



Marches Counselling Service

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

Trustees Introduction

This will be the last year we set out our annual report in this format. 24-25 will see the results of our lottery funding and the development work planned this year, which includes updating our branding, publicity materials and website.

Recognising the challenges of the economic climate, particularly for small charities such as our own, we have put a lot of time and energy into the work of becoming more sustainable. Successful in the first round of Reaching Communities Lottery Fund, we have worked hard this year towards the promise of three year's funding which could provide a secure period when we might make changes to the organization; to both reach out to the more disadvantaged and build a structure to support working with them at this time.

We are pleased that the energy put into this has not been detrimental to our overall performance. Indeed, this past year has seen an increase in referrals and client sessions which outstripped our expectations. This is both positive in the context of achieving our charitable objectives, but also negative in increasing the pressure for core funding to support the work. However, we now have a new Development Officer in place who has been working hard to help us achieve success in both broadening and strengthening our income streams.

This year we have continued with the implementation of our new client management system (CMS). It has yet to bed in and has involved far more work than anticipated for the admin staff. Although the best system we could find in providing the flexibility for the data we have and require, there is still a lot of work involved in making it fit for purpose. The ideal of automatic reporting of statistics is still some way off I am afraid, but those involved are hard at work to achieve this. Thanks in particular to Graham our Treasurer who is our main IT advisor in this field at present, and Carys, for all her hard work getting accurate statistics on the system back to 2018. No mean feat!

We are still involved with project work, piloting a telephone service for people over 50 who may be unable to access face to face counselling and looking into the possibility of providing art workshops for our refugee community in Herefordshire as part of the support being offered to them through the City of Sanctuary initiatives. The proposed work with asylum seekers became irrelevant with their removal from the centers in Hereford.

Despite the challenges there are also opportunities as concerns for mental health within our largely rural and often isolated community continue to grow.

OUR SERVICE

"I found the counselling really beneficial. I was respected for who I am, with no judgement. We had mutual respect for each other, which built a therapeutic and professional relationship. Thank you to the admin support for the non-judgmental and accommodating approach. It's hard to make that first phone call to ask for support and admin instantly made me feel at ease."

"Having reached a point where my understanding of the issues affecting me, the road ahead looks clearer. So I now feel positive about reaching a positive conclusion. But it does provide a degree of reassurance knowing that a return is possible."

"I want to thank you for helping me climb out of a very deep hole that has lasted many years. I now feel more able to deal with the remaining problem I have."

"I loved speaking with my counsellor every week. She made opening up easy and no issue felt too small. Personally I've noticed my life completely change and I believe in myself, that I am a good person. I also have so much more empathy for others which is life changing. My relationships are healed, especially with my Mum which I had given up on before. I recommend MCS to anyone struggling if they are open to changing their life. Thank you so much."

"I have really valued my time at MCS and would highly recommend this service to those who are also struggling mentally and financially."

"My counsellor has significantly helped me over the last few years to overcome some very traumatic experiences and has also more recently been leading me onto a journey of self-reflection towards my true authenticity and a higher awareness of my subconscious triggers. I highly recommend her as a counsellor to anyone, she really listens and cares, she is empathetic to the core but also is so skilled to know when to bring challenge. She has restored peace back into my world and has been my consistent safe place each week. Counselling has changed my life in such a positive way and I also thank Marches for that being compassionate to each person's financial position. My counsellor has driven me to work hard on myself and look at things differently and I want to highly recommend her and thank her for walking my journey with me."

"I have suggested your services to colleagues and patients. I am very grateful for not being pressured on time frames as I have experienced with other counselling services."

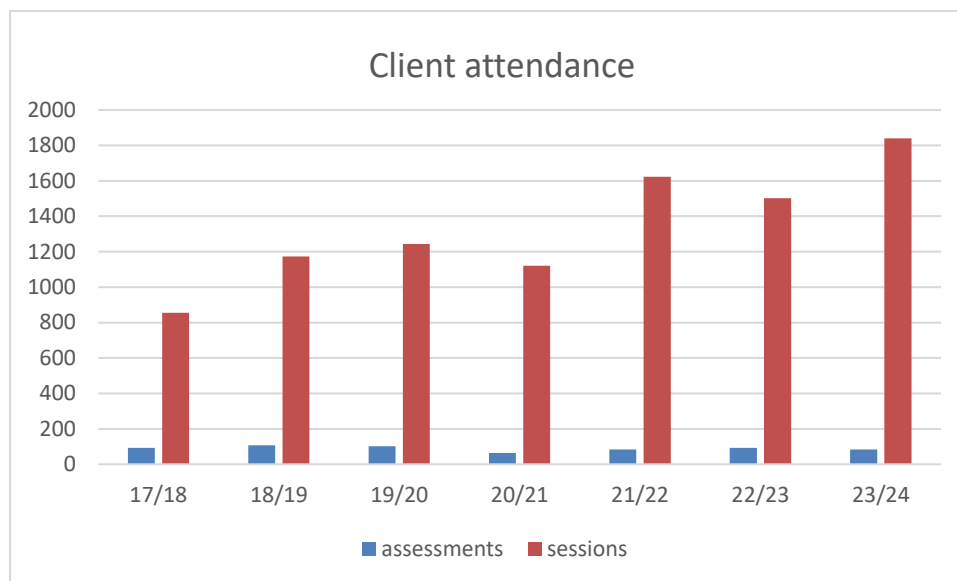
"My time in counselling has been completely rewarding for me. I feel lighter, empowered and confident in my abilities moving forward to engage in life fully. I have learned to look at myself more kindly and feel many of the internalised traumas that were weighing me down have been talked through, seen, heard and lifted. Counselling has been life changing for me and I am very, very grateful to have been given the space to be so honest and open about my life without judgement, but listened to and asked the questions I needed to be asked. Thank you!"

Client Management System

This year has seen the transfer of data to the new CMS back to 2018, however it has yet to provide us with the historical perspective and understanding of trends we require, as generating reports other than those provided by the system itself has proved quite challenging. Despite assurances that the system would be flexible, the way in which it is set up was not conducive to the amount of data and level of information we are dealing with.

Client profiles and fees

Over the year we engaged with 83 clients and provided 1839 sessions of therapy.



The number of client contacts has risen again from previous years, but over 90% of those seen were subsidised in order to attend the sessions, which, if we include development initiatives over the past year, cost us £67 a session to provide. The piloting of an increased full fee for counselling to £65 this year does not appear to have deterred many as we are clear that this is negotiable. For the time being we will retain this, although with increasing workload it has underlined the importance of grant funding. We have to acknowledge that this is a time when there is increased competition for reduced assets, so it has also reinforced our strategic plan to broaden our funding streams. On a positive note, we have been able to sustain the income from gift aid despite a decrease in the percentage of people in employment.

During the year we completed a piece of work to develop our service for people with long term physical health conditions. Initially aimed at establishing a psychotherapeutic group for people experiencing Long Covid, we subsequently broadened it out to enable us to offer counselling and psychotherapy to a much wider group of people whose physical health conditions were affecting their mental health, or who were coping with a change in their life arising from a diagnosis. This work was funded by the EF Bulmer Trust and the Eveson Trust. It has enabled us to promote our services to the many organisations in Herefordshire which support people living with health conditions. Some of the findings from this piece of work are below.

The impact of Long Covid

Early in the Covid19 pandemic official guidance made a distinction between those with mild illness and those where it was severe enough to require hospitalisation. The typical recovery time for those with mild illness was said to be around two weeks, but media attention was focused on the large number of deaths in those with a severe infection. Being a previously unknown illness it was a while before patients worldwide started to report long-lasting symptoms, even after a mild infection. The term long-covid was reportedly first used in May 2020, and experiences shared online filled a gap in knowledge in how the media talked about the pandemic.

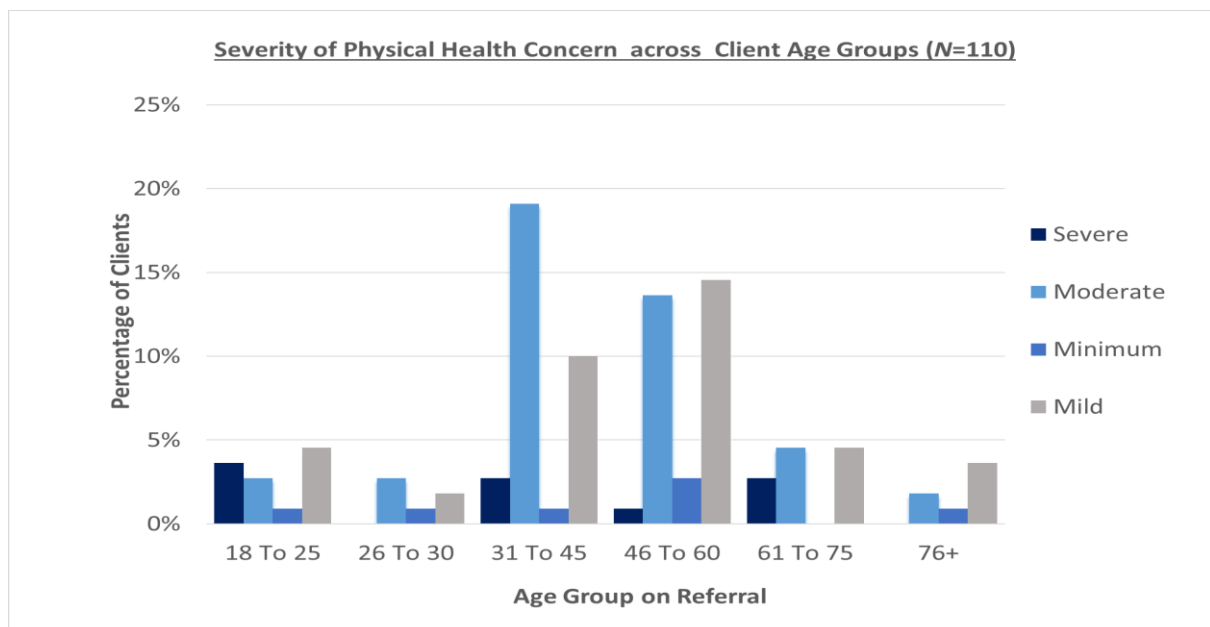
Many people with long COVID reported experiencing difficulty accessing appropriate healthcare, particularly while face-to-face services were restricted by lockdown and subsequent health and safety precautions. In addition, people reported being misdiagnosed with anxiety or depression.

It is now recognised that long-covid can cause many additional issues as well as anxiety, and can severely impact people's ability to work. The Institute for Fiscal Studies studied labour impacts of long-covid in the UK in 2021. They concluded that of people who worked before contracting long-covid, one in ten had stopped working. Most of them were on sick leave rather than unemployed.

As well as exploring the possibility of groupwork for people experiencing long-covid, the pandemic prompted us to examine the overall relationship between mental health and physical health in our clients.

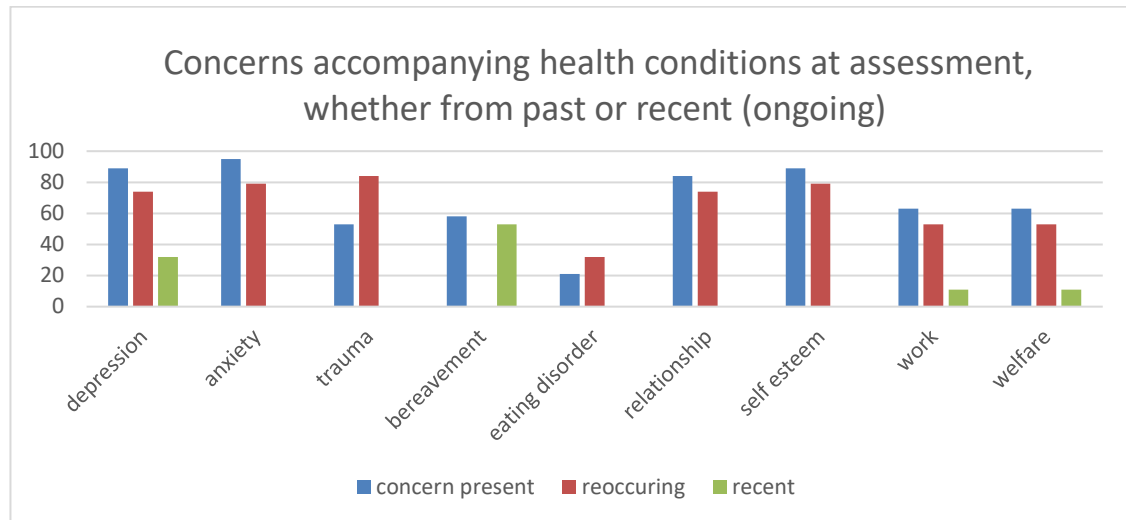
Relationship between physical and mental health

Below is some initial analysis of data from clients with long term health conditions who have attended our service. By looking at the accompanying mental health concerns at assessment, we can understand more about the profile of these clients. This has underlined our awareness that many of those coming to us from our publicity and receiving assessment, present in quite complex situations.

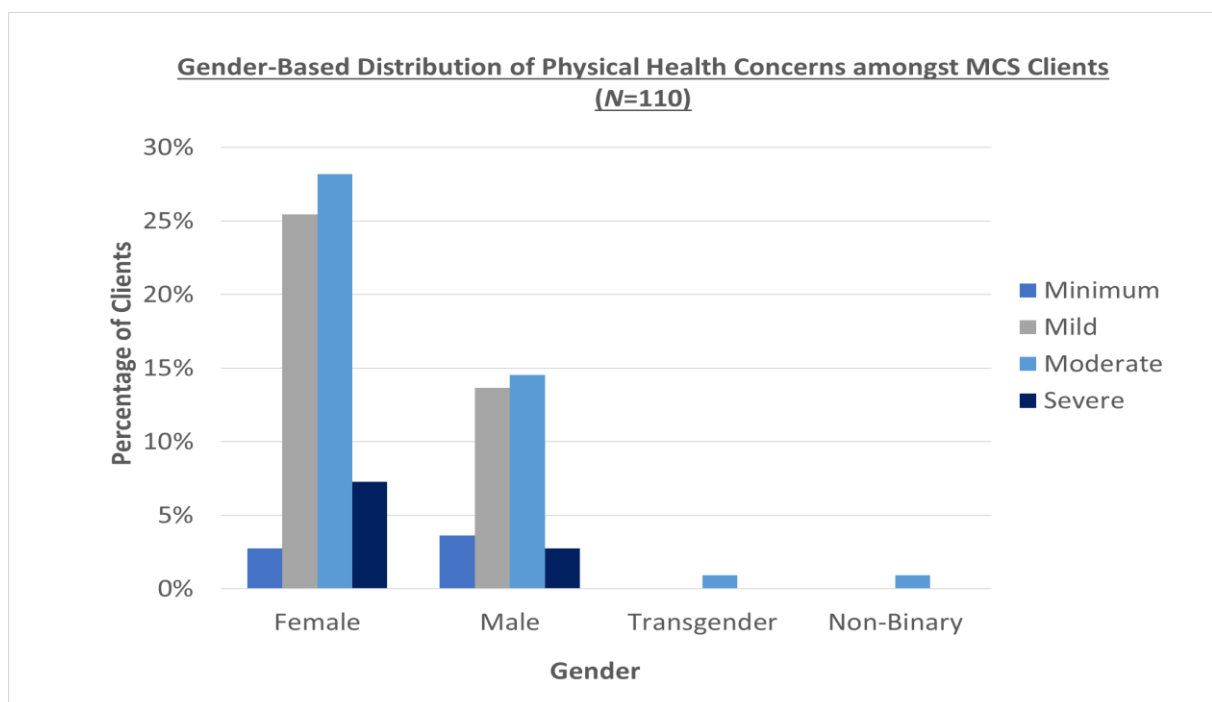


We have data on outcome from those who have been discharged, but by the nature of these conditions, many (over 50%) are still working with us.

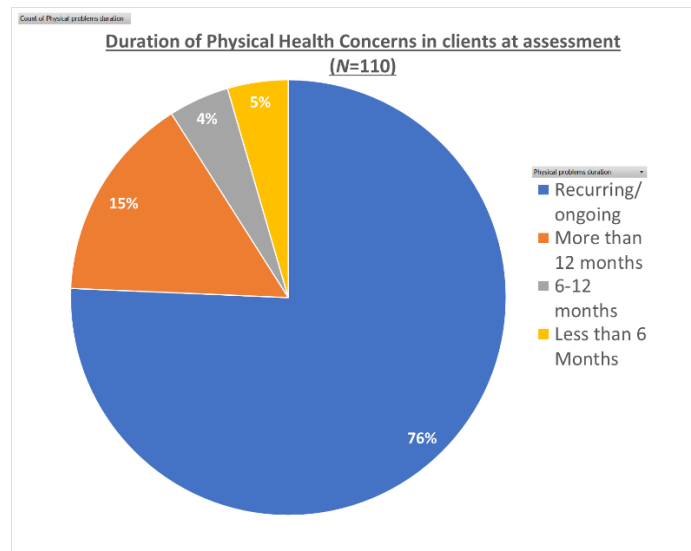
The chart below shows the range of concerns involved in clients whose therapy is still on-going. Some of the concerns, such as bereavement, were recent, but many were of long-standing. The complexity of the presentations indicated the need for individual work before someone would be able to utilise either short term group work for the management of their physical health, or longer term group psychotherapy.



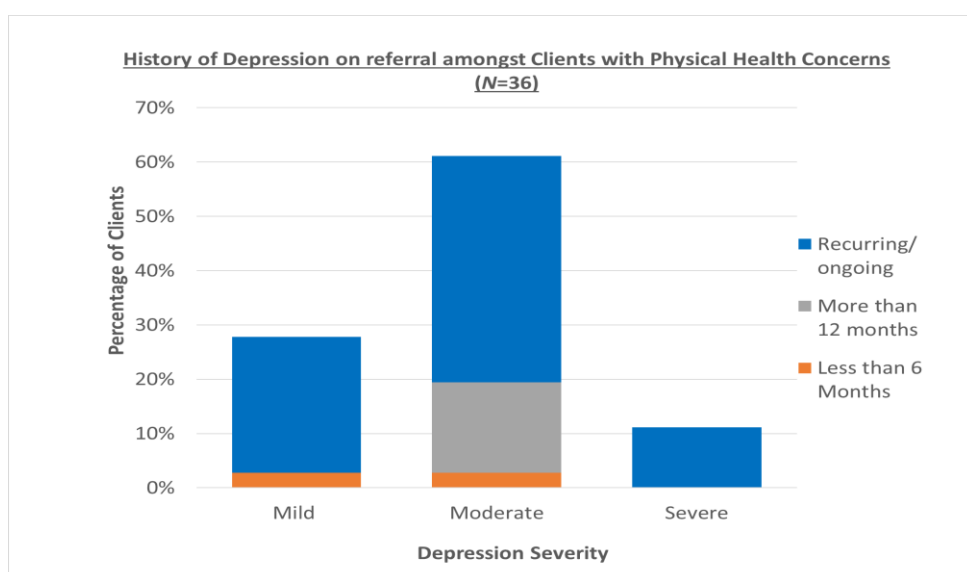
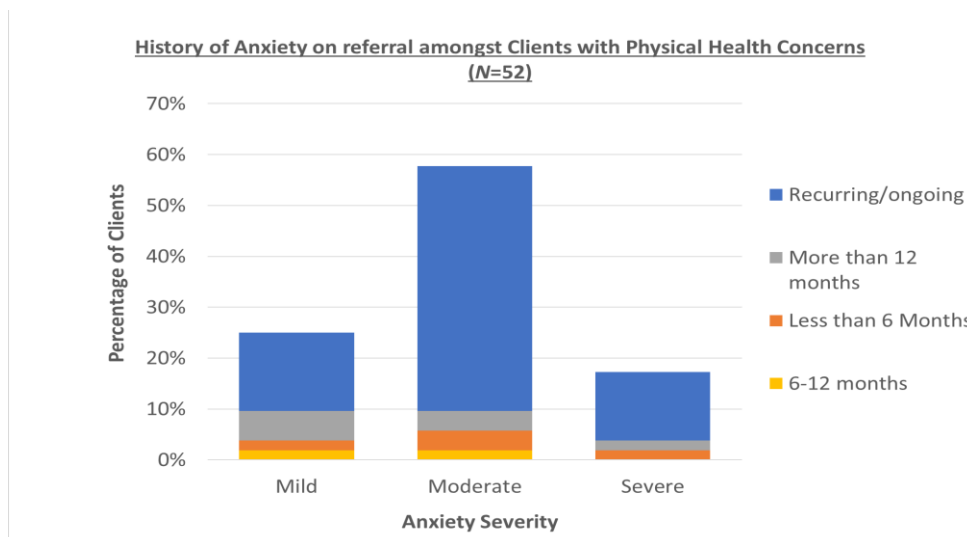
Physical health concerns appear more prominent in women than in men. There may be many reasons for this. To some extent it could reflect more reluctance on the part of men to acknowledge concerns; we might also hypothesise that once identified, men are more likely to seek medical attention; or perhaps that, with the stress of childbirth and menopause, women have more pressures which lead to a conflation of physical and mental health issues.



It is interesting that where there are concerns, over 75% are reoccurring. This supports the well-established research evidence for links between mental and physical health.



In particular, we see that the most common mental health issues dealt with in primary care, those of anxiety and depression, are prominent here.



Looking forward

One thing remains clear since covid, that there are still difficult times ahead. We have been fortunate in securing a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund for the next three years. This gives us a secure base upon which to build. We have a programme to reach out more into the rural areas through community hubs and are looking at how we can improve working conditions for those staff who give generously of their time.

Although we recognized that the support will not go on indefinitely, three years will hopefully see us able to strengthen our funding position, at the same time as being able to reach out to the more disadvantaged with an adequately resourced professional service. There will always be challenges, that is the nature of life and what we do, but extending our reach will enable us to help people become more resilient as they meet the challenges that the future will bring.

HOW TO CONTACT US

At MCS we welcome input from any interested people. This can be achieved formally by becoming a member of the organisation or a volunteer, or informally through contacting us via email at admin@marchescounselling.org and/or through a phone call: 01432 279906.

Charity number: 1140780
Company number: 07471763
(England and Wales)

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees and Unaudited Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Contents Page
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Report of the Trustees	1 to 3
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees	4
Statement of Financial Activities	5
Statement of Financial Position	6
Notes to the Financial Statements	7 to 11
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	12 to 13

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees
For the year ended 31 March 2024

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

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The relief of those in Herefordshire and the Marches who, because of mental or physical health, social or economic circumstances, or disability, are suffering from psychological distress and/or disorder through:

- a) the provision of a locally based, confidential, reliable and affordable counselling and psychotherapy service, with a fast and smooth transition from referral to assessment and allocated counsellor;
- b) the provision of a sign-posting service to local agencies, statutory, voluntary or private, for those who come for assessment but for whom counselling is inappropriate;
- c) the provision of a supportive and educative working environment for counsellors to raise and maintain professional standards and thereby benefit the recipients of therapy; and
- d) to further benefit the well-being of those needing psychological support through working against the stigma of mental illness and distress by education and raising awareness within the general public.

Statement on public benefit

Our core service is to offer counselling to those most in need including those who are unable to afford the full session fee which is set at cost to us. We have a concessionary fund to enable us to continue this activity. It also funds additional sessions for those who have begun counselling with us, but whose circumstances suddenly change, so that we may be able to bring our work with them to a satisfactory conclusion.

The trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

Social investments

We believe that the individuals who consult with us are usually empowered to contribute more effectively to their families, workplace, and community. This is our contribution to social investment.

Grantmaking

Although we are not a charity which makes grants available to individuals or groups, we have a concessionary fund which helps pay for counselling sessions for people on low incomes.

Volunteers

Many of the people working with us do so on a voluntary basis. Our service would be impossible to sustain without them.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This year has continued to be one of economic stress for many within the local community as well as nationally. Concerns around health have increased for many, as services struggle to manage increased pressures and the impact of long-covid continues to be felt.

The appointment of a Development Officer, initially from reserves, has given us the resources necessary to look at the sustainability of the service over the next few years. We recognised that the need for a subsidised service was likely to rise rather than fall, and that we would have to address issues of strengthening and widening our funding streams.

Of the 1,839 sessions of therapy we provided this year for 156 clients, only 17% were unsubsidised leaving us with a shortfall of £48,802, an average of £32 per session. This is a larger amount than anticipated, but our work this year has resulted in obtaining funding to support on-going costs from The Reaching Communities Fund for the next three years. This will provide us with a more secure base from which to build.

Most important in attracting clients has been our continued ability to see people promptly once they have contacted us, in contrast to the statutory services locally. As demand increases we will continue to appoint new staff to allow us to offer most clients a start date within days rather than months and to match their therapy to their needs. It is vital that people are able to access support at the right time for them. The average number of sessions was 12, the range was from 1 to 35 over the year.

"Very insightful, reflective and objective at a critical time for me personally. The counsellor was excellent."

"I would like to use this opportunity to thank the counsellor for all her patience, kindness and skill to listen and support me during a very difficult time in my life. I wish her all the best! I would also like to thank Marches for facilitating the counselling sessions for me."

Alongside directly benefitting the client, our work has many indirect consequences dependent upon their situation. This is of particular importance as social and environmental pressures upon many families have increased. Appropriate and timely counselling can help break the cycle of deprivation created by adverse childhood experiences which have a lifelong impact.

"She was an amazing counsellor and a great listener who helped me work and think through difficult experiences in my life. Thanks so much."

As well as affecting immediate family and friends, after therapy many clients are more able to function well in workplace and community. To this end we have been developing our relationship with small local businesses who refer their staff through to us when troubled.

"Having spoken to one member of staff recently who used Marches Counselling several years ago I asked if there was any feedback they could give me. The response was 'at the time of my counselling sessions I never realised what I was gaining and wondered if it was worth it, however, I now know retrospectively that it was a vital part of helping me move forward in my life.'"

With the stigma of mental health issues lessening, we are seeing a shift in the location of disturbance from the individual to the social, and indeed the political. More people are acknowledging struggles which have been exacerbated by the economic situation. This has made many aware of the degree to which things in their life were already outside of their control. Re-establishing some sense of control can be empowering, but this often needs to be balanced by the reality of what we can control and what we cannot. As an organisation which puts the individual at the centre of its work and celebrates individual difference, we can often help clients achieve the right balance for them, something which many of the 'apps' and manualised programmes now available through the internet cannot achieve.

"My counsellor has been brilliant and an absolute credit to the team at Marches. He has helped me over 3 years to really frame things differently and helped me learn how to open up and talk to people. It helps having the right counsellor for the right person and I thank you so much for that. You have helped, which will very much benefit for not just the short term but the long term and way into my future."

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Following the resignation of the person initially appointed as our Development Officer, we have been fortunate in a further appointment. Although initially funded from our reserves, we have been able to develop the role through this year's grant applications.

There is a constant search for external funding, which we recognise will be on-going. Grant giving bodies, as well as being overwhelmed by applications, are often impacted themselves by the economic climate with less resources at their disposal.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Reserves

We are aware that our reserves, built up previously, continue to be compromised by the on-going financial situation. Realistically it is unlikely that the situation will resolve other than slowly and intermittently over the next few years. We have thus continued to spend time in developing the strategic planning which can sustain the service as we go forward and have been aided in this by the appointment of the Development Officer and a new Trustee with management experience.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

Marches Counselling Service is a charity formed on 16 December 2010, limited by guarantee and governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

People believing in the organisation's ethos and having skills to offer may apply to become trustees. Potential trustees are initially co-opted onto the board to check that they can work effectively.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Name of Charity	Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Charity registration number	1140780
Company registration number	07471763
Principal address	57 St Owen Street Hereford HR1 2JQ

Trustees

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Jennifer French
Lorraine Slane
Elizabeth Lloyd
Frankie Farrell
Marc Leppard
(Resigned: 17 October 2023)
Graham Thomas
Tina Abbott

Independent examiners

Cole Bishop & Co
Market Square Chambers
Bromyard
Herefordshire
HR7 4BP

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by


.....
Jennifer French

16 August 2024

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees
For the year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity Trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts 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 charity's accounts 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 examiners 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 accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the 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 accounts 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.



Cole Bishop & Co
Market Square Chambers
Bromyard
Herefordshire
HR7 4BP

16 August 2024

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	2023 £
Income and endowments from:			
Donations and legacies	2	12,712	9,488
Charitable activities	3	86,475	70,219
Other trading activities	4	1,242	1,286
Investments	5	269	65
Total		100,698	81,058
Expenditure on:			
Charitable activities	6	(102,188)	(91,869)
Total		(102,188)	(91,869)
Net expenditure		(1,490)	(10,811)
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward		86,057	96,868
Total funds carried forward		84,567	86,057

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Statement of Financial Position
As at 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	910	1,213
		910	1,213
Current assets			
Debtors	10	3,262	1,931
Cash at bank and in hand		84,574	88,891
		87,836	90,822
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(4,179)	(5,978)
Net current assets		83,657	84,844
Total assets less current liabilities		84,567	86,057
Net assets		84,567	86,057
The funds of the charity			
Unrestricted income funds	12	84,567	86,057
Total funds		84,567	86,057

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

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,
- The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board and signed on its behalf by:


 Jennifer French
 Trustee

16 August 2024

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for investments which are included at market value and the revaluation of certain fixed assets and in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), and the Companies Act 2006.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost or valuation less depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following basis:

Equipment	25% Reducing balance
-----------	----------------------

2. Income from donations and legacies

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Donations received	25	1,259
Grants received	12,687	8,229
	12,712	9,488

3. Income from charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
<i>Counselling and supervision</i>		
Counselling fees	78,619	64,241
Supervision fees	7,856	5,978
	86,475	70,219
	86,475	70,219

4. Income earned from other activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Room hire and sundry income	1,242	1,286
	1,242	1,286

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

5. Investment income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Bank interest receivable	269	65
	269	65

6. Costs of charitable activities by fund type

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Counselling and supervision	40,770	37,929
Support costs	61,418	53,940
	102,188	91,869

7. Net income/(expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation of owned fixed assets	303	405

8. Comparative for the Statement of Financial Activities

The comparative year values on the Statement of Financial Activities are for unrestricted funds.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

9. Tangible fixed assets

Cost or valuation	Plant and Machinery £
At 01 April 2023	3,201
At 31 March 2024	3,201
Depreciation	
At 01 April 2023	2,291
At 31 March 2024	2,291
Net book values	
At 31 March 2024	910
At 31 March 2023	910

10. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts due within one year:		
Trade debtors	1,022	115
Other debtors	2,240	1,816
	3,262	1,931

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	2,579	4,534
Other creditors	700	700
Accruals and deferred income	900	744
	4,179	5,978

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

12. Movement in funds

Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 01/04/2023	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Transfers	Balance at 31/03/2024
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Designated</i>					
<i>General</i>					
Accumulated general funds	86,057	100,698	(102,188)	-	84,567
	86,057	100,698	(102,188)	-	84,567

Unrestricted Funds - Previous year

	Balance at 01/04/2022	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Transfers	Balance at 31/03/2023
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Designated</i>					
Nationwide deposit account	22,633	65	-	(22,698)	-
<i>General</i>					
Accumulated general funds	74,235	80,993	(91,869)	22,698	86,057
	96,868	81,058	(91,869)	-	86,057

Purpose of unrestricted Funds

Nationwide deposit account

The Nationwide deposit account was closed during the previous year and the balance transferred to the main bank account.

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Tangible fixed assets	Net current assets / (liabilities)	Net Assets
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
<i>General</i>			
Accumulated general funds	910	83,657	84,567
	910	83,657	84,567

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Previous year

	Tangible fixed assets	Net current assets / (liabilities)	Net Assets
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
<i>General</i>			
Accumulated general funds	1,213	84,844	86,057
	1,213	84,844	86,057

14. Company limited by guarantee

Marches Counselling Service Ltd is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENT		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	25	1,259
Grants receivable	12,687	8,229
	12,712	9,488
Charitable activities		
Counselling fees	78,619	64,241
Supervision fees	7,856	5,978
	86,475	70,219
Other trading activities		
Room hire and sundry income	1,242	1,286
	1,242	1,286
Investments		
Bank interest receivable	269	65
	269	65
Total incoming resources	100,698	81,058
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Assessment	(4,450)	(5,060)
Supervision	(8,143)	(8,893)
Counsellors' fees	(19,570)	(19,629)
Volunteers' payments (expenses only)	(8,607)	(4,347)
	(40,770)	(37,929)
SUPPORT COSTS		
Establishment costs		
Rent	(9,109)	(9,060)
Lighting and heating	(1,565)	(4,968)
Repairs and renewals	-	(25)
	(10,674)	(14,053)
Administrative costs		
Administration	(39,708)	(28,449)
Clinical management	(4,273)	(5,043)
Recruitment and training costs	-	(364)
Public liability insurance	(100)	(100)
Subscriptions	(939)	(916)
Credit card charges	(344)	(33)
	(45,364)	(34,905)

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Communications and IT		
Telephone and internet	(1,371)	(1,065)
I.T. and software costs	(2,330)	(2,288)
	(3,701)	(3,353)
Accountancy fees		
Accountancy fees	(900)	(744)
	(900)	(744)
Other office costs		
Depreciation - owned assets	(303)	(405)
Postage and stationery	(379)	(379)
General expenses	(97)	(101)
	(779)	(885)
Total resources expended	(102,188)	(91,869)
Net Expenditure	(1,490)	(10,811)

Charity number: 1140780

Company number: 07471763

(England and Wales)

Marches Counselling Service Ltd

Report of the Trustees and Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Contents Page
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Report of the Trustees	1 to 3
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees	4
Statement of Financial Activities	5
Statement of Financial Position	6
Notes to the Financial Statements	7 to 11
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	12 to 13

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees
For the year ended 31 March 2024

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

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The relief of those in Herefordshire and the Marches who, because of mental or physical health, social or economic circumstances, or disability, are suffering from psychological distress and/or disorder through:

- a) the provision of a locally based, confidential, reliable and affordable counselling and psychotherapy service, with a fast and smooth transition from referral to assessment and allocated counsellor;
- b) the provision of a sign-posting service to local agencies, statutory, voluntary or private, for those who come for assessment but for whom counselling is inappropriate;
- c) the provision of a supportive and educative working environment for counsellors to raise and maintain professional standards and thereby benefit the recipients of therapy; and
- d) to further benefit the well-being of those needing psychological support through working against the stigma of mental illness and distress by education and raising awareness within the general public.

Statement on public benefit

Our core service is to offer counselling to those most in need including those who are unable to afford the full session fee which is set at cost to us. We have a concessionary fund to enable us to continue this activity. It also funds additional sessions for those who have begun counselling with us, but whose circumstances suddenly change, so that we may be able to bring our work with them to a satisfactory conclusion.

The trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

Social investments

We believe that the individuals who consult with us are usually empowered to contribute more effectively to their families, workplace, and community. This is our contribution to social investment.

Grantmaking

Although we are not a charity which makes grants available to individuals or groups, we have a concessionary fund which helps pay for counselling sessions for people on low incomes.

Volunteers

Many of the people working with us do so on a voluntary basis. Our service would be impossible to sustain without them.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This year has continued to be one of economic stress for many within the local community as well as nationally. Concerns around health have increased for many, as services struggle to manage increased pressures and the impact of long-covid continues to be felt.

The appointment of a Development Officer, initially from reserves, has given us the resources necessary to look at the sustainability of the service over the next few years. We recognised that the need for a subsidised service was likely to rise rather than fall, and that we would have to address issues of strengthening and widening our funding streams.

Of the 1,839 sessions of therapy we provided this year for 156 clients, only 17% were unsubsidised leaving us with a shortfall of £48,802, an average of £32 per session. This is a larger amount than anticipated, but our work this year has resulted in obtaining funding to support on-going costs from The Reaching Communities Fund for the next three years. This will provide us with a more secure base from which to build.

Most important in attracting clients has been our continued ability to see people promptly once they have contacted us, in contrast to the statutory services locally. As demand increases we will continue to appoint new staff to allow us to offer most clients a start date within days rather than months and to match their therapy to their needs. It is vital that people are able to access support at the right time for them. The average number of sessions was 12, the range was from 1 to 35 over the year.

"Very insightful, reflective and objective at a critical time for me personally. The counsellor was excellent."

"I would like to use this opportunity to thank the counsellor for all her patience, kindness and skill to listen and support me during a very difficult time in my life. I wish her all the best! I would also like to thank Marches for facilitating the counselling sessions for me."

Alongside directly benefitting the client, our work has many indirect consequences dependent upon their situation. This is of particular importance as social and environmental pressures upon many families have increased. Appropriate and timely counselling can help break the cycle of deprivation created by adverse childhood experiences which have a lifelong impact.

"She was an amazing counsellor and a great listener who helped me work and think through difficult experiences in my life. Thanks so much."

As well as affecting immediate family and friends, after therapy many clients are more able to function well in workplace and community. To this end we have been developing our relationship with small local businesses who refer their staff through to us when troubled.

"Having spoken to one member of staff recently who used Marches Counselling several years ago I asked if there was any feedback they could give me. The response was 'at the time of my counselling sessions I never realised what I was gaining and wondered if it was worth it, however, I now know retrospectively that it was a vital part of helping me move forward in my life.'"

With the stigma of mental health issues lessening, we are seeing a shift in the location of disturbance from the individual to the social, and indeed the political. More people are acknowledging struggles which have been exacerbated by the economic situation. This has made many aware of the degree to which things in their life were already outside of their control. Re-establishing some sense of control can be empowering, but this often needs to be balanced by the reality of what we can control and what we cannot. As an organisation which puts the individual at the centre of its work and celebrates individual difference, we can often help clients achieve the right balance for them, something which many of the 'apps' and manualised programmes now available through the internet cannot achieve.

"My counsellor has been brilliant and an absolute credit to the team at Marches. He has helped me over 3 years to really frame things differently and helped me learn how to open up and talk to people. It helps having the right counsellor for the right person and I thank you so much for that. You have helped, which will very much benefit for not just the short term but the long term and way into my future."

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Following the resignation of the person initially appointed as our Development Officer, we have been fortunate in a further appointment. Although initially funded from our reserves, we have been able to develop the role through this year's grant applications.

There is a constant search for external funding, which we recognise will be on-going. Grant giving bodies, as well as being overwhelmed by applications, are often impacted themselves by the economic climate with less resources at their disposal.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Reserves

We are aware that our reserves, built up previously, continue to be compromised by the on-going financial situation. Realistically it is unlikely that the situation will resolve other than slowly and intermittently over the next few years. We have thus continued to spend time in developing the strategic planning which can sustain the service as we go forward and have been aided in this by the appointment of the Development Officer and a new Trustee with management experience.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

Marches Counselling Service is a charity formed on 16 December 2010, limited by guarantee and governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

People believing in the organisation's ethos and having skills to offer may apply to become trustees. Potential trustees are initially co-opted onto the board to check that they can work effectively.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Name of Charity	Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Charity registration number	1140780
Company registration number	07471763
Principal address	57 St Owen Street Hereford HR1 2JQ

Trustees

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Jennifer French
Lorraine Slane
Elizabeth Lloyd
Frankie Farrell
Marc Leppard
(Resigned: 17 October 2023)
Graham Thomas
Tina Abbott

Independent examiners

Cole Bishop & Co
Market Square Chambers
Bromyard
Herefordshire
HR7 4BP

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by


.....
Jennifer French

16 August 2024

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees
For the year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity Trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts 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 charity's accounts 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 examiners 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 accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the 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 accounts 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.



Cole Bishop & Co
Market Square Chambers
Bromyard
Herefordshire
HR7 4BP

16 August 2024

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	2023 £
Income and endowments from:			
Donations and legacies	2	12,712	9,488
Charitable activities	3	86,475	70,219
Other trading activities	4	1,242	1,286
Investments	5	269	65
Total		100,698	81,058
Expenditure on:			
Charitable activities	6	(102,188)	(91,869)
Total		(102,188)	(91,869)
Net expenditure		(1,490)	(10,811)
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward		86,057	96,868
Total funds carried forward		84,567	86,057

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Statement of Financial Position
As at 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	910	1,213
		910	1,213
Current assets			
Debtors	10	3,262	1,931
Cash at bank and in hand		84,574	88,891
		87,836	90,822
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(4,179)	(5,978)
Net current assets		83,657	84,844
Total assets less current liabilities		84,567	86,057
Net assets		84,567	86,057
The funds of the charity			
Unrestricted income funds	12	84,567	86,057
Total funds		84,567	86,057

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

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,
- The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board and signed on its behalf by:


 Jennifer French
 Trustee

16 August 2024

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for investments which are included at market value and the revaluation of certain fixed assets and in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), and the Companies Act 2006.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost or valuation less depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following basis:

Equipment	25% Reducing balance
-----------	----------------------

2. Income from donations and legacies

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Donations received	25	1,259
Grants received	12,687	8,229
	12,712	9,488

3. Income from charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
<i>Counselling and supervision</i>		
Counselling fees	78,619	64,241
Supervision fees	7,856	5,978
	86,475	70,219
	86,475	70,219

4. Income earned from other activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Room hire and sundry income	1,242	1,286
	1,242	1,286

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

5. Investment income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Bank interest receivable	269	65
	269	65

6. Costs of charitable activities by fund type

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Counselling and supervision	40,770	37,929
Support costs	61,418	53,940
	102,188	91,869

7. Net income/(expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation of owned fixed assets	303	405

8. Comparative for the Statement of Financial Activities

The comparative year values on the Statement of Financial Activities are for unrestricted funds.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

9. Tangible fixed assets

Cost or valuation	Plant and Machinery £
At 01 April 2023	3,201
At 31 March 2024	3,201
Depreciation	
At 01 April 2023	2,291
At 31 March 2024	2,291
Net book values	
At 31 March 2024	910
At 31 March 2023	910

10. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts due within one year:		
Trade debtors	1,022	115
Other debtors	2,240	1,816
	3,262	1,931

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	2,579	4,534
Other creditors	700	700
Accruals and deferred income	900	744
	4,179	5,978

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

12. Movement in funds

Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 01/04/2023	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Transfers	Balance at 31/03/2024
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Designated</i>					
<i>General</i>					
Accumulated general funds	86,057	100,698	(102,188)	-	84,567
	86,057	100,698	(102,188)	-	84,567

Unrestricted Funds - Previous year

	Balance at 01/04/2022	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Transfers	Balance at 31/03/2023
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Designated</i>					
Nationwide deposit account	22,633	65	-	(22,698)	-
<i>General</i>					
Accumulated general funds	74,235	80,993	(91,869)	22,698	86,057
	96,868	81,058	(91,869)	-	86,057

Purpose of unrestricted Funds

Nationwide deposit account

The Nationwide deposit account was closed during the previous year and the balance transferred to the main bank account.

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Tangible fixed assets	Net current assets / (liabilities)	Net Assets
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
<i>General</i>			
Accumulated general funds	910	83,657	84,567
	910	83,657	84,567

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Previous year

	Tangible fixed assets	Net current assets / (liabilities)	Net Assets
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
<i>General</i>			
Accumulated general funds	1,213	84,844	86,057
	1,213	84,844	86,057

14. Company limited by guarantee

Marches Counselling Service Ltd is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital.

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENT		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	25	1,259
Grants receivable	12,687	8,229
	12,712	9,488
Charitable activities		
Counselling fees	78,619	64,241
Supervision fees	7,856	5,978
	86,475	70,219
Other trading activities		
Room hire and sundry income	1,242	1,286
	1,242	1,286
Investments		
Bank interest receivable	269	65
	269	65
Total incoming resources	100,698	81,058
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Assessment	(4,450)	(5,060)
Supervision	(8,143)	(8,893)
Counsellors' fees	(19,570)	(19,629)
Volunteers' payments (expenses only)	(8,607)	(4,347)
	(40,770)	(37,929)
SUPPORT COSTS		
Establishment costs		
Rent	(9,109)	(9,060)
Lighting and heating	(1,565)	(4,968)
Repairs and renewals	-	(25)
	(10,674)	(14,053)
Administrative costs		
Administration	(39,708)	(28,449)
Clinical management	(4,273)	(5,043)
Recruitment and training costs	-	(364)
Public liability insurance	(100)	(100)
Subscriptions	(939)	(916)
Credit card charges	(344)	(33)
	(45,364)	(34,905)

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Communications and IT		
Telephone and internet	(1,371)	(1,065)
I.T. and software costs	(2,330)	(2,288)
	(3,701)	(3,353)
Accountancy fees		
Accountancy fees	(900)	(744)
	(900)	(744)
Other office costs		
Depreciation - owned assets	(303)	(405)
Postage and stationery	(379)	(379)
General expenses	(97)	(101)
	(779)	(885)
Total resources expended	(102,188)	(91,869)
Net Expenditure	(1,490)	(10,811)

