB2) and Reporting (PB3).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Achievements and performance

The achievements and performance are described further in the Impact Report accompanying these financial statements.

Financial review

The charity's income in 2022/23 was £300,746 (2021/22: £173,768) of which £176,962 (2021/22: £66,068) related to project restricted activities. The charity's expenditure in 2022/23 was £177,646 (2021/22: £168,420) of which £135,246 (2021/22: £64,354) related to project restricted activities. The net surplus of £123,100 (2021/22: £5,348) has continued to contribute to the charity's general reserves.

Principal funding sources

The charity's core income is received under a funding agreement with Suffolk County Council and the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and West Suffolk CCG via a tri-part fund called the Mental Health Pooled Fund. This funding agreement is overseen by Suffolk County Council. The Mental Health Pooled Fund is due to end by 31st March 2024. SUF's core funding for 2022/23 was confirmed for one year. At the end of this reporting period a further year's core funding via has been agreed for 2023/24.

As the reporting year 2022/23 commences, SUF is pleased to report that we are part of a new advocacy partnership made up of POhWER, Ace Anglia, Suffolk Family Carers and Suffolk User Forum. This new partnership is commissioned to deliver advocacy services to people in Suffolk for the next three years, with the opportunity for a further two years funding. As a partnership, we will be working together as a unified and stronger voice, with greater influence to make an even bigger difference to people's lives. Trustees are pleased the charity will be able to continue to deliver peer led inpatient mental health advocacy for a further three years (commencing 1st April 2022).

We are proud to report that following the success of our Healthy Together pilot project further funding has been awarded for 2022/23. The project this year is expanded to offer support to people who receive their Severe Mental Illness (SMI) Annual Health Checks by primary care practitioners. The project delivers peer support and personalised care planning, providing emotional and practical help for people living with SMI, to help access their physical health entitlements and achieve wellbeing goals.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's policy is to invest any surplus funds in savings accounts, up to a maximum of the guaranteed £85,000 in any one account. The charity has a Business Deposit Account with the Ipswich Building Society and with the Nationwide Building Society.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Reserves policy

The Trustees remain committed to providing the maximum possible service levels. The Trustees have continued to retain SUF reserves during this financial year to provide the charity with reserves equal to at least six months' operating costs.

It is our revised policy to maintain current general reserves equivalent to six months projected operating expenditure, plus redundancy and statutory notice costs of £39,000 and £12,000 to replace IT equipment. This equates to £199,882 (2021/22: £191,881). Reserves on unrestricted funds at 31 March 2023 are £239,241 (2021/22: £157,954). The Trustee board will review the reserves policy during the forthcoming year, aiming to expend the slight excess in the coming year as and where appropriate.

Financial reserves are SUF's savings, helping to strengthen the charity and its sustainability. They help SUF to pay for activities that donors will not fund or handle unplanned events. They also provide additional operating funds over and above the core funding provided by the Mental Health Pooled Fund.

General reserves must be built up from unrestricted income; any surplus on a restricted project is tied to the same restrictions as the original project and may not be transferred to unrestricted funds without the donor's consent.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Plans for future periods

Trustees are committed to further developing service user leadership, involvement, personalisation, and coproduction working together with our local statutory partners, Suffolk County Council and NHS, supporting the developing Integrated Care System (ICS), and promoting the mental health service user voice.

We aim to continue to grow our mental health user led network to try to ensure the voice of lived experience informs and shapes new and existing mental health services, placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of suicide prevention, service improvement and development.

Our key priorities for the next period include:

1. Funding -

Trustees' top priority is to secure sustainable, long-term funding (for three years+) to ensure ongoing service delivery and support to beneficiaries, through specific project work, alongside promoting the voices of individual people living with mental ill health, and the shared interests of mental health service users collaboratively.

As the reporting year closes, the board of trustees are pleased to report that our core funding has been confirmed for a further year (2023/24).

If SUF could secure appropriate levels of core funding for a minimum of three years, the charity would be sustainable. This remains a key priority, and it would enable SUF to recruit to its community engagement and involvement posts which have been vacant since February 2022.

The charity is strengthened through having secured long term funding for peer led advocacy services, funded for a minimum of three years (up to 31st March 2025), with the opportunity for an additional two years until 31st March 2027.

In February 2023 SUF submitted a tender bid for the delivery of outreach peer support to people living with severe mental illness (SMI), which has been piloted over the last 18 months through the Healthy Together Project. A successful bid will secure funds for Healthy Together Peer Support for a further three years up to 31st March 2026.

2. Partnership and user voice -

- To continue to strengthen our local partnerships, supporting the County Council and the newly formed Integrated Care System (ICS) to discharge their statutory responsibilities for mental health service user involvement; coproduction, information, assistance, and advocacy in relation to adult mental health service users. This includes supporting the new ICS Mental Health Collaborative Board to ensure that the voice of lived experience is a golden thread through the collaborative and its subgroups.

- Making Our Voice Count: continuing to raise people's voices and lived experience to try to ensure that mental health services, organisations and policies are led and shaped by the people best placed to know what works.

- To use the Metal Recycling grant carried forward into 2023/24 (from 2022/23) to invest in the appointment of a SUF Community and Involvement worker to reach people in our communities to listen to and hear the user voice.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

- To continue actively promoting service user priority areas for mental health improvement. These include:

- Raising and promoting LISTEN as a universal model for personalised care, suicide prevention and coproduction.

- Championing improved discharge planning for people transitioning from secondary mental health services to primary care support.

3. Project delivery -

- To continue to help deliver good outcomes for people at a time of mental health crisis through our peer led advocacy service, working as a partner within the Suffolk Advocacy Service.

- Assuming our bid for the delivery of outreach peer support is successful, we will continue to develop the SUF Healthy Together Project, growing new partnerships within primary care, promoting the healthcare rights and goals of people living with severe mental illness (SMI), which includes the following diagnoses: Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, and Psychosis.

4. People in our communities

- To work across all communities and protected characteristics regarding groups where there is evidence of under-representation and/or greater discrimination.

- To develop our skills and capacity to support service user leadership and volunteer roles within our charity. Supporting people to gain skills and self-confidence as active citizens, building capacity to increase our support to people living with mental distress and mental health needs.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Structure, governance, and management

Suffolk User Forum is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on the 29th June 2009 and registered as a charity (registered number 1133457) on the 5th January 2010.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which sets out the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. The liability of the members is limited.

Trustee Board

The directors of Suffolk User Forum are known as trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles of Association are known as members of the Trustee Board. Recruitment to Suffolk User Forum's Trustee Board seeks to ensure that the organisation's desire to remain service user-led is appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Trustee body.

Currently 88% of the SUF Trustee Board have used or currently use mental health services as a service user or family carer. The charity is described as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) as over 75% of its trustees and 100% of its staff have lived experience of mental ill health. The charity works within the ethos of the social model of disability.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustee Board

Business and public sector, mental health and social care, and family carer and service user skills remain well represented on the Trustee Board. Trustees also have skills in law and in community and voluntary services development. Recruitment has been supported by robust policy and procedures. SUF advertises vacancies for new trustees through the SUF website and social media, Reach Volunteering, Suffolk Volunteering and through its wider networks and partnerships.

The Trustee Board actively encourages and welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds, particularly welcoming applications from ethnic minority communities and women, as they are currently underrepresented on the Trustee Board.

Potential trustees are invited to meet SUF trustees and the chief executive to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. All applicants are asked to apply (using the SUF application form) to the Trustee Board.

Applications are shortlisted by the Chair of Trustees in partnership with at least one other Trustee, establishing a recruitment team supported by the Company Secretary. An interview is conducted by this recruitment team which writes an Interview Report. This report is submitted at the earliest board meeting for a board discussion and a decision made regarding suitability for appointment. Trustees are appointed by the Trustee Board initially until the next annual members' meeting when the appointment is put to a vote. Trustees normally serve a term of three years before reappointment at the next annual members' meeting.

Trustee Induction and Training

All new Trustees receive governance and business documentation relevant to their role, induction, and training.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

New trustees are provided with essential documents to support them in their role. These include:

1. The obligations of the Trustee Board members including the Declaration of Interests, Code of Conduct and Agreement, trustees' roles, and a self-reported skills audit, to inform the board's overall skills report, which is regularly reviewed by the board to ensure a balance of knowledge and skills across the Trustee Board, and to inform the board's annual training plan for trustees.
2. The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity include the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Suffolk User Forum.
3. A copy of all partnership and funding agreements, including those with Suffolk County Council, the NHS CCGs for Healthy Together and the Suffolk Advocacy Service lead partner POhWER.
4. Copies of contract review meetings.
5. Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
6. The charity's aims and objectives.
7. The current business/operational plan.
8. The current structure of the organisation including staff.
9. The current project plans and reports.
10. The latest SUF publication including the regular service user feedback reports titled 'Making Our Voice Count'.
11. This documentation is supported by a Trustee Induction programme which provides forums for wider discussion regarding the governing documents, explanation of aims and objectives and of the charity's business and action plan, including strategic plans. All new trustees are encouraged to complete on-line training provided in Suffolk by Community Action Suffolk as part of their induction, to ensure they understand their trustee role and responsibilities.

The SUF new trustee induction programme includes receiving information about key SUF policies and procedures which include:

1. The SUF Information Governance framework which underpins our registration with NHS digital, including confidentiality, data, and cyber security, data protection, and the SUF Privacy Statement.
2. Equality and Diversity.
3. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.
4. Health and Safety including, lone working, near miss policy and risk management.
5. Comments, Compliments, and Complaints.
6. Social Value Strategy.
7. Environmental Strategy.
8. The SUF Staff and Volunteer Handbook.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2023

Structure, governance, and management *(continued)*

Risk assessment

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and holds a Risk Register that is reviewed at least four times a year at board meetings to ensure that the board is satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. Risk assessment and mitigations inform the Charity's Business Continuity Plan, the robustness of which is tested through regular business continuity exercises.

Independent examiner reappointment

A resolution to appoint L Thurston FCCA of Lovewell Blake LLP as independent examiner will be proposed at the next AGM.

Small company provisions

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

The trustees' annual report was approved on 11/9/23 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



G Pachent
(Chair)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Suffolk User Forum

Year ended 31 March 2023

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

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

 13/10/23

L Thurston FCCA
Independent Examiner

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

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
	Note				
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	122,749	176,962	299,711	162,662
Investment income	6	1,035	–	1,035	228
Other income		–	–	–	10,878
Total income		<u>123,784</u>	<u>176,962</u>	<u>300,746</u>	<u>173,768</u>
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	7	42,400	135,246	177,646	168,420
Total expenditure		<u>42,400</u>	<u>135,246</u>	<u>177,646</u>	<u>168,420</u>
Net income before transfer of funds		81,384	41,716	123,100	5,348
Transfers between funds		(97)	97	–	–
Net movement in funds		<u>81,287</u>	<u>41,813</u>	<u>123,100</u>	<u>5,348</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		157,954	7,150	165,104	159,756
Total funds carried forward		<u>239,241</u>	<u>48,963</u>	<u>288,204</u>	<u>165,104</u>

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

The notes on pages 16 to 24 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance sheet

31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	11	5,292	2,148
Current assets			
Debtors	12	15,347	8,450
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>277,922</u>	<u>320,120</u>
		293,269	328,570
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(10,357)</u>	<u>(165,614)</u>
Net current assets		282,912	162,956
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>288,204</u>	<u>165,104</u>
Net assets		<u>288,204</u>	<u>165,104</u>
Funds of the charity			
Restricted funds		48,963	7,150
Unrestricted funds		<u>239,241</u>	<u>157,954</u>
Total charity funds	16	<u>288,204</u>	<u>165,104</u>

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

Directors' responsibilities:

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

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

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 11/9/23, and are signed on behalf of the board by:



G Pachent
(Chair)

Company registration number: 06946785

The notes on pages 16 to 24 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2023

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The operational address and registered office is 3 Grange Business Centre, Kesgrave, Ipswich, IP5 2BY.

2. Statement of compliance

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

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

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

Going concern

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

Income tax

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

Fund accounting

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

Designated funds where necessary, are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

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

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Income

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

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Expenditure

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

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable, and consistent basis.

Operating leases

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

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

An increase in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of a revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, unless it reverses a charge for impairment that has previously been recognised as expenditure within the statement of financial activities. A decrease in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, except to which it offsets any previous revaluation gain, in which case the loss is shown within other recognised gains and losses on the statement of financial activities.

Depreciation

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

Computer equipment	- 25% straight line
Office furniture	- 25% straight line

Financial instruments

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

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

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

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

When contributions are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the end of the reporting date in which the employees render the related service, the liability is measured on a discounted present value basis. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as an expense in the period in which it arises.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

4. Limited by guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company if it is wound up during the time that he or she is a member, or within one period afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before the time at which he or she ceases to be a member and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required not exceeding £10.

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations			
Donations	15,335	–	15,335
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	107,414	–	107,414
NHS West Suffolk CCG	–	34,657	34,657
NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG	–	60,486	60,486
NHS England	–	48,500	48,500
POhWER	–	33,319	33,319
	<u>122,749</u>	<u>176,962</u>	<u>299,711</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Donations			
Donations	57	–	57
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	107,415	–	107,415
NHS West Suffolk CCG	–	6,343	6,343
NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG	–	48,847	48,847
NHS England	–	–	–
POhWER	–	–	–
	<u>107,472</u>	<u>55,190</u>	<u>162,662</u>

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Building society interest	<u>1,035</u>	<u>1,035</u>	<u>228</u>	<u>228</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

7. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Staff costs	1,032	126,345	127,377
Staff and volunteer expenses	3,992	1,360	5,352
Support costs	37,376	7,541	44,917
	<u>42,400</u>	<u>135,246</u>	<u>177,646</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Staff costs	64,078	56,068	120,146
Staff and volunteer expenses	2,420	–	2,420
Support costs	37,568	8,286	45,854
	<u>104,066</u>	<u>64,354</u>	<u>168,420</u>

Analysis of support costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Office rent	12,906	14,254
Rates	1,018	960
Light and heat	2,079	3,210
Telephone	2,252	2,924
Payroll bureau	592	648
Computer and website costs	11,262	5,824
Equipment hire	1,904	1,724
Postage and stationery	1,783	718
Repairs and renewals	661	156
Marketing	–	8,286
Insurance	1,726	1,546
Depreciation	2,376	1,433
Trustees' expenses	646	465
Sundry expenses	591	945
Legal and professional fees	2,301	997
Independent examination fee	2,820	1,764
	<u>44,917</u>	<u>45,854</u>

8. Net income

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>2,376</u>	<u>1,433</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

9. Staff costs

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

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	119,493	112,997
Social security costs	6,553	5,197
Pension costs	1,331	1,952
	<u>127,377</u>	<u>120,146</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 5 (2021/22: 5).

Travel expenses were paid during in the period amounting to £856 (2021/22: £297), with none of the Trustees being paid expenses as users.

10. Trustee remuneration and expenses

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. The trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2021/22: £Nil). The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions) received by senior management for their services to the charity was £54,215 (2021/22: £47,819).

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Office furniture £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	18,213	2,431	20,644
Additions	5,520	–	5,520
At 31 March 2023	<u>23,733</u>	<u>2,431</u>	<u>26,164</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	16,414	2,082	18,496
Charge for the year	2,119	257	2,376
At 31 March 2023	<u>18,533</u>	<u>2,339</u>	<u>20,872</u>
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2023	<u>5,200</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>5,292</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>1,799</u>	<u>349</u>	<u>2,148</u>

12. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Prepayments and accrued income	15,347	7,980
Other debtors	–	470
	<u>15,347</u>	<u>8,450</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	983	5,369
Accruals and deferred income	9,374	160,245
	<u>10,357</u>	<u>165,614</u>

14. Deferred income

	2023	2022
	£	£
At 1 April 2022	158,643	29,333
Amount released to income	(158,643)	(29,333)
Amount deferred in year	6,970	158,643
At 31 March 2023	<u>6,970</u>	<u>158,643</u>

15. Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £1,331 (2021/22: £1,952).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Year ended 31 March 2023

16. Analysis of charitable funds

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	–	–	–	4,690
SCC Waveney Peer Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	–	143,643	(101,830)	(28,905)	12,908
Personal Health Budgets	–	–	–	28,905	28,905
Suicide Prevention	1,714	–	–	–	1,714
Advocacy	–	33,319	(33,416)	97	–
	<u>7,150</u>	<u>176,962</u>	<u>(135,246)</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>48,963</u>

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	–	–	–	4,690
SCC Waveney Peer Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	–	45,190	(45,190)	–	–
Suicide Prevention	–	10,000	(8,286)	–	1,714
Advocacy	–	10,878	(10,878)	–	–
	<u>5,436</u>	<u>66,068</u>	<u>(64,354)</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>7,150</u>

The Mental Health Services User expenses - is funded by the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group; West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Suffolk County Council, through the Suffolk Mental Health Pooled Fund, SUF have agreed to hold and administer an amount of now less than £5,000 on behalf of Suffolk County Council and the Integrated Care System.

SCC Waveney Peer Support was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Healthy Together was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. During the year it was agreed to transfer the remaining balance to a new project called Personal Health Budgets.

Personal Health Budgets was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG following the transfer from the Healthy Together project to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Suicide Prevention was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Advocacy was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF. This is a three year contract with POHWER as the lead partner.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

17. Analysis of net assets between funds

As at 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	5,292	–	5,292
Net current assets	233,949	48,963	282,128
Net Assets	239,241	48,963	287,420

As at 31 March 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,148	–	2,148
Net current assets	155,806	7,150	162,956
Net Assets	157,954	7,150	165,104

18. Operating lease commitments

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

	2023 £	2022 £
Not later than 1 year	13,080	14,425

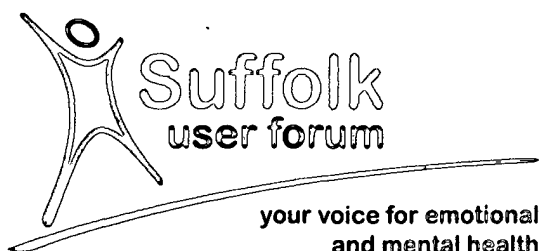
19. Related parties

Other than elsewhere disclosed in the accounts, there were no related party transactions in this or the prior period.



Impact Report 2022/23

SUFFOLK USER FORUM



Welcome to our Impact Report for 2022/23

Chair's Report



By Guenever Pachent, Chair of Trustees (left)
and Jayne Stevens, Chief Executive (right)

Over the years, much of Suffolk User Forum's (SUF's) work listening to service users and their families has been about their experiences of NHS services. In 2022/23, SUF was pleased to be asked by Suffolk County Council (SCC) to engage with mental health (MH) service users about their interactions with SCC social workers and provide written feedback to SCC on the quality of their services as experienced by service users. It has been pleasing to see SCC genuinely interested in learning about service users' experiences, willing to listen and take action even when service user feedback has been negative. Working in partnership with SCC and with service users, we look forward to collecting more feedback about MH social work services in 2023/24, highlighting the good practice and areas in need of improvement.

The new statutory NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care System (SNEE ICS) is also very keen for coproduced service user feedback to be a golden thread woven into all its decisions. SUF has been contributing to the development of SNEE's systems, including its MH Collaborative, and expects, together with service users, to participate more extensively in the Collaborative in 2023/24.

We are really pleased that advocacy for voluntary MH patients (distinct from patients detained under the Mental Health Act who have the legal right to advocacy) has been included in the three-year advocacy contract for Suffolk Advocacy Services, led by the charity POhWER, since it is so important that all inpatients, whether detained or not, have someone who will help them voice their wants and needs.

We are particularly pleased that SUF is contracted to provide peer-led advocacy to patients in Woodlands, Wedgwood House and Foxhall House. Helping people voice their concerns and take control of their lives is core SUF business.

Healthy Together is another project which helps people with severe mental illness, psychosis, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia in this case, voice their concerns and take control of their own lives. SUF developed this project with the NHS and received further pilot funding in 2022/23. The stories of how private and public sector organisations have given service users the run around for straightforward requests, e.g. getting the sink fixed in rented accommodation, booking appointments for utility services, or booking GP appointments, are shocking. Healthy Together has made a real difference to people's lives in enabling people to get these sorts of problems fixed. And then, relieved of burdensome everyday life stresses, service users have been free to attend their health appointments and improve their lives in this way as well.

2022/23, with its high rate of inflation and cost of living crises, has been a burden on MH service users and their families, and on SUF staff. SUF staff are conscious of the stress on service users and the need to be supportive. The Trustee Board is conscious of our obligation regarding the wellbeing of staff, and we have been able in 2022/23 to increase basic pay levels and to remunerate some additional work. It is pleasing to see in 2023 some signs of longer-term funding and indeed some small allowances for inflation.

We also wish to recognise in this report the hard work of our staff team: their contributions to SUF members and service users and their commitment to our charity. Our person centred Advocacy and Healthy Together work relies entirely on the staff team, led from the front by our indomitable chief executive. We also say a very big thank you to our funders and donors without whom SUF would not be here. And finally, thank you to our excellent volunteer trustees who hold the legal responsibility for SUF, ensuring that SUF carries out its functions in the interests of our beneficiaries, complies with our governing document and the law, ensuring good governance and accountability.

With best wishes,

Guenever and Jayne

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About us

Suffolk User Forum (SUF) is an independent mental health user led involvement, peer support and advocacy organisation. All our staff and trustees have lived experience of mental health as a service user, family/parent carer or mental health worker. We make a difference because people know we understand their experiences and genuinely care.

Listening and giving people a voice is central to our work. We make positive changes happen for individuals and we help drive service improvement. As a critical friend we are respected and valued as a strategic partner that shares people's stories, ensuring lived experience is at the heart of service planning, delivery, improvements, and commissioning. Our regular publication 'Making Our Voice Count' reports key themes and emerging trends.

We actively support and facilitate user/family/parent carer involvement in coproduction, thus influencing decision-making about individuals' care. Valuing individuals as active citizens ensures that their lived experience becomes an essential resource for service improvement.

Our project work in 2022/23



Our Mission, Vision, Values and Objectives

Our Mission

Is to be an inclusive and trusted mental health user led network that values, promotes, and strengthens the user voice for positive change, independence, rights, choice, and control.

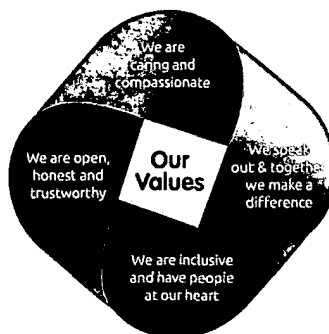
Our Vision

Is to continue to be the leading organisation in Suffolk, championing equal and valued partnerships between mental health service users, commissioners, and providers; combining mutual strengths and experience to improve services, achieving positive emotional and mental health for all.

Our Charitable Objectives

SUF can help and work with people in Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex. We have five main charitable objectives.

1. To promote partnership working between service providers, including the NHS and Social Care, service users and family/parent carers.
2. To promote suicide prevention initiatives.
3. To provide advocacy services, peer support and information to empower people to make their own decisions.
4. To promote better understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
5. To promote volunteering and peer support.



SUF Peer Led Advocacy



As a partner within the Suffolk Advocacy Service, our inpatient peer advocacy service, led by James Woolnough (pictured left), has delivered peer led mental health ward advocacy through weekly drop ins at Wedgwood House (Bury St Edmunds) and Woodlands (Ipswich Hospital); and monthly at Foxhall House low to medium secure unit, Ipswich. On average (2018-2021) 40% of mental health inpatients are detained under the Mental Health Act and 60% are admitted voluntarily.

Voluntary/informal patients have no statutory access to advocacy. SUF's peer advocacy has no eligibility criteria. It is accessible to all inpatients, importantly ensuring voluntary/informal patients receive support to have their voice heard. We ensure that patients know and understand their rights, choices, and options. Peer advocacy is a strengths-based approach, which enables connection, addresses inequalities, increases self-autonomy and involvement in decisions about treatment, care, and discharge planning, in a way that is meaningful for a recovery.

Alongside this role we deliver wider advocacy awareness, promoting the benefits of advocacy to staff, inpatients, and family carers. We refer on to our lead partner POhWER those people who require statutory advocacy or Independent Mental Health Capacity Advocacy.

Our advocate also shares the inpatients' voices and experiences with the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust's monthly Mental Health Law Monitoring Group, supporting the Trust to review and improve patients' rights.

This year our inpatient advocacy service has:



Delivered peer led advocacy to **939 people**.



Helping them with **1098 advocacy issues** on acute mental health inpatient wards in East and West Suffolk.

Suicide Prevention

The 10th of September each year is World Suicide Prevention Day, where people and organisations across the globe come together to raise awareness of suicide and suicide prevention. The theme in 2022 was 'creating hope through action' and locally SUF supported the #You are not alone campaign, encouraging people to reach out for support.

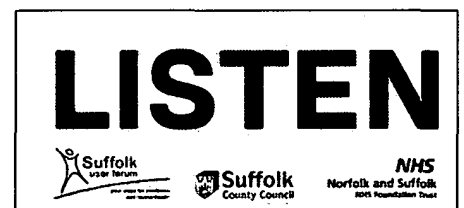
As a mental health user led charity, we know from people's experiences that when personal problems become insurmountable, it can be very hard to reach out for help. Too often people stay silent about their problems and difficulties. Talking about suicidal feelings can feel impossible. We can feel a sense of shame for not being able to cope; for being unable to find solutions to our problems. We can fear letting our families and loved ones down, or can experience a sense of loneliness and isolation, a loss of purpose and self-worth, so that these feelings become overwhelming.

In Suffolk User Forum, supporting people to talk more openly about their feelings, in a safe, and non-judgmental way is essential for suicide prevention. It is equally important that friends, family, and professionals can feel confident to be able to listen and offer support. Often people tell us they worry about saying the 'wrong' thing and are frightened to ask if someone is thinking of taking their own life. We work to support people to listen and to feel confident to ask questions, such as 'What's happening for you right now?' 'Are you having thoughts of ending your life?' Listening and understanding people's experiences is essential for building connection, offering hope and reassurance that says, 'I care, and you are not alone'.

We have coproduced helpful resources to support people to find ways to manage difficult feelings, and for supporting others to start conversations with people in distress. Our 'Thrive with Five' booklets support self-care and our LISTEN for Suicide Prevention booklet and this year, our coproduced LISTEN video provide helpful ways to manage thoughts of suicide with a step-by-step guide to help friends, family, people in our communities and professionals to feel more confident when giving support to prevent suicide.



To watch our coproduced video
LISTEN for Suicide Prevention visit
<https://youtu.be/8E6hNCiiyWA>



Healthy Together Peer Support



Drawing on their lived experience, our Healthy Together Peer Support Workers, Chloe Newman (left) and Simon Palman-Titchener (right) provide friendly and supportive peer support which is mutual, trauma informed, and recovery focused. Our approach is person centred offering people options and choices about how they wish to be supported to achieve their healthcare goals.

This year we have been delighted to appoint Simon to the team. Both Chloe and Simon have been supported to attend a range of training to help develop our team's knowledge and skills. Our staff training programme includes mandatory training e.g. Data Security/GDPR, Safeguarding, Equalities and Diversity, Health and Safety, and more specialist training: e.g. all Peer Support Workers are ImROC qualified (Implementing Recovery through Organisational Change) meeting Health Education England's Competence Framework for MH PSWs.

Supporting people in over 70+ health and support pathways, Chloe and Simon have also undertaken additional training including: Making Every Contact Count (MECC); advocacy awareness; Oral Health Champions; Stop Smoking Practitioner Level One; Talk Cancer; Bipolar UK E-learning; Terrence Higgins Trust HIV Training; Key Understanding Framework for Personality Disorders; Zero Suicide Alliance's suicide prevention; Integrating Care: Depression, Anxiety and Physical Illness; Suffolk Wellbeing Friend; plus other recovery focused courses e.g. Suffolk Cares. We are a Mindful Employer and support peer staff with both regular and peer group supervision, and reflective practice sessions.

As the year ends, we have published a wealth of information for people living with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) and professionals on our website. We have submitted a funding bid for the delivery of peer led outreach support for people living with SMI and look forward to extending Healthy Together and growing our peer service further over the next three years, including developing personal health budgets.

Healthy Together peer support enables over **90%** of those referred to meet their health care goals.



If we are living with schizophrenia, psychosis or bipolar we have what is called a severe mental illness (SMI) and are more likely to develop physical health problems such as diabetes and heart problems. Because of these health risks we are entitled to a **FREE SMI Annual Physical Health Check**. Attending our annual physical health check is an important first step towards taking charge of our physical health. An annual physical health check usually takes about 30 to 45 minutes. It includes six different checks:

1. Our height and weight.
2. Our blood pressure.
3. Our temperature and pulse.
4. Blood tests to check our blood sugar and cholesterol.
5. Smoking – we will be asked if we smoke.
6. Alcohol - we will be asked whether we drink alcohol, and if so, how much.

Ask your GP surgery to arrange a SMI annual physical health check appointment.

Mental health self-care and support

Mental health problems are common, with 1 in 6 adults reporting a common mental health disorder, such as anxiety. There are close to five thousand people in Suffolk with more severe mental illness (SMI) such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder and around 5,000 adults (aged 16 and over) estimated to live with autism. Mental health problems are often hidden, and many people are still not receiving support to access services. We know that social risk factors, which include poverty, migration, extreme stress, exposure to violence (e.g. domestic, sexual and gender-based), emergency and conflict situations, natural disasters, trauma, and low social support, increase the risk of poor mental health.

Whilst our Healthy Together project supports those of us who live with an SMI, our wider work supports people with existing mental health problems to get information that can help them to access services and support to improve their health and wellbeing.



Over **2169 people** visited our website each month for signposting and support.

26,033 people across the year viewed over **56,800 SUF web pages**.

Our most visited web pages are:

Making Our Voice Count -
Feedback Reports

Mental health crisis and
emergency help now

Healthy Together
Peer-led Advocacy

Living with Eating Disorders
Living with Personality Disorder

Long Covid Recovery

Our Support Directory: Housing, Older People's Support, Domestic Violence Support, Bereavement Support, Customer First and Social Care Support

Making Our Voice Count: Discharge and Eating Disorders

Making our Voice Count (MOVC) is our feedback report on service user and family/parent carer experiences of adult mental health and wellbeing services in East and West Suffolk. Our reports provide service user feedback with statistical information, alongside some anonymised personal stories which describe people's experiences and views. This year we have focused our reports on two key issues. Discharge from mental health services (both community mental health and inpatient care) and eating disorder services.



Discharge from mental health services. This report focused on people's experiences of being discharged from specialist mental health services in East and West Suffolk. Our feedback was shared at the Healthwatch Suffolk Mental Health Focus Group and with NSFT and commissioners. Whilst some people experience discharge as a positive part of their recovery, others experience it as difficult and distressing.

It can present risks to people's recovery and care if not managed with consideration and sensitivity. Both nationally and locally it is understood that often people leave inpatient mental health care with no discharge plan in place to support them after discharge. We are still working with NSFT local leadership to ask for discharge to be a key priority for coproduction, involving other mental health system partners and representatives (e.g. the new Connect Service and Steam/wellbeing/crisis cafés) to work together to support a more thorough, user led approach to safe and effective discharge planning.



Eating Disorders, the Cycle of 'Support' - How you can help. In this publication we featured the voices and experiences of people living with eating disorders. Our Call to Action set out a series of targeted actions for the short and medium term that would make a difference to the lives of people living with eating disorders. Suffolk Mind's Eating Recovery Group has now been recommissioned. Service users have set up their own peer support group to help reduce

isolation and to build self-confidence for managing wellbeing. Find out more [Suffolk InfoLink | Eating Peer Support Group - Ipswich](#)

Making Our Voice Count: The Mental Health Collaborative

We gather and share feedback from a wide range of health and care organisations, who provide mental health care and wellbeing services. This includes mental health services in primary care (at our GP surgeries) and secondary care (specialist mental health services provided by Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT)). In 2022/23 we have also gathered feedback for SCC about their point of contact to social care: Customer First. This year our feedback and Making Our Voice Count report has been presented at strategic meetings including the NSFT Overview and Assurance Group and the Mental Health Alliance Implementation Group and sent to key strategic leaders. As the year ends, we are working with the new Integrated Care System (ICS) to strengthen the user voice within the ICS, at the new Mental Health Collaborative. The Collaborative's aim is to make the voice of lived experience a golden thread which is central to the IC Board's decision making, quality assurance and governance.

To achieve this, we will need to create more opportunities for service users to be involved, to influence activities and decisions, to identify priorities, investing in innovative approaches, building on our shared strengths, and doing things differently together. As this work develops, we will be working closely with our SUF members and service users to work in coproduction with the Collaborative, aiming for user involvement:

- To be given time and appropriately resourced.
- Has a clear remit and mandate.
- Recognises that it often takes courage to speak up, and that people need support, alongside being enabled to participate in a range of diverse ways.
- Captures a wider range of user voices, recognising the diverse range of groups and people that access mental health services.
- Understands the importance of seeing the whole of the person's life, not just the part that relates to mental health or to a service.
- Builds on existing insight and intelligence.
- Ensures that the user voice is evident in all Mental Health Collaborative Board papers, with a clear path from involvement through to board decision making/minutes of meetings. This needs to be tangible and more than the usual feedback loop (e.g. 'you said, we did').

If you would like to be involved in this work, please email us through our online Contact Us form [Contact Suffolk User Forum](#). Share your story via our [feedback page](#) or call the SUF office on 01473 907087.

Our members



SUF is a membership organisation. Individual members include people with lived experience, who may have used mental health services in the past or are currently using them. They may include professionals with lived experience. However, we hold a separate mailing list for MH professionals, e.g. mental health nurses, or nursing/social work students or other people with an interest in the mental health lived experience landscape in Suffolk. Benefits of SUF membership include our bi-weekly e-news, providing information, news, events, involvement opportunities, SUF jobs, and funding updates.

Our group members may not all be mental health groups, but all are organisations that work at the grassroots level across our county. They offer emotional support, faith, cultural, practical, financial, and much more, enabling people to have opportunities to build their recovery, tackling the social and economic issues that can lead to distress or mental ill-health. During this year we have had personal contact with all our group members to catch up on their work supporting vulnerable people and those living with mental ill health.

As the financial year ends, we are planning a summer 2023 members' event, to gather people's views about their priorities for mental health coproduction.

Looking ahead to 2023/24

Trustees are committed to further developing service user leadership, involvement, personalisation, and coproduction collaborating with our local statutory partners, SCC, and the NHS, supporting the developing Integrated Care System (ICS), and promoting mental health service user voices.

We aim to continue to grow our mental health user led network to try to ensure the voice of lived experience informs and shapes new and existing mental health services, placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of suicide prevention, service improvement and development.

Our key priorities for the next period include:

1. Funding

- 1.1 Trustees' top priority is to secure sustainable, long-term funding (for three years+) to ensure ongoing service delivery and support to beneficiaries, through specific project work, alongside promoting the voices of individual people living with mental ill health, and the shared interests of mental health service users collaboratively.
- 1.2 As the reporting year closes, the board of trustees are pleased to report that our core funding has been confirmed for a further year (2023/24).
- 1.3 If SUF could secure appropriate levels of core funding for a minimum of three years, the charity would be sustainable. This remains a key priority, and it would enable SUF to recruit to its community engagement and involvement posts which have been vacant since February 2022.
- 1.4 The charity is strengthened through having secured long term funding for peer led advocacy services, funded for a minimum of three years (up to 31st March 2025), with the opportunity for an additional two years until 31st March 2027.
- 1.5 In February 2023 SUF submitted a tender bid for the delivery of outreach peer support to people living with severe mental illness (SMI), which has been piloted over the last 18 months through the Healthy Together Project.

A successful bid will secure funds for Healthy Together Peer Support for a further three years up to 31st March 2026.

2. Partnership and user voice

- 2.1 To continue to strengthen our local partnerships, supporting the County Council and the newly formed Integrated Care System (ICS) to discharge their statutory responsibilities for mental health service user involvement; coproduction, information, assistance, and advocacy in relation to adult mental health service users. This includes supporting the new ICS Mental Health Collaborative Board to ensure that the voice of lived experience is a golden thread through the collaborative and its subgroups.
- 2.2 Making Our Voice Count: continuing to raise people's voices and lived experience to try to ensure that mental health services, organisations and policies are led and shaped by the people best placed to know what works.
- 2.3 To use the Metal Recycling grant carried forward into 2023/24 (from 2022/23) to invest in the appointment of a SUF Community and Involvement worker to reach people in our communities to listen to and hear the user voice.
- 2.4 To continue actively promoting service user priority areas for mental health improvement. These include:
 - Raising and promoting LISTEN as a universal model for personalised care, suicide prevention and coproduction.
 - Championing improved discharge planning for people transitioning from secondary mental health services to primary care support.

3. Project delivery

- 3.1 To continue to help deliver good outcomes for people at a time of mental health crisis through our peer led advocacy service, working as a partner within the Suffolk Advocacy Service.
- 3.2 Assuming our bid for the delivery of outreach peer support is successful, we will continue to develop the SUF Healthy Together Project, growing new partnerships within primary care, promoting the healthcare rights and goals of people living with severe mental illness (SMI), which includes the following diagnoses: Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, and Psychosis.

4. People in our communities.

- 4.1 To work across all communities and protected characteristics regarding groups where there is evidence of under-representation and/or greater discrimination.
- 4.2 To develop our skills and capacity to support service user leadership and volunteer roles within our charity. Supporting people to gain skills and self-confidence as active citizens, building capacity to increase our support to people living with mental distress and mental health needs.

Final words – Thank you.

To our members

We would like to thank our SUF membership, service users and family/parent carers who have supported us during this year. Thank you for trusting us, for sharing your very individual experiences with us and for working in coproduction with us. Together we are stronger and can make a difference. We look forward to working together in 2023/24.

To our trustees

We would like to thank all our trustees for their volunteering time, continued commitment, and outstanding support. They have actively supported us to achieve our mission and strategic objectives, bringing a more diverse range of skills, lived experience and knowledge; raising awareness about SUF and mental health; building valuable relationships within our networks, partnerships, community and ultimately our work supporting others.

To our funders

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our funders and donors who are fundamental to the financial stability of our charity. Thank you for being our partner, for your generosity, confidence, and appreciation of our support to vulnerable people and mental health service users.



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-  Suffolk User Forum (SUF) is a
Registered Company Number
06946785 and a Charity
Number 1133457.

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Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06946785

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1133457

**Suffolk User Forum
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited financial statements
31 March 2022**

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2022

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Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report)

Year ended 31 March 2022

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Chair's report

This reporting year has brought us a mix of challenges, successes, and rewards. It has been our third and final year of a three-year partnership and funding agreement with Suffolk County Council and the final year of advocacy funding, as a partner within Total Voice Suffolk. The challenge, as it is for many small charities, has been in securing long term sustainable funding to ensure ongoing service delivery and support to our beneficiaries, through specific project work, alongside promoting the voices of individual people living with mental ill health, and the shared interests of mental health service users.

As the reporting year closes, we are pleased to report that our core funding has been confirmed for a further year until March 2023. We have also been successful in our advocacy bid, as a partner in the new Suffolk Advocacy Service. Working together with POHWER and two other Suffolk charities (Ace Anglia, and Suffolk Family Carers) we will provide advocacy for a further three years.

In February 2022 we also received a generous donation from Ipswich Cemeteries Department through their Metal Recycling Fund. This donation was made in recognition of the personalised support given to service users who have valued a more individual approach to help them to manage their grief.

However, we have not been able to secure funding for our community engagement work with service users, for suicide prevention or for our business support post. We have been unable to extend most staff contracts beyond March 2022. We wish to express our thanks to the staff who have left us this year, for their hard work, commitment, and contribution to SUF, wishing them well in their future careers. We also wish to recognise the hard work of our existing team for the additional work they have undertaken to continue to meet our beneficiaries' needs and our charitable objectives and to support our developing project work.

In this report you can read about the positive impact of our work. Our peer advocacy has supported people at a critical time in their lives, enabling them to understand and exercise their rights, speaking up for their needs, choices and wishes. Our Healthy Together Project, which delivers peer support to people living with severe mental illness (SMI), has made a significant difference to individual lives, helping people to reach their healthcare and wellbeing goals and addressing long standing health inequalities. We are delighted to report that our Healthy Together Project has been funded for 2022/23. This additional funding will enable us to support more service users living with SMI in primary care.

We have published six 'Making Our Voice Count' feedback reports, sharing your experiences of mental health services and support. These publications form a vital part of raising awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of local services. It is only by understanding service user experiences that improvements can be made by providers. The reports also support adult social care and NHS commissioners to discharge their statutory duty to listen to user voices. Our reports are only possible because of the feedback we receive from you, as mental health service users and family/parent carers. We would like to thank you for trusting us with your very personal lived experiences, for your time and involvement. Your feedback has been invaluable and will help to make a difference.

Finally, we would like to recognise the commitment and contribution made by our SUF trustees. They are unpaid volunteers who take responsibility for ensuring that SUF carries out its functions in the interests of our beneficiaries, complies with our governing document and the law, ensuring good governance and accountability. Thank you SUF Trustees; without your oversight, support, and unwavering commitment we would not be the organisation we are.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

As we enter the new year, we are excited by the opportunities ahead of us, and know we can continue to make a valuable contribution to many people's lives. We feel proud of the unwavering positive support and feedback we have received. We remain committed to being the authentic voice of people living with mental ill health.

With best wishes, Guenever and Jayne.

Guenever Pachent, SUF Chair

Jayne Stevens, CEO

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Suffolk User Forum
Charity registration number	1133457
Company registration number	06946785
Principal office and registered office	3 Grange Business Centre Kesgrave Ipswich IP5 2BY

The trustees

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

G Pachent (Chair)
M Blowers
J Everett (Appointed 12/07/2022)
A Good (Appointed 02/03/2022)
R Nesbitt
B Parrott
J Stern
B Turner (Appointed 02/03/2022)
M White (Appointed 28/04/2021)
P Gaffney (Resigned 14/09/2021)
B Griggs (Resigned 21/03/2022)
C Maher (Resigned 26/06/2021)
M Wright (Resigned 20/07/2021)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Chief executive officer	J Stevens
Solicitors	Bates Wells and Braithwaite Solicitors 29 Lower Brook Street Ipswich IP4 1AQ
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank 9-11 Queen Street Ipswich IP1 1SW Ipswich Building Society Unit 22 Sailmakers Shopping Centre Ipswich IP1 3BB Nationwide Building Society 48 Tavern Street Ipswich IP1 3DL
Company secretary	R Nesbitt
Independent examiner	L Thurston FCCA Lovewell Blake LLP Chartered accountants First Floor Suite 2 Hillside Business Park Bury St Edmunds IP32 7EA

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Objectives and activities

Suffolk User Forum, also referred to as SUF (a term used throughout these accounts) voices the views of mental health service users and their family/parent carers in the East and West of Suffolk. SUF is an independent, user-led mental health charity, also known as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO). Everyone involved in the charity has lived experience of mental health as a service user, family carer or worker.

SUF delivers engagement, involvement, coproduction, peer support and inpatient mental health advocacy services. SUF gives mental health service users a powerful and unified voice for their experiences of care and support, promoting individuals' rights, options and choices for care and support for both physical and mental health.

The charity works with service providers and commissioners to ensure that the voices of lived experience are central to improving emotional wellbeing and mental health services in East and West Suffolk. This is achieved through the charity's engagement, peer support and advocacy roles, which alongside supporting people, prioritises the gathering and recording of people's experiences of services. By connecting areas of individual feedback together, the charity draws together key themes and emerging trends in mental health experiences. These are reported quarterly in the SUF publication titled 'Making our Voice Count' which is presented to providers, commissioners and to strategic partners, to assist with decision-making and to promote coproduction, so that providers and commissioners can understand and actively respond to the current lived experience of people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Objectives and activities *(continued)*

SUF's mission is to be an inclusive and trusted mental health user-led network that values, promotes, and strengthens the user voice for positive change, independence, legal rights, choice, and control.

SUF's vision is to become the leading organisation for adults in Suffolk championing equal and valued partnerships between mental health service users, commissioners, and providers, combining mutual strengths and experience to improve services, achieving emotional wellbeing and mental health for all.

SUF's values were coproduced at the SUF AGM in 2018:

1. We are open, honest, and trustworthy
2. We are inclusive and have people at our heart
3. We are caring & compassionate.
4. We speak out together to make a difference

Charitable Objectives

The charity can help people in Suffolk. Norfolk and Essex. It has five main objectives.

- a) To promote partnership working between service providers, including the NHS and Social Care, service users and family/parent carers.
- b) To promote suicide prevention initiatives.
- c) To provide advocacy services, peer support and information to empower people to make their own decisions.
- d) To promote better understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- e) To promote volunteering and peer support.

Public Benefit

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on Public Benefit including, The Public Benefit Requirement (PB1), Running a Charity (PB2) and Reporting (PB3).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Achievements and performance

1. Peer Advocacy

Our peer advocate has delivered mental health advocacy to 483 inpatients who have been admitted into acute mental health hospitals in Suffolk at a time of crisis.

On average (2018-2021) 40% of inpatients are detained under the Mental Health Act and 60% are voluntarily admitted. Voluntary (informal) patients have no statutory access to advocacy. Our peer advocacy has no eligibility criteria and is accessible to all inpatients.

This ensures that informal patients receive advocacy support to have their views heard and understood.

Our peer advocate delivers a weekly drop-in service to Woodlands (Ipswich), Wedgwood House (Bury St Edmunds) and monthly drop ins to Foxhall House.

Advocacy ensures that patients know and understand their rights, choices, options, and their voice heard.

During this year, our peer advocate has listened to inpatients' concerns about information regarding fire safety. Inpatients were concerned that bedrooms did not provide information about what they needed to do in the event of a fire. Working together with the Trust's fire safety professionals, we were able to explain inpatients' concerns, coproducing new fire safety information for patients, which has now been rolled out across all inpatient areas in the trust.

As the year comes to an end, we are pleased to report that SUF is now a partner in the new Suffolk Advocacy Service. This new partnership is made up of POhWER and three long-established and experienced local advocacy providers: Ace Anglia, Suffolk Family Carers and Suffolk User Forum. Together we have a stronger voice and greater influence to make an even bigger difference to people's lives.

2. Healthy Together

SUF peer support for people living with severe mental illness (SMI)

It has been known for many decades that the average life expectancy for people living with severe mental illness (SMI) is up to twenty years shorter than the general population.

SMI includes people living with schizophrenia, psychosis, and bipolar disorders.

Reduced life expectancy is mostly due to preventable physical health problems which are often not diagnosed or managed effectively.

Working with Commissioners and our partners in the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (the Suffolk Physical Health Team) SUF has developed an innovative team to address this inequality. Our aim is to ensure physical health and mental health are meaningfully integrated, with people receiving the right support at the right time. With more than 3800 people in Suffolk living with SMI, Annual Physical Health Checks provide a vital opportunity to identify and address physical health needs.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

To support this project, we became a member of 'Equally Well' in 2021 and made changes to our ICT system to meet the requirements of NHS Digital, attaining 'standards met' status in May 2022. SUF believes that physical and mental health should be given the same respect and care. Importantly our Healthy Together Project supports people to take control of their lives and their personal health care goals. Service users tell us that our additional peer support makes all the difference. Project data has shown that our support increased the uptake of healthcare follow up appointments and the achievement of wellbeing goals by 92%. This led to significant improved health outcomes for some of the most vulnerable people in our community. Whilst 66% of support needs were identified by professionals, a further 34% of previously unidentified needs were uncovered once our Healthy Together Peer Support became involved.

As the year ends, we are proud to report that due to the success of our Healthy Together project we have now secured funding for 2022/23. The project will now to be expanded to offer support to people who receive their SMI Annual Health Checks by primary care practitioners, providing the service to approx. 400 people in the coming year. If you would like to receive our Healthy Together Peer Support, at your next SMI Annual Health Check ask the practitioner from your GP surgery or the Suffolk Physical Health Team, to make a referral to us.

3. Suicide Prevention

We want to ensure that fewer lives are lost to suicide, and that people receive the best possible support.

This year we have continued to influence and support the prevention of suicide.

We presented service user feedback, and suicide prevention reports to the Suffolk Suicide Prevention strategy group, including, your feedback for Coproduction for the Suffolk Suicide Prevention Strategy and our coproduced publication LISTEN for Suicide Prevention. Working with the East Anglian Daily Times (EADT) we have contributed to their wellbeing event, leading on starting conversations for suicide prevention.

Key areas of feedback we have shared have included the need to support professionals and GPs to better understand feelings of suicide, the language used and people's mental health needs; the need for a timely response by mental health psychiatric liaison and crisis care services.

As the reporting year ends, we are developing an animated film based on LISTEN to support safe and compassionate conversations about suicidal feelings, enabling people to listen and feel confident to ask questions, to bring hope and reassurance that says, 'I care, and you are not alone'.

We have been an active partner in the redesign and recommissioning of the new support service for people who have been bereaved by suicide. This service is now provided by Victim Support. Our Suicide Prevention Lead has been proactive in supporting referrals, to ensure people get the support they need following the loss of a loved one to suicide. For more Information about Bereaved by Suicide Support call 01473 322683.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

We continue to promote suicide prevention resources and support using the Stay Alive App. The App has grown in 2021/22.

- 600+ new users.
- Over 44,500 views resources and support pages.

4. Signposting for Support

Help to find the right support, at the right time

SUF has a key role in helping service users and family/parent carers to find the help and support they need. We work with people one-to-one. By listening to people's needs, we provide signposting information, choices, and options for support wherever possible.

This year we have supported 749 people with one-to-one support for signposting, with 55,645 website views for signposting. We know from speaking to service users and family/parent carers that the mental health system is complex to navigate.

There are often barriers to accessing support, people are sometimes signposted to services that no longer exist, or which cannot meet their needs. We identify gaps in services and support, reporting these to commissioners. Key areas where there is insufficient support:

- Services for people living with personality disorders.
- Support for those who experience dissociative disorders.
- Access to NHS dentists.
- Support for people living with autism.

As the year ends we are progressing conversations with our local commissioners to ensure that those living with SMI, are not further disadvantaged by this health inequality.

This year SUF has joined the Suffolk Information Partnership (SIP). SIP is a network of organisations supporting people in Suffolk with information and services around care, health, and wellbeing.

The aim of the Partnership is to work together to provide clear, consistent, quality information to customers and a seamless journey for those needing to access services.

5. Making Our Voice Count

Together we are stronger and can make a difference

We know that people's individual stories and feedback empower service user leadership which is essential to improve services. We collate and report your experiences in our regular publication 'Making Our Voice Count' which is presented to strategic NHS and Suffolk County Council (SCC) leaders, mental health providers and the Care Quality Commission, informing decision making.

This year we published six reports, identifying important areas for service improvement, working with commissioners to inform the design of new services and improvements to existing services.

We listened to your views and experiences of the specialist Joint Engagement Team (JET) also known as

Suffolk User Forum

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Serenity Intensive Mentoring (SIM). SIM was a nationally recognised mentoring programme for mental health service users who come into frequent contact with healthcare and emergency services. Service users told us that they had no confidence in this SIM model.

Service users have asked to be involved in the future design of services for people with complex needs, to ensure they get best possible care, with all the necessary safeguards and crisis responses required.

We will continue working with NHS Commissioners and Suffolk County Council to support user involvement in these services. As this reporting year ends, we have published our coproduced special report on eating disorder services. We will be following up our Call for Action at a future Healthwatch Suffolk Mental Health Focus Group.

6. Our Membership

SUF is a membership organisation, with 498 individual members, 59 group members, with a reach of over 43,662 people. This year our membership has remained strong.

Our social media presence on both Twitter and Facebook has steadily grown, with 2149 followers on Twitter (7.1% increase) and over 371,700 Impressions. Our Facebook followers have grown to 2000.

SUF is committed to undertake voice-of-the-member research as a way of understanding first-hand what our members value and want from their SUF membership, and how well they perceive we are delivering on these.

7. Our Events in 2021/22

SUF has held ten events for members this year. These include the post covid wellbeing event discussing 'How do we heal?', and involvement for a new care planning app offering feedback for improvements to make the app more user friendly.

Members have also been enabled to speak up and have their say on developments for the new West Suffolk Hospital, and work at Ipswich Hospital to support the East Suffolk and North East Essex NHS Foundation Trust in its work to become a mentally healthy acute trust.

In the Impact report we feature two event highlights.

We would like to thank all presenters at our events for their time and for sharing their experiences with us, and our members.

8. Looking Ahead to 2022/23

Our goals and commitments for the coming year are outlined in the plans for future periods note of the accounts.

Suffolk User Forum

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Financial review

The charity's income in 2021/22 was £173,768 (2020/21: £218,440) of which £66,068 (2020/21: £89,258) related to project restricted activities. The charity's expenditure in 2021/22 was 168,420 (2020/21: £176,790) of which £64,354 (2020/21: £89,258) related to project restricted activities. The net surplus of £5,348 (2020/21: £41,650) has continued to contribute to the charity's general reserves.

Principal funding sources

The largest component of the charity's income is received under a funding agreement with Suffolk County Council and the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and West Suffolk CCG via a tri-part fund called the Mental Health Pooled Fund. This funding agreement is overseen by Suffolk County Council, who awarded the Charity a three-year partnership contract commencing from 1st April 2019 and ending on 31st March 2022.

SUF has continued as an advocacy partner within the Total Voice Suffolk (TVS) Partnership, who were awarded the contract for Suffolk Advocacy services from 1st April 2017. The SUF contract within this partnership changed in February 2020, to include only the provision of inpatient independent mental health advocacy.

Additional funding was awarded in February 2021 to deliver a new peer support pilot project called Healthy Together. This project delivers peer support and personalised care planning, providing emotional and practical help for people living with severe mental illness (SMI), to help access their physical health entitlements and achieve wellbeing goals.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's policy is to invest any surplus funds in an Easy Access bank account. The charity has a Business Deposit Account with the Ipswich Building Society and with the Nationwide Building Society.

Reserves policy

The Trustees remain committed to providing maximum possible service levels. The Trustees have continued to retain SUF reserves during this financial year to provide the charity with reserves equal to at least 6-months operating costs.

It is our revised policy to maintain current general reserves equivalent to six months projected operating expenditure, plus redundancy and statutory notice costs of £31,000 and £12,000 to replace IT equipment. This equates to £191,881 (2020/21: £80,766). Reserves on unrestricted funds at 31 March 2022 are £157,954 (2020/21: £154,320). The Trustee board will continue to review the reserves policy during the forthcoming year and aim to increase income in the coming year as and where appropriate.

Financial reserves are SUF's savings, helping to strengthen the charity and its sustainability. They help SUF to pay for activities that donors will not fund or handle unplanned events. They also provide additional operating funds over and above the core funding provided by the Mental Health Pooled Fund.

General reserves must be built up from unrestricted income; any surplus on a restricted project is tied to the same restrictions as the original project and may not be transferred to unrestricted funds without the donors' consent.

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Plans for future periods

This reporting year (2021/22) is the third year of a three-year partnership and funding agreement with Suffolk County Council. It is also the final year of the charity's advocacy funding contract, as a partner within Total Voice Suffolk.

Trustees' top priority this fiscal year has been to secure sustainable, long-term funding to ensure ongoing service delivery and support to beneficiaries, through specific project work, alongside promoting the voices of individual people living with mental ill health, and the shared interests of mental health service users collaboratively.

As the reporting year closes, the board of trustees are pleased to report that our core funding has been confirmed for a further year (2022/23). Securing longer term core financial sustainability continues to be a top priority going forward into the new fiscal year.

We are pleased to report that our partnership funding bid for the new Suffolk Advocacy Service has also been successful. This partnership is made up of POhWER, a national advocacy organisation who is the lead partner and three long-established and experienced local advocacy providers including Suffolk User Forum, Ace Anglia, and Suffolk Family Carers. Trustees are pleased the charity will be able to continue to deliver peer led inpatient mental health advocacy for a further three years (commencing 1st April 2022).

Trustees are wholly committed to service user leadership, involvement, personalisation, and co-production working together with our local statutory partners, Suffolk County Council and NHS, supporting the developing Integrated Care System (ICS), promoting the mental health service user voice. We aim to continue to grow our mental health user led network, to ensure the voice of lived experience informs and shapes new and existing mental health services, placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of suicide prevention, service improvement and development.

Our key priorities for the next period include:

1. Making Our Voice Count - continuing to raise people's voices and lived experience to ensure mental health services, organisations and policies are led and shaped by the people best placed to know what works. People who use mental health services are experts by experience.

2. To continue actively promoting service user priority areas for mental health improvement. Including:

- Raising and promoting LISTEN as a model for personalised crisis care support and suicide prevention.
- Awareness raising to change the language used for suicide prevention through 'Suicide is not a Choice Change the language Save a life - Be the change.'
- Championing personalisation and reasonable adjustments for mental health service users.
- User involvement for the developing services and support for people living with Personality Disorders and complex needs.
- User involvement for the developing services and support for people living with eating disorders.
- Championing improved discharge planning for people transitioning from secondary mental health services to primary care support.

3. To continue to strengthen our local partnerships, supporting the County Council and local NHS to discharge their statutory responsibilities for mental health service user involvement, coproduction, information, assistance, and advocacy in relation to adult mental health service users.

Suffolk User Forum

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

4. Expand the SUF Healthy Together Project, promoting the healthcare rights and goals for people living with severe mental illness (SMI) (which includes Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, and Psychosis).

5. To widen the expertise and lived experience of our trustee board, to include Financial and Accountancy skills, welcoming trustees from our local ethnic minority communities, women, and younger people.

Our key commitments are:

- To work across all communities and protected characteristics with particular regard to groups where there is evidence of under-representation and/or greater discrimination.
- To develop our skills and capacity to support service user leadership and volunteer roles within our charity. Supporting people to gain skills and self-confidence as active citizens, building capacity to increase our support to people living with mental distress and mental health needs.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

Structure, governance, and management

Suffolk User Forum is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on the 29th June 2009 and registered as a charity (registered number 1133457) on the 5th January 2010.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which sets out the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. The liability of the members is limited and the Memorandum and Articles were updated on 3rd December 2022.

Trustee Board

The directors of Suffolk User Forum are known as trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles of Association are known as members of the Trustee Board. Recruitment to Suffolk User Forum's Trustee Board seeks to ensure that the organisation's desire to remain service user-led is appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Trustee body.

Currently 88% of the SUF Trustee Board have used or currently use mental health services as a service user or family carer. The charity is described as a Disabled Persons Organisation as over 75% of its trustees and 100% of its staff have lived experience of mental ill health and the charity works within the ethos of the social model of disability.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustee Board

Business, public sector, mental health, social care, family carer and service user skills remain well represented on the Trustee Board. This has been supported by a robust recruitment policy and procedure. SUF advertises vacancies for new trustees through the SUF website and social media, Reach Volunteering, Suffolk Volunteering and through its wider networks and partnerships. In 2021/22 SUF recruited new trustees, with skills in law, business, community and voluntary services development and lived experience of mental illness.

The Trustee Board actively encourages and welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds particularly welcoming applications from ethnic minority communities, women, and younger people, as they are currently underrepresented on the Trustee Board.

Potential trustees are invited to meet SUF trustees and the chief executive to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. All applicants are asked to apply (using the SUF application form) to the Trustee Board.

Applications are shortlisted by the Chair of Trustees in partnership with at least one other Trustee, who form the recruitment team supported by the Company Secretary. An interview is conducted by this recruitment team which writes an Interview Report. This is submitted at the earliest board meeting for a board discussion and a decision made regarding suitability for appointment. Trustees are appointed by the trustee Board initially until the next annual members' meeting when the appointment is put to a vote. Trustees normally serve a term of three years before reappointment at the next annual members' meeting.

Trustee Induction and Training

All new Trustees receive governance and business documentation relevant to their role, induction, and training.

New Trustees are provided with essential documents to support them in their role.

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

These include;

1. The obligations of the Trustee Board members including the Declaration of Interests, Code of Conduct and Agreement, Trustees' roles, and a self-reported skills audit, to inform the board's overall skills report, which is regularly reviewed by the board to ensure a balance of knowledge and skills across the trustee Board, and to inform the board's annual training plan for Trustees.
2. The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity including the Memorandum and Articles of association of Suffolk User Forum.
3. A copy of all partnership and funding agreements, including those with Suffolk County Council and Total Voice Suffolk.
4. Copies of Contract Review Meetings.
5. Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
6. The charities aims and objectives.
7. The current business/operational plan.
8. The current structure of the organisation including its staff.
9. The current project plans and reports.
10. The latest SUF publications including the quarterly service user feedback reports titled 'Making our voice count'.
11. This documentation is supported by a Trustee Induction programme which provide forums for wider discussion regarding the governing documents, explanation of aims and objectives and of the charity's business and action plan, including strategic plans. All new trustees are encouraged to complete on-line training provided in Suffolk by Community Action Suffolk as part of their induction to ensure they understand their trustee role and responsibilities.

The SUF new Trustee induction programme includes receiving information about key SUF policies and procedures which include:

1. Information Governance including confidentiality, data security, data protection, and the SUF Privacy Statement.
2. Equality and Diversity.
3. Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults.
4. Health and safety including, COVID safety, lone working, and risk management.
5. Comments, compliments, and complaints.
6. Social Value Strategy.
7. Environmental Strategy.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2022

8. The SUF Staff and Volunteer Handbook.

Risk assessment

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and holds a Risk Register that is reviewed at least four times a year at board meetings to ensure that the board are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Small company provisions

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

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

G Pachent
(Chair)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Suffolk User Forum

Year ended 31 March 2022

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), balance sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

L Thurston FCCA
Independent Examiner

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

Suffolk User Forum

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Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2022

		Unrestricted funds	2022 Restricted funds	Total funds	2021 Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	107,472	55,190	162,662	207,263
Investment income	6	228	—	228	299
Other income		—	10,878	10,878	10,878
Total income		<u>107,700</u>	<u>66,068</u>	<u>173,768</u>	<u>218,440</u>
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	7	104,066	64,354	168,420	176,790
Total expenditure		<u>104,066</u>	<u>64,354</u>	<u>168,420</u>	<u>176,790</u>
Net income and net movement in funds		<u>3,634</u>	<u>1,714</u>	<u>5,348</u>	<u>41,650</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		154,320	5,436	159,756	118,106
Total funds carried forward		<u>157,954</u>	<u>7,150</u>	<u>165,104</u>	<u>159,756</u>

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

The notes on pages 21 to 29 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance sheet

31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	£	2021 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	11		2,148		2,582
Current assets					
Debtors	12	8,450		4,763	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>320,120</u>		<u>186,624</u>	
		328,570		191,387	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(165,614)</u>		<u>(34,213)</u>	
Net current assets			162,956		157,174
Total assets less current liabilities			165,104		159,756
Net assets			<u>165,104</u>		<u>159,756</u>
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds			7,150		5,436
Unrestricted funds			<u>157,954</u>		<u>154,320</u>
Total charity funds	16		<u>165,104</u>		<u>159,756</u>

For the year ending 31 March 2022 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

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

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

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

G Pachent
(Chair)

Company registration number: 06946785

The notes on pages 21 to 29 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2022

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The operational address and registered office is 3 Grange Business Centre, Kesgrave, Ipswich, IP5 2BY.

2. Statement of compliance

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

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

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

Going concern

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

Fund accounting

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

Designated funds where necessary, are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

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

Income

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

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

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Income *(continued)*

- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Expenditure

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

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable, and consistent basis.

Operating leases

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

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

An increase in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of a revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, unless it reverses a charge for impairment that has previously been recognised as expenditure within the statement of financial activities. A decrease in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, except to which it offsets any previous revaluation gain, in which case the loss is shown within other recognised gains and losses on the statement of financial activities.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Depreciation

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

Computer equipment	-	25% straight line
Office furniture	-	25% straight line

Financial instruments

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

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

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

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

When contributions are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the end of the reporting date in which the employees render the related service, the liability is measured on a discounted present value basis. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as an expense in the period in which it arises.

4. Limited by guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company if it is wound up during the time that he or she is a member, or within one period afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before the time at which he or she ceases to be a member and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required not exceeding £10.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Donations			
Donations	57	–	57
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	107,415	–	107,415
Suffolk County Council (Covid -19)	–	–	–
NHS West Suffolk CCG	–	6,343	6,343
NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG	–	48,847	48,847
	<u>107,472</u>	<u>55,190</u>	<u>162,662</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Donations			
Donations	340	–	340
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	107,415	–	107,415
Suffolk County Council (Covid -19)	–	20,000	20,000
NHS West Suffolk CCG	4,150	–	4,150
NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG	6,100	69,258	75,358
	<u>118,005</u>	<u>89,258</u>	<u>207,263</u>

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Building society interest	<u>228</u>	<u>228</u>	<u>299</u>	<u>299</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

7. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Staff costs	64,078	56,068	120,146
Staff and volunteer expenses	2,420	—	2,420
Support costs	37,568	8,286	45,854
	<u>104,066</u>	<u>64,354</u>	<u>168,420</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Staff costs	49,764	89,258	139,022
Staff and volunteer expenses	1,249	—	1,249
Support costs	36,519	—	36,519
	<u>87,532</u>	<u>89,258</u>	<u>176,790</u>

Analysis of support costs

	2022 £	2021 £
Office rent	14,254	13,080
Rates	960	512
Light and heat	3,210	1,671
Telephone	2,924	3,219
Payroll bureau	648	895
Computer and website costs	5,824	5,845
Equipment hire	1,724	2,555
Postage and stationery	718	1,481
Repairs and renewals	156	83
Marketing	8,286	1,834
Insurance	1,546	1,023
Depreciation	1,433	1,799
Trustees' expenses	465	435
Sundry expenses	945	303
Legal and professional fees	997	384
Independent examination fee	1,764	1,400
	<u>45,854</u>	<u>36,519</u>

8. Net income

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2022 £	2021 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>1,433</u>	<u>1,799</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

9. Staff costs

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

	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	112,997	129,480
Social security costs	5,197	5,763
Pension costs	1,952	3,779
	<u>120,146</u>	<u>139,022</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 5 (2020/21: 7).

Travel expenses were paid during in the period amounting to £297 (2020/21: £368), with none of the Trustees being paid expenses as users.

10. Trustee remuneration and expenses

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. The trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2020/21: £Nil). The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions) received by senior management for their services to the charity was £47,819 (2020/21: £49,927).

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Office furniture £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2021	17,214	2,431	19,645
Additions	999	—	999
At 31 March 2022	<u>18,213</u>	<u>2,431</u>	<u>20,644</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2021	15,467	1,596	17,063
Charge for the year	947	486	1,433
At 31 March 2022	<u>16,414</u>	<u>2,082</u>	<u>18,496</u>
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2022	<u>1,799</u>	<u>349</u>	<u>2,148</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>1,747</u>	<u>835</u>	<u>2,582</u>

12. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Prepayments and accrued income	7,980	4,763
Other debtors	470	—
	<u>8,450</u>	<u>4,763</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	5,369	1,382
Accruals and deferred income	160,245	30,683
Other creditors	—	2,148
	<u>165,614</u>	<u>34,213</u>

14. Deferred income

	2022	2021
	£	£
At 1 April 2021	29,333	—
Amount released to income	(29,333)	—
Amount deferred in year	158,643	29,333
At 31 March 2022	<u>158,643</u>	<u>29,333</u>

15. Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £1,952 (2020/21: £3,779).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

16. Analysis of charitable funds

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	–	–	–	4,690
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	–	–	–	746
Healthy Together	–	45,190	(45,190)	–	–
Suicide Prevention	–	10,000	(8,286)	–	1,714
Advocacy	–	10,878	(10,878)	–	–
	<u>5,436</u>	<u>66,068</u>	<u>(64,354)</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>7,150</u>
	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2021 £
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	–	–	–	4,690
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	–	–	–	746
COVID work for SUF					
members	–	20,000	(20,000)	–	–
COVID work for shielded					
persons	–	53,591	(53,591)	–	–
Healthy Together	–	15,667	(15,667)	–	–
	<u>5,436</u>	<u>89,258</u>	<u>(89,258)</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>5,436</u>

The Mental Health Services User expenses - is funded by the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group; West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Suffolk County Council, through the Suffolk Mental Health Pooled Fund, SUF have agreed to hold and administer an amount of now less than £5,000 on behalf of Suffolk County Council.

SCC Waveney Peer Support was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

COVID work for SUF members was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

COVID work for shielded persons was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Healthy Together was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Suicide Prevention was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Advocacy was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

17. Analysis of net assets between funds

As at 31 March 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,148	–	2,148
Net current assets	155,806	7,150	162,956
Net Assets	<u>157,954</u>	<u>7,150</u>	<u>165,104</u>

As at 31 March 2021

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,582	–	2,582
Net current assets	151,738	5,436	157,174
Net Assets	<u>154,320</u>	<u>5,436</u>	<u>159,756</u>

18. Operating lease commitments

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

	2022 £	2021 £
Not later than 1 year	14,425	12,529
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	–	2,915
	<u>14,425</u>	<u>15,444</u>

19. Related parties

Other than elsewhere disclosed in the accounts, there were no related party transactions in this or the prior period.

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06946785

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1133457

**Suffolk User Forum
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited financial statements
31 March 2021**

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2021

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Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report)

Year ended 31 March 2021

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Suffolk User Forum
Charity registration number	1133457
Company registration number	06946785
Principal office and registered office	3a Grange Business Centre Kesgrave Ipswich IP5 2BY

The trustees

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

G Pachent (Chair from 26/11/2020)
M Blowers
P Gaffney (Resigned 14/09/2021)
B Griggs (Appointed 05/10/2020)
C Maher (Appointed 01/10/2020, Resigned 26/06/2021)
R Nesbitt
B Parrott
D Pennock (Resigned 23/10/2020)
J Stern (Chair until 26/11/2020)
M White (Appointed 28/04/2021)
M Wright (Appointed 13/11/2020, Resigned 20/07/2021)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

Chief executive officer	J Stevens
Solicitors	Bates Wells and Braithwaite Solicitors 29 Lower Brook Street Ipswich IP4 1AQ
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank 9-11 Queen Street Ipswich IP1 1SW Ipswich Building Society Unit 22 Sailmakers Shopping Centre Ipswich IP1 3BB
Company secretary	K Burr (Resigned 31/07/2020) R Nesbitt (Appointed 01/08/2020)
Independent examiner	L Thurston FCCA Lovewell Blake LLP Chartered accountants First Floor Suite 2 Hillside Business Park Bury St Edmunds IP32 7EA

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

Objectives and activities

Suffolk User Forum, also referred to as SUF, a term used throughout these accounts is the voice for mental health service users in the East and West of Suffolk. SUF is a user-led charity and everyone involved in the charity has lived experience of mental health as service user, family carer or worker.

SUF delivers engagement and inpatient mental health advocacy services, working to give mental health service users a powerful unified voice for their experiences of care and support, promoting individuals' rights, options and choices for care and support.

The charity works with service providers and commissioners to ensure that the voice of lived experience is central to improving emotional wellbeing and mental health services in East and West Suffolk. This is achieved through the charity's engagement and advocacy roles, which alongside supporting people, prioritise the gathering and recording of people's experiences of services. By connecting areas of individual feedback together, the charity draws together key themes and emerging trends in mental health experience. These are reported on quarterly in the SUF publication titled 'Making our Voice Count' which is presented to providers, commissioners and to strategic partners, to assist with decision making and to promote coproduction, so that providers and commissioners can understand and actively respond to the current lived experience of people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs.

The charity's aim and objectives for this financial year include:

1. Increasing parity of esteem by raising the profile of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
2. Ensuring that the voices of service users and family carers are at the heart of service transformation through the development of the new mental health strategy #AVeryDifferentConversation and future implementation plans.
3. Using knowledge and feedback gained from service user and family carer engagement, to contribute to improving existing services and shaping the design of future models.
4. Providing a service that gives individual service users and family carers an increased understanding of the local mental health system and where they can access help and support.
5. Facilitating opportunities for mental health service users and family carers to meaningfully come together, promoting communities, reducing isolation, and lowering impact on statutory services.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

Objectives and activities *(continued)*

SUF's mission is to be an inclusive and trusted mental health user-led network that values, promotes, and strengthens the user voice for positive change, independence, legal rights, choice, and control.

SUF's vision is to become the leading organisation for adults in Suffolk championing equal and valued partnerships between mental health service users, commissioners, and providers, combining mutual strengths and experience to improve services, achieving emotional wellbeing and mental health for all.

SUF's values were coproduced at the SUF AGM in 2018:

1. We are open, honest, and trustworthy
2. We are inclusive and have people at our heart
3. We are caring & compassionate.
4. We speak out together to make a difference

Our Objectives for 2020-2021:

1. To speak out for the emotional wellbeing and mental health of people with mental ill-health of any description, who are living in East and West Suffolk, and are, or need to be, receiving services, through listening to service users, valuing them as experts in equal partnership, communicating their views, and actively involving them in co-designing and co-producing mental health services with commissioners and providers.
2. To promote the rights of people with mental ill-health who are, or need to be, receiving services in East and West Suffolk, through one-to-one advocacy (inpatient care), information provision, communications, partnership, networks and maintaining effective relationships with commissioners, providers, statutory and voluntary organisations as well as service users.
3. To support the empowerment and enablement of service users, through assisting service users to feel empowered to speak out, assert their rights and needs to make changes in their lives.
4. To recruit, maintain and support SUF members and volunteers, enabling opportunities for active involvement at the level they wish, and providing them and other mental health service users with co-produced services which will improve their lives.

Public Benefit

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on Public Benefit including, The Public Benefit Requirement (PB1), Running a Charity (PB2) and Reporting (PB3).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

Achievements and performance

1. Increasing parity of esteem

Promoting parity of esteem to enable equal access to physical and mental health services, developing the SUF Healthy Together peer support project for people living with Severe Mental Illness (SMI).

This year we have delivered 711 hours of work to enable equal access to physical and mental health. This has included:

- Working with SUF members, supporting their involvement with East Suffolk and North East Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT), and their quality improvement programme to become a mentally healthy acute trust. This has included supporting SUF members to become volunteers with ESNEFT, SUF attendance at Mental Health Steering Groups, Carers' Steering Group, and support for the development of the ESNEFT Carers' Passport.
- Supporting the GP Federation with their work to reach out to as many women as possible for cervical screening, through the development of an enhanced service. This included providing longer appointment times and reasonable adjustments for women with mental health needs, and those who would appreciate support to attend appointments.
- Supporting mental health service users to get physical healthcare appointments and mental health appointments during the pandemic and national lockdowns.
- Supporting shielded persons during lockdown to get healthcare appointments for their physical health needs and changes in their long-term conditions when they didn't feel able to contact their General Practitioners or Consultants due to the pressures on the NHS due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Reporting back the needs of shielded persons to Suffolk County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups at strategic meetings, working to address health inequalities, isolation and a strategic response to people's changing needs during the pandemic.
- Supporting shielded persons' family carers to get mental health support during the pandemic from the voluntary sector as well as statutory service support.
- Working with the East and West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups, Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT) and SUF members in the autumn of 2020 to develop the SUF Healthy Together Peer Support Project. This pilot project started in February 2021 and was funded through the Integrated Care System. Healthy Together is for people living with severe mental illness who would benefit from additional support in relation to their health needs and wellbeing goals identified at their annual SMI health check.

Our Healthy Together team provide individualised support to help people plan and to attend physical health care appointments, to achieve their physical health and wellbeing goals. By 31st March 2021, our Healthy Together Champions were already supporting 11 people, with a range of health care support needs including COVID-19 vaccinations, cancer care, increasing hydration and exercise, health eating, physiotherapy appointments, diabetes appointments and living well with diabetes, support to register with a dentist. This is a pilot project that will continue through to July 2021.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

2. Making Our Voice Count

Ensuring that service users and family carers have an equal voice in Suffolk's local health and care system.

Listening and giving people a voice through conversations about mental health and emotional wellbeing, is at the heart of our organisation. We believe that people's individual stories and feedback empowers service user leadership which is essential to improve services and to make a difference to the experience of others. We have spent over 1800 hours listening and gathering people's feedback about mental health services. We provide a platform for people's stories and views to be heard. During 2020/21, we have collated and reported people's experiences in our feedback publication called 'Making Our Voice Count'. We have published five feedback reports in 2020/21, sharing over 3200 experiences of mental health services, including anonymised personal stories. Where we have received a range of feedback about a service, we have shared stories that describe both positive and negative experiences. Making Our Voice Count has been presented at strategic meetings including.

- Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT) -Overview and Assurance Group.
- NSFT Board of Governors.
- The Mental Health Alliance Implementation Group.
- NHS and Suffolk County Council COVID-19 Strategic Groups.
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Our achievements include.

- Embedding the coproduced LISTEN Model into the commissioning of all Mental Health services.
- Supporting service users to work in coproduction, informing mental health transformation and suicide prevention, including development of the new Personality Disorder and Complex Needs Service due to commence in June 2021; development of mental health crisis support services including the Suffolk First Response Service (FRS); improvements to Psychiatric Liaison Services; development of the new community model for mental health.
- Supporting the county's response to our communities in COVID-19 providing communication about the resources and support across our communities to ensure they are clear and accessible; Identifying gaps and emerging needs due to the impact of COVID-19, working with partners to bring forward service users' ideas and recommendations seeking to address them.
- Coproduction at Wedgwood House (NSFT) with the service user group called the Supportive Friends, assisting in the ongoing improvements for inpatient care.
- In March 2021, providing service user feedback to inform the NSFT Board of Governors' Annual plan for 2021/22.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

- Working strategically, we raised concerns about the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 for people from our ethnic minority communities, focusing with NSFT leadership on the needs and support for both staff and service users.
- Following service user concerns about local press articles reporting on deaths by suicide, or sudden and unexpected deaths, we have worked in partnership with the NSFT Communications Team and Archant (the local newspaper and magazine publishing company) to agree press statements that better support people who may be affected or distressed by the content contained in articles.
- We have raised people's experiences in three press publications in the East Anglian Daily Times and in June 2020 we gave an interview to BBC Radio Suffolk about the experiences of people shielding during the pandemic.

3. #AVeryDifferentConversation

Ensuring the voices of service users and family carers are at the heart of mental health service transformation.

In 2018, the Ipswich & East Suffolk and West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) started working together with the other Suffolk NHS, voluntary and statutory organisations to design the new mental health strategy for east and west Suffolk for 2019-2029. Since this time SUF has been an active coproduction partner working to ensure the voices of mental health service users, family and parent carers are at the heart of mental health transformation.

This work has been known as #AVeryDifferentConversation and has involved some coproduction, service user, family/parent carer involvement, through meetings, surveys, and events. The start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 meant that the next steps planned for 2020/21 were paused, as our local NHS adapted to meet the needs of people during the early part of pandemic.

The transformation programme recommenced via virtual meetings in late April 2020/May 2020. SUF staff have delivered 852 hours representing the service user voice at the following meetings, sharing current feedback on services and people's views on how services could be improved and developed.

- Suffolk Mental Health Alliance Implementation Group Meeting (six weekly).
- Personality Disorder and Complex Needs Pathway transformation (fortnightly).
- Mental Health community steering group (fortnightly).
- Crisis Steering Group (fortnightly).
- Early Adopter for community mental health in primary care - Haverhill (weekly).

We have actively supported the following developments.

- Ensured that the coproduced LISTEN model is fully embedded in all mental health transformation, including the quality assurance framework and, staff training. We have recommended it is included in staff, supervision, and appraisal and in patient/service user feedback (Friends & Family test).
- Responding to the difficulties that NSFT service users experienced accessing the First Response Service (FRS) we have worked with NSFT to ensure there is clarity of information about who people call when in crisis. We have raised concerns and changes have been made to NSFT answer phone messages and public information, including the NSFT website, to confirm that all service users receiving NSFT services can call the FRS.

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Year ended 31 March 2021

- Enabled SUF members and supporters to be directly involved in mental health transformation including being involved in providing feedback and/or attending meetings for the new Personality Disorder and Complex Needs service, crisis care pathways, community mental health care and planning for dementia care.
- Contributing to the training plan for mental health staff recommending it includes training in Coproduction, Complaints, the LISTEN model, compassionate care, working and supporting people living with Personality Disorders and those with eating disorders, so that services can respond better to the increased mental health needs post COVID.

In addition, we have shared the user voice and views in meetings to link priorities across the mental health system; supporting key lines of enquiry to evaluate assurance on the proposed new services and the way in which they will be delivered. Our SUF CEO shared service user experiences of crisis services at the Eastern Region, NHS England Clinical Senate in November 2020. In the Autumn 2020 we promoted the East and West Suffolk CCG consultation and survey about the developing plans for new mental health services, inviting people to comment and share their views. In total 450 people provided feedback. Our SUF CEO took part in live online question and answer sessions. As the year ends, we coproduced the outcomes people would like to experience through the changes being made in mental health services, using the Think Local Act Personal 'I' statements.

4. Sharing our knowledge and Information

Help to access mental health services and community support

One of the biggest problems that people face is understanding how our local mental health care system works and what support is available in our communities.

- **Telephone support:** Through our telephone support work for SUF members and shielded persons, mental health advocacy and contact from members of the public we have spent 697 hours signposting 790 people to local Suffolk services and mental health organisations, including COVID-19 support.
- **Our website:** During this year we updated our website to provide information about new services and support during the COVID-19 pandemic. With over 22,700 views, we have supported people to access information about a range of services, including our Thrive With Five series, based on the Five Ways Wellbeing. Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give. Our most viewed page has been Help Now which provides emergency information for people in mental health crisis. This page had over 2,170 views, an increase of 98 % from 2019/20. Other 'most viewed' pages include:
 - Covid-19 support (813 views)
 - LGBTQ+ support (637 views)
 - Suffolk County Council Customer First (529 views)
 - Housing support (285 views)
 - Mental health support by diagnosis (274 views)
 - Suffolk County Council, including Housing, Help and Support (260 views)
 - Suffolk Careline (215 views)
 - Missing People (185 views)
 - Caribbean African Community Health Support Forum (141 views)
 - PHOEBE Promotion of Health Opportunity Equality Benevolence Empowerment (139 views)
 - How to Use Microsoft Teams (127 views)
 - Bereavement by suicide support (117 views).

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

- **Social Media:** We continue to grow our social media presence year on year. Our SUF social media plays a crucial role in connecting people and developing our relationships. It also provides a great opportunity for people to find out information about mental health and support and to share information that other may find helpful. Social media enables us to value people's input, to answer questions and to listen to their feedback. This year we achieved:

- Twitter: 2219 Twitter followers, showing an 11% increase in Twitter followers. 655,700 Impressions.
- Facebook: 1595 Facebook Likes, a 31.5% increase in Facebook likes. 793,746 reach.

- **Email and postal communication:** The use of digital communication has been essential during the pandemic as we have been following Government's COVID-19 guidance. We are aware that about 10% of our SUF community members do not have access to digital technologies including email/smart phones. As we have developed new digital ways of working through our website, Zoom, MS teams and using email, we have also ensured we share information and important news by post. This year we have introduced Chair's update letters after each board meeting which briefs our SUF community members on the work of the board.

- **Connecting to share Five Ways to Wellbeing:** SUF's 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' course was developed in coproduction with SUF community members. Since 2019 this course has been delivered to five service user groups, where we have worked in partnership with our SUF community members, The ACE Project, Julian Support, and Icen.

With funding from the West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group's Realise Ambitions Fund, our team successfully moved this five-week course to an online group in 2020. We ran two courses for service users, one in the autumn of 2020 and a second in late winter 2021.

Based on the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' programme, our coproduced course focused on people's individual needs and goals, enabling connections with local support. The course covers the five key areas for wellbeing; Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give.

The skills that the course promotes include good sleep, nutrition, exercise, and relaxation and these have been important elements in coping with the huge changes that have taken place during 2020, keeping us strong and healthy in mind, body, and spirit.

The focus on setting small goals helps to make a big difference to our self-care and can tap into renewed energy and enthusiasm.

To support this course this year we coproduced in 2020/21 our Thrive with Five series of booklets which are also based on the Five Ways to Wellbeing programme. These can be downloaded from our website and contain links for support in East and West Suffolk.

5. SUF telephone peer support

COVID-19 support to shielded persons and SUF community members - a lifeline during the pandemic.

When the COVID-19 lockdown started in March 2020, we made it a priority to contact our SUF community members and to offer regular telephone peer support. We were pleased that Suffolk County Council recognised the importance of this work and supported us with additional funding. We were also able to extend our support to some GP surgeries with short-term funding from the Ipswich and East NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). With this additional funding we delivered 2981 hours of telephone peer

Suffolk User Forum

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

support throughout 2020/21.

Between April and July 2020, we spoke with over 1500 people, delivering Times Ten Together peer support for 642 people who were shielding. As well as providing telephone support, we ensured people had the information they needed to receive their essential supplies including medication and food. We provided signposting for additional support, including family and young carers' support, and we also ensured that people received medical support for their changing healthcare needs by making referrals back to their GPs and hospital consultants.

We arranged ongoing weekly peer support to 80 SUF community members, providing a reassuring and supportive voice. Our work included supporting people during mental health crises and enabling people to focus on their own weekly personal wellbeing goals.

Shielded persons valued our telephone contact, which was made on behalf of their GP surgeries, saying that they felt cared for and supported at a very difficult and worrying time. The 80 people receiving our regular peer support have all told us that our regular calls had been a lifeline during the pandemic. Many have specifically thanked our individual SUF staff. They have said that our support made them feel valued. Having regular contact with us reduced their isolation, provided the opportunity to talk through their worries and to achieve incremental goals to support their wellbeing.

6. LISTEN for Suicide Prevention

Coproduction for suicide prevention and the Stay Alive App for Suffolk.

This year we have spent 846 hours supporting suicide prevention in Suffolk. In the Autumn of 2020, we bought together SUF community members who spoke to us about living with suicidal thoughts and suicide prevention. Meeting in small groups on Zoom and in one-to-one conversations, people shared 142 experiences, helping us to understand what works well to support people in extreme distress and what really does not help. This has identified further suicide-prevention work which we have taken forward this year with the North East Essex and Suffolk Suicide Prevention Steering Group.

Twenty experiences related to the response received at Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments in Suffolk and from Psychiatric Liaison teams (the mental health crisis service provided in acute trusts by Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT)). We have already started working with NSFT who have welcomed SUF and two of our service user members as partners at their Crisis Steering Group. This means that we can work together to ensure that LISTEN is used to better support people and to coproduce improved outcomes for people receiving crisis support in A&E. With the reported increase in mental health crises as COVID-19 rules ease, this is an important area for development in 2021/22, alongside working with commissioners to plan alternative responses such as crisis cafés.

For World Suicide Prevention Day (10th September 2020) we promoted the importance of staying connected through our coproduced publication LISTEN for Suicide Prevention. Service users with lived experience of suicidal thoughts and distress worked with us to develop this helpful approach for anyone to use.

Our SUF Suicide Prevention Lead this year supported two SUF members to share their personal experiences of living with suicidal thoughts through videos and podcasts on YouTube. This work complements the award-winning StayAlive App, which SUF bought to Suffolk in 2019, now has 1400 users in the county.

The stories in these videos and podcasts have been promoted by the North East Essex and Suffolk Suicide Prevention Steering Group and can be seen on our SUF website. They provide powerful insights and help build an understanding of what it can be like when living with suicidal thoughts. The material also sets out what is helpful and supportive, how to recover and where to get support. Their stories include:

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

- Two personal podcasts, Part 1, and Part 2.
- Stay Alive 1 - When suicide is on your mind.
- Stay Alive 2 - Things that do and do not help when someone is suicidal.
- Stay Alive 3 - How to protect your mental health when feeling suicidal.
- Stay Alive 4 - Break the stigma.

Our other suicide prevention work includes supporting service users to be involved in action in relation to locations that present a higher suicide risk. This has included working with strategic partners in Suffolk County Council and Highways England, exploring the opportunity to make some areas safer with the installation of new Samaritan signs, relocation of Samaritan telephone boxes, increasing safety through permanent closure of high-risk laybys and the possible installation of 'happy to talk' benches.

Our SUF Suicide Prevention Lead has worked closely with the Public Health team in Suffolk County Council to involve service users in the coproduction of support leaflets and to ensure families and people in local communities are offered emotional and practical support following deaths by suicide. We have also supported local organisations with their work on suicide prevention. This has included raising the profile of mental health awareness, suicide prevention training and Suffolk Life Savers with local construction companies, football associations and farming communities. Our SUF Advocate has worked closely with NSFT, supporting and participating in their monthly suicide prevention webinars throughout 2020/21.

7. SUF inpatient mental health peer advocacy

Working together as peers to make your voice heard

This year our we have delivered 186 hours of peer led, non-statutory inpatient Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), and 81 individual advocacy interventions. We have delivered this work as an advocacy partner within the Total Voice Advocacy Contract.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we were unable to undertake our regular weekly advocacy ward drop ins at Woodlands and Wedgwood House, or our monthly drop ins at Foxhall House. We quickly adapted our advocacy service to provide support by phone and to ensure that we had weekly contact with inpatients by attending the ward community meetings virtually using Microsoft Office Teams.

We have valued the support from staff at Wedgwood House, Woodlands and Foxhall House, who worked hard to be inclusive and to support our advocacy role through virtual meetings during the pandemic restrictions. Our SUF Peer Advocate has also supported people in community groups and through individual advocacy interventions. This has included:

- Support for people to know their legal rights and the basis for people's admission, as either a detained or voluntary patient.
- Information about people's care and treatment, including care plans.
- Information and support for inpatients to get permission, called authorisation, to leave the ward for what is called 'authorised leave'.
- Support to have one-to-one time with a named nurse.
- Support for queries about medication, test results and appointments.

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

- Signposting for other support for example support groups and recovery groups so people feel more connected once they are discharged.
- Referral to an Independent Mental Health Advocate for support to appeal detention where people meet the criteria for statutory advocacy including Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) or Independent Mental Health Capacity Act Advocacy (IMCA).

As part of the improvement work for Wedgwood House, the SUF Advocate was asked in early May 2020, by the lead nurse of the West Suffolk Care Group, if they could be involved in a new initiative called the Supportive Friends which was starting in Wedgwood House. This initiative invited experts by experience (ex NSFT service users) to evaluate the quality of inpatient care.

During 2020/21 we have worked with the Supportive Friends and valued both their support of inpatients and of our SUF peer advocacy role. They have stayed in regular contact with our peer advocate through virtual meetings and regular catch ups, updating us about the quality improvement work at the inpatient unit.

We have recommended that this model also be adopted at Woodlands. As the year comes to an end, Woodlands are in the process of recruiting a peer support worker and family carer lead. Our SUF Advocate looks forward to developing these relationships to further support the inpatient quality improvement work. We look forward to returning to our in person drop-in visits from 19th April 2021.

Our peer advocacy service adheres to the definition and principles of the Advocacy Charter. We have coproduced our advocacy commitments this year to ensure our advocacy delivery works in true partnership with people, with clarity of purpose, upholding people's rights and promoting social inclusion.

8. Looking Ahead to 2021/22

Our goals and commitments for the coming year are outlined in the plans for future periods note of the accounts.

Suffolk User Forum

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

Financial review

The charity's income in 2020-21 was £218,440 (2020: £179,545) of which £89,258 (2020: £41,850) related to project restricted activities. The charity's expenditure in 2020-21 was £176,790 (2020: £181,956) of which £89,258 (2020: £44,248) related to project restricted activities. This has continued to contribute to the charity's general reserves.

Principal funding sources

The largest component of our charity's income is received under a funding agreement with Suffolk County Council and the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and West Suffolk CCG via a tri-part fund called the Mental Health Pooled Fund. This funding agreement is overseen by Suffolk County Council, who awarded the Charity a three-year partnership contract commencing from 1st April 2019.

SUF has continued as an advocacy partner within the Total Voice Suffolk (TVS) Partnership, who were awarded the contract for Suffolk Advocacy services from 1st April 2017. The SUF contract within this partnership changed during this fiscal year (February 2020), to include the provision of inpatient independent mental health advocacy.

Additional funding has been awarded by the Ipswich and East Clinical Commissioning Group (IECCG) and West Suffolk CCG people living with mental health needs and those who have been shielding during the first six months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both CCG's have also awarded funding for a six month pilot project called Healthy Together, delivering peer support to people living with Severe Mental Illness and physical health care needs identified following their annual health check.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's policy is to invest any surplus funds in separated bank accounts to balance security and return. The charity has a Business Deposit Account with the Ipswich Building Society.

Reserves policy

The Trustees remain committed to providing maximum possible service levels. The Trustees have successfully grown SUF reserves during this financial year to provide the charity with reserves equal to at least 6-months operating costs.

It is our revised policy to maintain current general reserves equivalent to six months operating expenditure at current levels, plus redundancy and statutory notice costs of £31,000 and £6,000 to replace IT equipment. This equates to £80,766 (2020: £105,854). Reserves on unrestricted funds at 31 March 2021 are £154,320 (2020: £112,670) which exceeds the reserves policy. The Trustee board will continue to review the reserves policy during the forthcoming year and aim to increase expenditure in the coming year accordingly.

Financial reserves are SUF's savings, helping to strengthen the charity and its sustainability. They help SUF to pay for activities that donors will not fund or handle unplanned events. They also provide additional operating funds over and above the core funding provided by the Mental Health Pooled Fund.

General reserves must be built up from unrestricted income; any surplus on a restricted project is tied to the same restrictions as the original project and may not be transferred to unrestricted funds without the donors' consent.

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

Plans for future periods

As we start the new fiscal year 2021/22, we enter the third year of a three-year partnership and funding agreement. Our top priority for this year is to secure sustainable, long-term funding to ensure we can continue to enhance and advance the voices of individual people living with mental ill health and the shared interests of mental health service users collaboratively. We are committed to service user leadership, involvement, personalisation, and co-production with our local statutory partners - - Suffolk County Council and NHS. We aim to continue to grow our mental health user led network, to ensure the voice of lived experience informs and shapes new and existing mental health services, placing the voice of lived experience at the heart of suicide prevention, service improvement and development.

Our key priorities for the next period include:

- Making Our Voice Count - continuing to raise people's voices and lived experience to ensure mental health services, organisations and policies are led and shaped by the people best placed to know what works. People who use mental health services are experts by experience.

To continue actively promoting service user priority areas for mental health improvement. Including:

- The LISTEN model.
- Suicide is not a choice Change the language Save a life Be the change.
- Personalisation and reasonable adjustments for mental health service users, including how these are embedded within our systems zero tolerance policies.
- To continue to build our partnerships to support the County Council and local NHS to discharge their statutory responsibilities for involvement, coproduction, information, assistance, and advocacy in relation to adult mental health service users.
- To secure funding for SUF peer advocacy which provides help at a critical moment to mental health inpatients.
- Expand the SUF Healthy Together Project, promoting the healthcare rights and goals for people living with severe mental illness (SMI). To become a member of Equally Well, coproducing our Equally Well commitments.
- To widen the expertise and lived experience of our trustee board, to include Financial and Accountancy skills, welcoming trustees from our local ethnic minority communities.

Our key commitments are:

- To continue to promote equalities and diversity in all our work including working with our local ethnic communities, women, and younger adults.
- To develop our skills and capacity to support service user leadership and volunteer roles within our charity. Supporting people to gain skills and self-confidence as active citizens, building capacity to increase our support to people living with mental distress and mental health needs

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

Structure, governance, and management

Suffolk User Forum is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on the 29th June 2009 and registered as a charity (registered number 1133457) on the 5th January 2010.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which sets out the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. The liability of the members is limited.

Trustee Board

The Directors of Suffolk User Forum are known as Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles of Association are known as members of the Trustee Board. Recruitment to Suffolk User Forum's Trustee Board seeks to ensure that the organisation's desire to remain service user-led is appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Trustee body. Currently 67% of the SUF Trustee Board have used or currently use mental health services as a service user or family carer.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustee Board

Traditional business, mental health, social care, family carer and service user skills remain well represented on the Trustee Board and has been supported by a robust recruitment policy and procedure. SUF advertises vacancies for new trustees through the SUF website and social media, Reach Volunteering, Suffolk Volunteering and through its wider networks and partnerships. In 2020/21 and April 2021, SUF recruited new trustees, including women and younger people, with skills in public health, finance, and clinical negligence law.

The Trustee Board actively encourages and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds particularly welcoming applications from Black Asian Minority Ethnic groups, women, and younger people, as they are currently underrepresented on the Trustee Board.

Potential trustees are invited to meet SUF trustees and attend Trustee Board Meetings to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. All applicants are asked to apply (using the SUF application form) and to provide a Curriculum Vitae (CV) to the Trustee Board.

Applications are shortlisted by the Chair of Trustees in partnership with at least one other Trustee, who form the recruitment team supported by the Company Secretary. An interview is conducted by this recruitment team which writes an Interview Report. This is submitted at the earliest board meeting for a board discussion and a decision made regarding suitability for appointment. Trustees are appointed by the trustee Board. Trustees serve a term of three years.

Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the charity may by ordinary resolution appoint a person who is willing to be a director and determine the rotation in which any additional Directors are to retire. The Directors also may appoint a person who is willing to act to be a director.

Trustee Induction and Training

All new Trustees receive governance and business documentation relevant to their role, induction, and training.

New Trustees are provided with essential documents to support them in their role.

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

These include;

- The obligations of the Trustee Board members including the Declaration of Interests, the Code of Conduct and Agreement, Trustees roles and a self-reported skills audit, to inform the boards overall skills report, which is regularly reviewed by the board to ensure a balance of knowledge and skills across the trustee Board and to inform the boards annual training plan for Trustees
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity including the Memorandum and Articles of association of Suffolk User Forum
- A copy of all partnership and funding agreements, including those with Suffolk County Council and Total Voice Suffolk.
- Copies of Contract Review Meetings.
- Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
- The charities aims and objectives.
- The current business plan and action plan.
- The current structure of the organisation including its staff.
- The current project plans and reports.
- The latest SUF publications including the quarterly service user feedback reports titled 'Making our voice count', SUF newsletter titled 'Our Voice'.

This documentation is supported by a Trustee Induction programme which provide forums for wider discussion regarding the governing documents, explanation of aims and objectives and of the charity's business and action plan, including strategic plans. All new trustees are encouraged to complete on-line training provided in Suffolk by Community Action Suffolk as part of their induction to ensure they understand their trustee role and responsibilities.

The SUF new Trustee induction programme includes receiving information about key SUF policies and procedures which include;

- Information Governance including confidentiality, data security, data protection, and the SUF Privacy Statement.
- Equality and Diversity.
- Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults.
- Health and safety including, COVID safety, lone working, and risk management.
- Comments, compliments, and complaints.
- Social Value Strategy.

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

Year ended 31 March 2021

- Environmental Strategy.
- A copy of the SUF Staff and Volunteer Handbook.

Risk assessment

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and holds a Risk Register that is reviewed quarterly at board meetings to ensure that the board are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Independent examiner reappointment

A resolution to appoint L Thurston FCCA of Lovewell Blake LLP as independent examiner will be proposed at the next meeting.

Small company provisions

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

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

G Pachent
(Chair)

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Suffolk User Forum

Year ended 31 March 2021

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), balance sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

L Thurston FCCA
Independent Examiner

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

Suffolk User Forum

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Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2021

		Unrestricted funds £	2021 Restricted funds £	Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
	Note				
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	118,005	89,258	207,263	149,802
Investment income	6	299	–	299	2
Other income		10,878	–	10,878	29,741
Total income		<u>129,182</u>	<u>89,258</u>	<u>218,440</u>	<u>179,545</u>
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	7	87,532	89,258	176,790	181,956
Total expenditure		<u>87,532</u>	<u>89,258</u>	<u>176,790</u>	<u>181,956</u>
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds		<u>41,650</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>41,650</u>	<u>(2,411)</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		112,670	5,436	118,106	120,517
Total funds carried forward		<u>154,320</u>	<u>5,436</u>	<u>159,756</u>	<u>118,106</u>

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

The notes on pages 21 to 30 form part of these financial statements.

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Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance sheet

31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	£	2020 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	11		2,582		3,306
Current assets					
Debtors	12	4,763		7,969	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>186,624</u>		<u>108,753</u>	
		191,387		116,722	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(34,213)</u>		<u>(1,922)</u>	
Net current assets			157,174		114,800
Total assets less current liabilities			159,756		118,106
Net assets			<u>159,756</u>		<u>118,106</u>
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds			5,436		5,436
Unrestricted funds			<u>154,320</u>		<u>112,670</u>
Total charity funds	16		<u>159,756</u>		<u>118,106</u>

For the year ending 31 March 2021 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

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

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

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

G Pachent
(Chair)

Company registration number: 06946785

The notes on pages 21 to 30 form part of these financial statements.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2021

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is 3a Grange Business Centre, Kesgrave, Ipswich, IP5 2BY.

2. Statement of compliance

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

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

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

Going concern

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

The Trustees have taken into account the impact of COVID-19 when assessing going concern.

Fund accounting

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

Designated funds where necessary, are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

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

Income

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

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Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Income *(continued)*

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

- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.

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

- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Expenditure

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

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

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

- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable, and consistent basis.

Operating leases

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

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

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Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Tangible assets *(continued)*

An increase in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of a revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, unless it reverses a charge for impairment that has previously been recognised as expenditure within the statement of financial activities. A decrease in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, except to which it offsets any previous revaluation gain, in which case the loss is shown within other recognised gains and losses on the statement of financial activities.

Depreciation

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

Computer equipment	-	25% straight line
Office furniture	-	25% straight line

Impairment of fixed assets

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

For the purposes of impairment testing, when it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs. The cash-generating unit is the smallest identifiable group of assets that includes the asset and generates cash inflows that largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets.

For impairment testing of goodwill, the goodwill acquired in a business combination is, from the acquisition date, allocated to each of the cash-generating units that are expected to benefit from the synergies of the combination, irrespective of whether other assets or liabilities of the charity are assigned to those units.

Financial instruments

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

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

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

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

When contributions are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the end of the reporting date in which the employees render the related service, the liability is measured on a discounted present value basis. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as an expense in the period in which it arises.

4. Limited by guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company if it is wound up during the time that he or she is a member, or within one period afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before the time at which he or she ceases to be a member and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required not exceeding £10.

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Donations			
Donations	340	—	340
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	107,415	—	107,415
Suffolk Community Foundation	—	—	—
Public Health QI Project	—	—	—
Transformation - Mental Health Services	—	—	—
Waveney Peer Support	—	—	—
Suffolk County Council (Covid -19)	—	20,000	20,000
NHS West Suffolk CCG	4,150	—	4,150
NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG	6,100	69,258	75,358
	<u>118,005</u>	<u>89,258</u>	<u>207,263</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Donations			
Donations	537	—	537

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

5. Donations and legacies *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Grants			
Mental Health Pooled Fund	107,415	–	107,415
Suffolk Community Foundation	–	993	993
Public Health QI Project	–	941	941
Transformation - Mental Health Services	–	37,916	37,916
Waveney Peer Support	–	2,000	2,000
Suffolk County Council (Covid -19)	–	–	–
NHS West Suffolk CCG	–	–	–
NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG	–	–	–
	<u>107,952</u>	<u>41,850</u>	<u>149,802</u>

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Building society interest	<u>299</u>	<u>299</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

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Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

7. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Staff costs	49,729	89,258	138,987
Staff and volunteer expenses	1,284	—	1,284
Support costs	36,519	—	36,519
	<u>87,532</u>	<u>89,258</u>	<u>176,790</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Staff costs	95,631	33,724	129,355
Staff and volunteer expenses	8,410	759	9,169
Support costs	33,667	9,765	43,432
	<u>137,708</u>	<u>44,248</u>	<u>181,956</u>

Analysis of support costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Office rent	13,080	13,263
Rates	512	512
Light and heat	1,671	1,727
Telephone	3,219	3,258
Payroll bureau	895	719
Computer and website costs	5,845	3,189
Equipment hire	2,555	2,451
Postage and stationery	1,481	3,895
Repairs and renewals	83	500
Marketing	1,834	5,321
Insurance	1,023	1,058
Room hire and events	—	1,878
Depreciation	1,799	2,887
Trustees' expenses	435	1,047
Sundry expenses	303	431
Legal and professional fees	384	—
Independent examination fee	1,400	1,296
	<u>36,519</u>	<u>43,432</u>

8. Net income/(expenditure)

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

	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>1,799</u>	<u>2,887</u>

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Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

9. Staff costs

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

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	129,445	118,888
Social security costs	5,763	5,652
Pension costs	3,779	3,192
Other employee benefits	—	1,623
	<u>138,987</u>	<u>129,355</u>

10. Trustee remuneration and expenses

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. The trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2020: £Nil). The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions) received by senior management for their services to the charity was £49,927 (2020: £43,594).

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £	Office furniture £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2020	16,505	2,065	18,570
Additions	709	366	1,075
At 31 March 2021	<u>17,214</u>	<u>2,431</u>	<u>19,645</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2020	14,276	988	15,264
Charge for the year	1,191	608	1,799
At 31 March 2021	<u>15,467</u>	<u>1,596</u>	<u>17,063</u>
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2021	<u>1,747</u>	<u>835</u>	<u>2,582</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>2,229</u>	<u>1,077</u>	<u>3,306</u>

12. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Prepayments and accrued income	4,763	7,654
Other debtors	—	315
	<u>4,763</u>	<u>7,969</u>

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,382	487
Accruals and deferred income	30,683	1,435
Other creditors	2,148	—
	<u>34,213</u>	<u>1,922</u>

14. Deferred income

	2021	2020
	£	£
Amount deferred in year	<u>29,333</u>	<u>—</u>

15. Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £3,779 (2020: £3,192).

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

16. Analysis of charitable funds

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2021 £
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	4,690	—	—	—	4,690
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	746	—	—	—	746
COVID work for SUF					
members	—	20,000	(20,000)	—	—
COVID work for shielded					
persons	—	53,591	(53,591)	—	—
Healthy Together	—	15,667	(15,667)	—	—
	<u>5,436</u>	<u>89,258</u>	<u>(89,258)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>5,436</u>
	At 1 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2020 £
Mental Health Service					
User expenses	5,449	—	(759)	—	4,690
Life Stories booklets	150	—	(150)	—	—
Transformation funding	2,235	37,916	(40,151)	—	—
Suffolk Community					
Foundation	—	993	(993)	—	—
Public Health Q1 Project	—	941	(941)	—	—
SCC Waveney Peer					
Support	—	2,000	(1,254)	—	746
	<u>7,834</u>	<u>41,850</u>	<u>(44,248)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>5,436</u>

The Mental Health Services User expenses - is funded by the Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group; West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Suffolk County Council, through the Suffolk Mental Health Pooled Fund, SUF have agreed to hold and administer an amount of now less than £5,000 on behalf of Suffolk County Council.

SCC Waveney Peer Support was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

COVID work for SUF members was funded by Suffolk County Council to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

COVID work for shielded persons was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Healthy Together was funded by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and NHS West Suffolk CCG to support a restricted project in line with the objectives of SUF.

Suffolk User Forum

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the financial statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

17. Analysis of net assets between funds

As at 31 March 2021

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,582	–	2,582
Net current assets	151,738	5,436	157,174
Net Assets	<u>154,320</u>	<u>5,436</u>	<u>159,756</u>

As at 31 March 2020

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Tangible fixed assets	3,306	–	3,306
Net current assets	109,364	5,436	114,800
Net Assets	<u>112,670</u>	<u>5,436</u>	<u>118,106</u>

18. Operating lease commitments

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

	2021 £	2020 £
Not later than 1 year	12,529	12,046
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	<u>2,915</u>	<u>711</u>
	<u>15,444</u>	<u>12,757</u>

19. Related parties

Travel expenses were paid during in the period amounting to £368 (2020: £811), with none of the Trustees being paid expenses as users. There were no other related party transactions in the year.