



ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025

Trustees Introduction

This year has been one of consolidation as we were successful in our application for a three year grant from the National Lottery Community Fund. It has given us a level of security in extending our work with the most disadvantaged at a time of economic stress for many, and an opportunity to concentrate on making the service more sustainable over the coming years rather than simply surviving.

Key to the sustainability of the service has always been our staff. Like most charities we have relied upon their goodwill and hard work. The grant, as well as providing us with the finance to employ the Development Officer, has also permitted the first full staff payment review since we began as a registered charity in 2010. The economic climate affects everyone and we knew it was vital to support the time and energy our counsellors and administration team put in with a remuneration more in keeping with the times.

We have been fortunate in continuing to attract new counsellors seeking clinical placement who give their time as volunteers, but the growth of our work has also necessitated the growth of our qualified clinical staff team. Increasing pressures in the mental health service locally has seen our client group continue grow and become more complex; for this we need experienced staff. That people stay with us after placement, despite a comparatively low remuneration, is testimony to the added value that our administrative and supervision structure offers. This year, for the duration of the lottery bid, we have committed to providing free supervision; a not inconsiderable cost that normally all counsellors have to support themselves in order to work. To us the additional protection our professional mandatory supervision offers both clients and staff is central to the success of the service.

The introduction of new IT systems this year has provided the administration team with additional challenges which we are aware they could well have done without. We are very grateful that they have shouldered the burden alongside their vital work as our first point of contact with clients.

We intend that the next year will build upon strengthened foundations and see the service developments we envisage come to fruition. As always we are responsive to the changing environment and seek new ways in which the skills our staff have to offer can benefit the community. Central to this will be bringing new life into the charity in the form of a Service Director role which will be instrumental in sustaining and developing the management of our growing organization.

CLIENT FEEDBACK ON OUR SERVICE THIS YEAR

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 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.

Well worth every minute - in time and in financial cost

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 nonjudgmental and accommodating approach. It's hard to make that first phone call to ask for support and admin instantly made me feel at ease.

Very professional counsellor who helped me talk openly as possible about my life, made me feel valued at the same time.

The support and understanding provided has been outstanding. I cannot thank you enough.

I very much appreciated my sessions with my counsellor. She was very kind and patient. I felt completely comfortable sharing my thoughts and feelings with her. She made me feel supported and cared about.

I'm very grateful for the support over the past few months. This has helped me hugely with in my life and also with family members. My counsellor is super at what he has done and doing.

Thank you for listening, understanding and helping me (and my Mum). I am very grateful.

I really didn't know what quite to expect from my counselling journey. My counsellor carefully led me along this bumpy (and sometimes difficult) path. Thank you. I hope to rejoin at somepoint.

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

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.

A huge thanks for all the support Marches have offered me. I'm so grateful. You matched me perfectly with my counsellor and I will miss our time together as it was so beneficial.

IT systems

Moving to 365

We were fortunate to receive funding from the Rowlands Trust to enable us to update our IT system. This has involved the replacing of computers too old to be changed to Windows 11 and moving from Microsoft Office suite of programmes to the online version of 365. Although, with the funding, we were able to bring in a local computer company to set things up for us, there have still been a number of challenges in getting all our staff onto the new systems. Our thanks to admin who have had to bear the bulk of the frustrations.

Client Management System

We have had a second year of bedding in the CMS and endeavoring to mold it to our various needs, but it continues to present admin with challenges not expected from a database. Making things more 'user friendly' can get in the way of flexibility it seems and the reporting function has yet to be of real benefit to us. Unfortunately, to achieve what we are looking for is going to involve further costs.

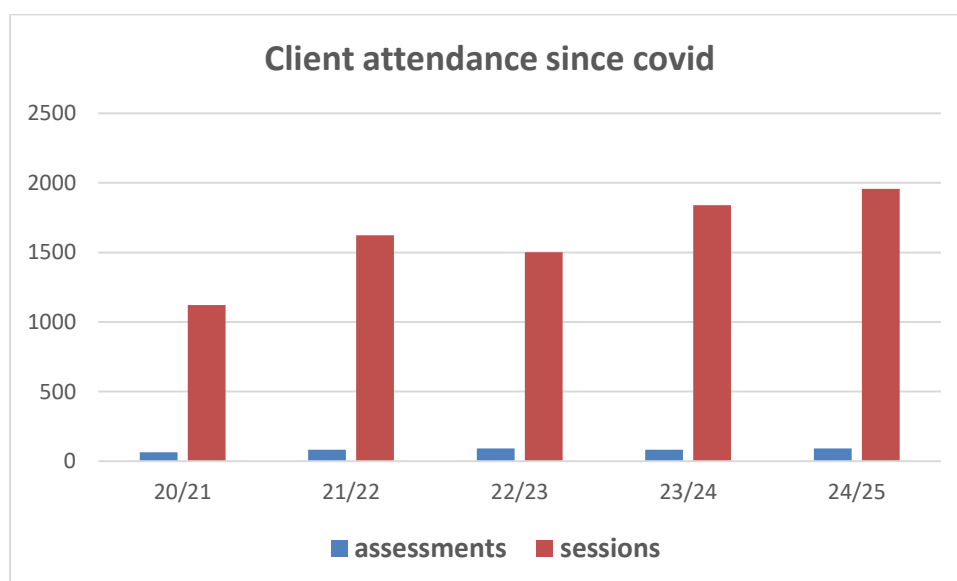
Communication and Training

More positively the generosity of our funders has allowed us to acquire a new screen for the training room so that hybrid working and training can take place more comfortably. We have begun to issue a staff newsletter to keep members up to date with changes; and in the summer vacation a sixth form student joined us on work experience. She spent time chatting to our counsellors and finding out about their work, whilst putting our library of books into a catalogue which will enable easier access for those who embrace the awareness that the therapy world is one of 'life-long learning'.

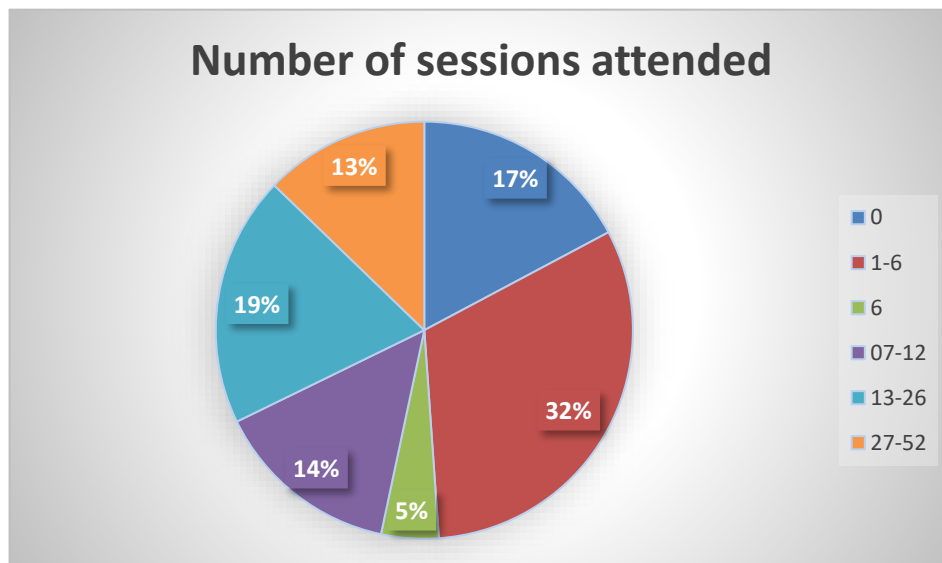
The Counselling Service

Client profiles and fees

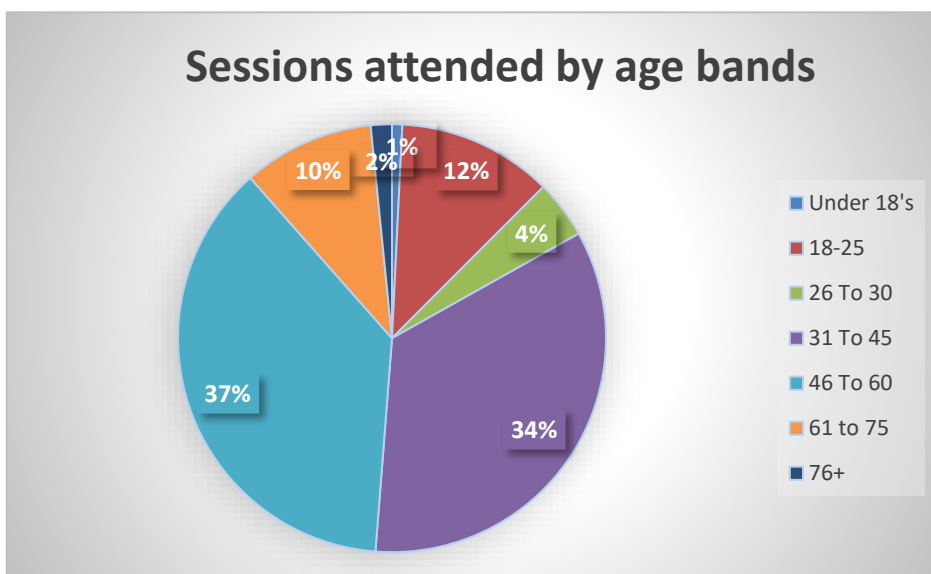
Over the year we engaged with 180 clients and provided 1956 sessions of therapy.



The number of client contacts has risen again from previous years, and we continue to see many clients staying with us to do the long term work necessary to make permanent changes.



We continue to do a good percentage of our work with the more difficult to reach groups, the over 60s (12%) and men (38%).



However, over 90% of those seen are being subsidised in order to attend the sessions, which, if we include core development initiatives over the past year, cost us £68.50 a session to provide. We have kept the full fee for those who can afford to pay at £65 per counselling hour. Part of the development work, subsidised by the TNL Community Fund, has been the provision of the 'package' deal to the most disadvantaged (see below). This has underlined the need for broadening and strengthening our funding streams in order to be able to sustain the initiative. It is thus we are particularly pleased with having retained the level of gift aid despite an increase in those needing subsidy.

Reaching Out – Bromyard

Our move back into the market towns after covid has seen us develop an outpost in the centre of Bromyard. We have been welcomed by Halo and decorated and furnished a small room at their leisure centre within which to see our clients. This was opened in December 2024 in the presence of the local mayor and MP.



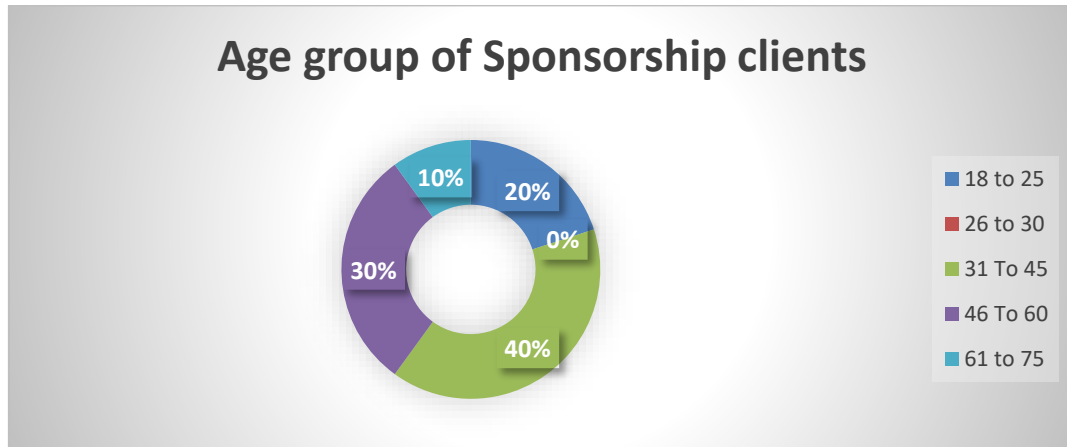
Sponsorship Clients

One aspect of the funding achieved through TNL Community Fund was our plan to reach out to people on low incomes, struggling with their mental health, where another organization was unable to provide the in depth work needed. This involves setting up partnerships, each organization working with their own skills for the well-being of the persons concerned. This year has seen the project piloted with The Cartshed, a well-established charity who initially worked with veterans offering the benefits of being in nature and now supports people more widely. Referral pathways and criteria were established and improved as the project went on.

The initial package offered clients the opportunity of an assessment appointment to check that they were appropriate for the service, able to engage, and up to six sessions of therapy. The full cost of this to the service, which has always been not-for-profit, is £455. Although the service is designed for people with very little disposable income, the client was asked to pay £30 as a contribution and to underline their commitment to the work involved. It is well known to services which offer free counselling (such as the NHS) that there will be a large number of drop-outs, moreover payment for the service offers the client more sense of control of what might be offered. Part of the pilot project is the review of the payment system.

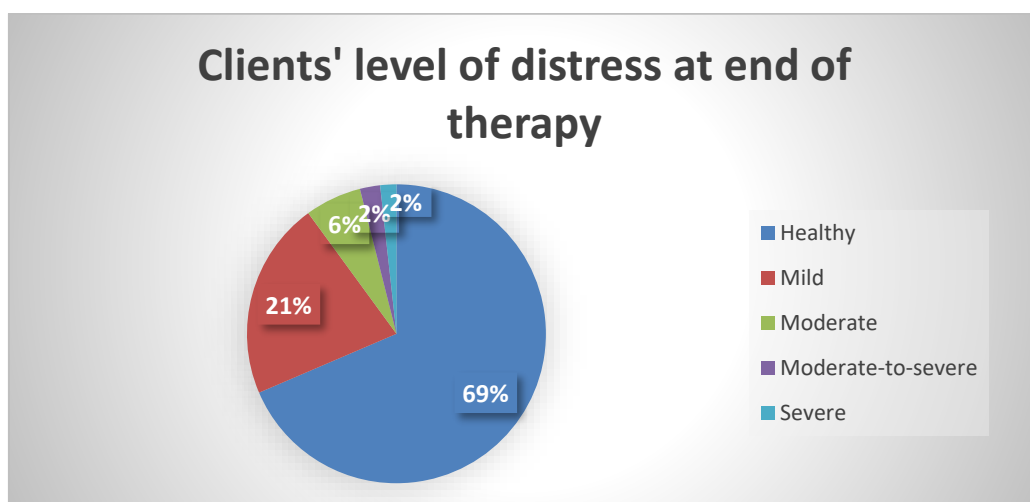
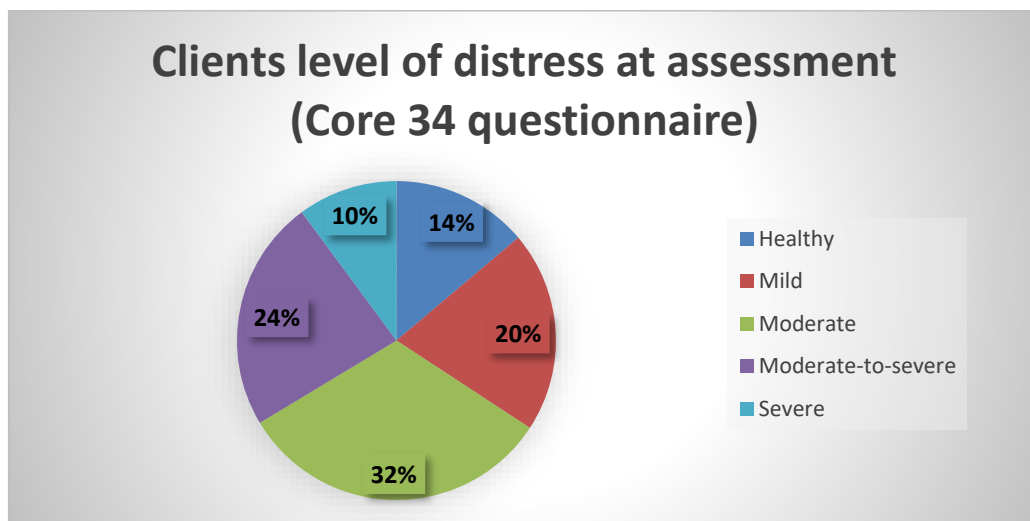
10 clients have been involved in 111 sessions to date. It is interesting that this average number of sessions correlates with our client population as a whole, which suggests that we have found a level of payment which can work for this very disadvantaged group. Where a client continues beyond the six sessions with their counsellor, they are asked to contribute £5 per session towards the cost. Where we are unusual is that we see each client as an individual and assess their personal circumstances rather than operate a single system which then has to fit all. The in-house group supervision which our counsellors are given ensures that each client is treated fairly in the context of their personal circumstances.

The chart below indicates that there is range of people being reached in this initiative.



Outcomes

As well as the comments from clients feedback provided at the beginning of this report, we continue to use CORE34 as an outcome measure. Our success is illustrated below.



Looking forward

We are grateful to the TNL Community Fund in providing us with the security of a three year grant to review the service and make long term plans to allow both for sustainability and the succession planning necessary for a service which will have been here for 15 years in 2026. This year has seen both the consolidation of the Development Officer role and the planning for a Service Director to take over the management of the administration for a growing organisation as the Clinical Director steps back from management. Our advertising for the latter resulted in a number of enquiries from suitably qualified people and the eventual offer of the post to someone experienced in management within third sector organisations as well as familiar with the therapy world. We are looking forward to her taking up the post in September, and anticipate that her previous knowledge and experience of our service, plus an initial period of induction in June, will result in her quickly being able to contribute to the strategic planning needed.

Alongside staff changes, this next year should see the continuation of the two programmes initiated this year, the support of the most disadvantaged through the package deals with partner organizations, and the establishment of more hubs in the market towns, In addition we are looking to strengthen our links with the business world, and reach out with the offer of supervision and training for other organisations whose staff are coping with clients with mental health challenges without the specific background or training to prevent vicarious traumatization and burnout.

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 2025

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
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For the year ended 31 March 2025

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Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees
For the year ended 31 March 2025

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 2025. 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 2025

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This year has been one of consolidation as we were successful in our application for a three year grant from the National Lottery Community Fund. It has given us a level of security in extending our work with the most disadvantaged at a time of economic stress for many, and an opportunity to concentrate on making the service more sustainable over the coming years rather than simply surviving.

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We have been fortunate in continuing to attract new counsellors seeking clinical placement who give their time as volunteers, but the growth of our work has also necessitated the growth of our qualified clinical staff team. Increasing pressures in the mental health service locally has seen our client group continue to grow and become more complex; for this we need experienced staff. That people stay with us after placement, despite a comparatively low remuneration, is testimony to the added value that our administrative and supervision structure offers. This year, for the duration of the lottery bid, we have committed to providing free supervision; a not inconsiderable cost that normally all counsellors have to support themselves in order to work. To us the additional protection our professional mandatory supervision offers both clients and staff is central to the success of the service.

The introduction of new IT systems this year has provided the administration team with additional challenges which we are aware they could well have done without. We are very grateful that they have shouldered the burden alongside their vital work as our first point of contact with clients.

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Examples of client feedback on our service this year

"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 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."

"Well worth every minute - in time and in financial cost."

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"I really didn't know what quite to expect from my counselling journey. My counsellor carefully led me along this bumpy (and sometimes difficult) path. Thank you. I hope to rejoin at some point."

"A huge thanks for all the support Marches have offered me. I'm so grateful. You matched me perfectly with my counsellor and I will miss our time together as it was so beneficial."

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Over 90% of those seen are being subsidised in order to attend the sessions, which, if we include core development initiatives over the past year, cost us £68.50 a session to provide. We have kept the full fee for those who can afford to pay at £65 per counselling hour. Part of the development work, subsidised by the TNL Community Fund, has been the provision of a 'package' deal to the most disadvantaged, referred to us by other organisations offering support. This has underlined the need for broadening and strengthening our funding streams in order to be able to sustain the initiative. It is thus we are particularly pleased with having retained the level of gift aid despite an increase in those needing subsidy.

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. Central to this has been succession planning as established staff members reach retirement age.

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
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

01 October 2025

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees
For the year ended 31 March 2025

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2025.

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

01 October 2025

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 £	2024 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	9,232	93,385	102,617	12,712
Charitable activities	3	78,359	-	78,359	86,475
Other trading activities	4	1,017	-	1,017	1,242
Investments	5	569	-	569	269
Total		89,177	93,385	182,562	100,698
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	(67,517)	(72,249)	(139,766)	(102,188)
Total		(67,517)	(72,249)	(139,766)	(102,188)
Net income/expenditure		21,660	21,136	42,796	(1,490)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		84,567	-	84,567	86,057
Total funds carried forward		106,227	21,136	127,363	84,567

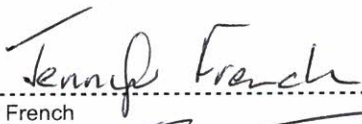
Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Statement of Financial Position
As at 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	3,753	910
		3,753	910
Current assets			
Debtors	10	3,470	3,262
Cash at bank and in hand		126,073	84,574
		129,543	87,836
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(5,933)	(4,179)
Net current assets		123,610	83,657
Total assets less current liabilities		127,363	84,567
Net assets		127,363	84,567
The funds of the charity			
Restricted income funds		21,136	-
Unrestricted income funds	12	106,227	84,567
Total funds		127,363	84,567

For the year ended 31 March 2025 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
 01 October 2025

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2025

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
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2. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Donations received	800	-	800	25
Grants received	8,432	93,385	101,817	12,687
	9,232	93,385	102,617	12,712

3. Income from charitable activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
<i>Counselling and supervision</i>		
Counselling fees	75,799	78,619
Supervision fees	2,560	7,856
	78,359	86,475
	78,359	86,475

4. Income earned from other activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Room hire and sundry income	1,017	1,242
	1,017	1,242

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

5. Investment income

	2025	2024
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Bank interest receivable	569	269
	569	269

6. Costs of charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Counselling and supervision	12,671	47,434	60,105	40,770
Support costs	54,846	24,815	79,661	61,418
	67,517	72,249	139,766	102,188

7. Net income/(expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2025	2024
	£	£
Depreciation of owned fixed assets	1,250	303

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 2025

9. Tangible fixed assets

Cost or valuation	Plant and Machinery £
At 01 April 2024	3,201
Additions	4,093
At 31 March 2025	7,294
Depreciation	
At 01 April 2024	2,291
Charge for year	1,250
At 31 March 2025	3,541
Net book values	
At 31 March 2025	3,753
At 31 March 2024	910

10. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Amounts due within one year:		
Trade debtors	1,063	1,022
Other debtors	2,407	2,240
	3,470	3,262

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	4,153	2,579
Other creditors	700	700
Accruals and deferred income	1,080	900
	5,933	4,179

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

12. Movement in funds

Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 01/04/2024 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Balance at 31/03/2025 £
<i>General</i>				
Accumulated general funds	84,567	89,177	(67,517)	106,227
	84,567	89,177	(67,517)	106,227

Unrestricted Funds - Previous year

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

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Tangible fixed assets £	Net current assets / (liabilities) £	Net Assets £
Unrestricted funds			
<i>General</i>			
Accumulated general funds	3,753	102,474	106,227
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Community Fund	-	21,136	21,136
	3,753	123,610	127,363

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

Previous year

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

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 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENT		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	800	25
Grants receivable	101,817	12,687
	102,617	12,712
Charitable activities		
Counselling fees	75,799	78,619
Supervision fees	2,560	7,856
	78,359	86,475
Other trading activities		
Room hire and sundry income	1,017	1,242
	1,017	1,242
Investments		
Bank interest receivable	569	269
	569	269
Total incoming resources	182,562	100,698
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Assessment	(6,570)	(4,450)
Supervision	(10,247)	(8,143)
Counsellors' fees	(39,881)	(19,570)
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SUPPORT COSTS		
Establishment costs		
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Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

Communications and IT		
Telephone and internet	(1,132)	(1,371)
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	(1,518)	(3,701)
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Accountancy fees	(1,080)	(900)
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Other office costs		
Depreciation - owned assets	(1,250)	(303)
Postage and stationery	(506)	(379)
Advertising and website	(1,091)	-
General expenses	(172)	(97)
	(3,019)	(779)
Total resources expended	(139,766)	(102,188)
Net Income	42,796	(1,490)

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 2025

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
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For the year ended 31 March 2025

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Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees
For the year ended 31 March 2025

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 2025. 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 2025

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This year has been one of consolidation as we were successful in our application for a three year grant from the National Lottery Community Fund. It has given us a level of security in extending our work with the most disadvantaged at a time of economic stress for many, and an opportunity to concentrate on making the service more sustainable over the coming years rather than simply surviving.

Key to the sustainability of the service has always been our staff. Like most charities we have relied upon their goodwill and hard work. The grant, as well as providing us with the finance to employ the Development Officer, has also permitted the first full staff payment review since we began as a registered charity in 2010. The economic climate affects everyone and we knew it was vital to support the time and energy our counsellors and administration team put in with a remuneration more in keeping with the times.

We have been fortunate in continuing to attract new counsellors seeking clinical placement who give their time as volunteers, but the growth of our work has also necessitated the growth of our qualified clinical staff team. Increasing pressures in the mental health service locally has seen our client group continue to grow and become more complex; for this we need experienced staff. That people stay with us after placement, despite a comparatively low remuneration, is testimony to the added value that our administrative and supervision structure offers. This year, for the duration of the lottery bid, we have committed to providing free supervision; a not inconsiderable cost that normally all counsellors have to support themselves in order to work. To us the additional protection our professional mandatory supervision offers both clients and staff is central to the success of the service.

The introduction of new IT systems this year has provided the administration team with additional challenges which we are aware they could well have done without. We are very grateful that they have shouldered the burden alongside their vital work as our first point of contact with clients.

Our move back into the market towns after Covid has seen us develop an outpost in the centre of Bromyard. We have been welcomed by Halo and decorated and furnished a small room at their leisure centre within which to see our clients. This was opened in December 2024 in the presence of the local mayor and MP.

Over the year we engaged with 180 clients and provided 1956 sessions of therapy. The number of client contacts has risen again from previous years, and we continue to see many clients staying with us to do the long term work necessary to make permanent changes. We continue to do a good percentage of our work with the more difficult to reach groups, the over 60s (12%) and men (38%).

We intend that the next year will build upon strengthened foundations and see the service developments we envisage come to fruition. As always we are responsive to the changing environment and seek new ways in which the skills our staff have to offer can benefit the community. Central to this will be bringing new life into the charity in the form of a Service Director role which will be instrumental in sustaining and developing the management of our growing organization.

Examples of client feedback on our service this year

"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 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."

"Well worth every minute - in time and in financial cost."

"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 nonjudgmental and accommodating approach. It's hard to make that first phone call to ask for support and admin instantly made me feel at ease."

"I really didn't know what quite to expect from my counselling journey. My counsellor carefully led me along this bumpy (and sometimes difficult) path. Thank you. I hope to rejoin at some point."

"A huge thanks for all the support Marches have offered me. I'm so grateful. You matched me perfectly with my counsellor and I will miss our time together as it was so beneficial."

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Report of the Trustees Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Over 90% of those seen are being subsidised in order to attend the sessions, which, if we include core development initiatives over the past year, cost us £68.50 a session to provide. We have kept the full fee for those who can afford to pay at £65 per counselling hour. Part of the development work, subsidised by the TNL Community Fund, has been the provision of a 'package' deal to the most disadvantaged, referred to us by other organisations offering support. This has underlined the need for broadening and strengthening our funding streams in order to be able to sustain the initiative. It is thus we are particularly pleased with having retained the level of gift aid despite an increase in those needing subsidy.

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. Central to this has been succession planning as established staff members reach retirement age.

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
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

01 October 2025

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees
For the year ended 31 March 2025

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2025.

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

01 October 2025

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 £	2024 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	9,232	93,385	102,617	12,712
Charitable activities	3	78,359	-	78,359	86,475
Other trading activities	4	1,017	-	1,017	1,242
Investments	5	569	-	569	269
Total		89,177	93,385	182,562	100,698
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	(67,517)	(72,249)	(139,766)	(102,188)
Total		(67,517)	(72,249)	(139,766)	(102,188)
Net income/expenditure		21,660	21,136	42,796	(1,490)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		84,567	-	84,567	86,057
Total funds carried forward		106,227	21,136	127,363	84,567

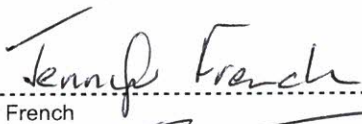
Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Statement of Financial Position
As at 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	3,753	910
		3,753	910
Current assets			
Debtors	10	3,470	3,262
Cash at bank and in hand		126,073	84,574
		129,543	87,836
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(5,933)	(4,179)
Net current assets		123,610	83,657
Total assets less current liabilities		127,363	84,567
Net assets		127,363	84,567
The funds of the charity			
Restricted income funds		21,136	-
Unrestricted income funds	12	106,227	84,567
Total funds		127,363	84,567

For the year ended 31 March 2025 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
 01 October 2025

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2025

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

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Donations received	800	-	800	25
Grants received	8,432	93,385	101,817	12,687
	9,232	93,385	102,617	12,712

3. Income from charitable activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
<i>Counselling and supervision</i>		
Counselling fees	75,799	78,619
Supervision fees	2,560	7,856
	78,359	86,475
	78,359	86,475

4. Income earned from other activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Room hire and sundry income	1,017	1,242
	1,017	1,242

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

5. Investment income

	2025	2024
	£	£
Unrestricted funds		
Bank interest receivable	569	269
	569	269

6. Costs of charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Counselling and supervision	12,671	47,434	60,105	40,770
Support costs	54,846	24,815	79,661	61,418
	67,517	72,249	139,766	102,188

7. Net income/(expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2025	2024
	£	£
Depreciation of owned fixed assets	1,250	303

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 2025

9. Tangible fixed assets

Cost or valuation	Plant and Machinery £
At 01 April 2024	3,201
Additions	4,093
At 31 March 2025	7,294
Depreciation	
At 01 April 2024	2,291
Charge for year	1,250
At 31 March 2025	3,541
Net book values	
At 31 March 2025	3,753
At 31 March 2024	910

10. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Amounts due within one year:		
Trade debtors	1,063	1,022
Other debtors	2,407	2,240
	3,470	3,262

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	4,153	2,579
Other creditors	700	700
Accruals and deferred income	1,080	900
	5,933	4,179

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

12. Movement in funds

Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 01/04/2024 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Balance at 31/03/2025 £
<i>General</i>				
Accumulated general funds	84,567	89,177	(67,517)	106,227
	84,567	89,177	(67,517)	106,227

Unrestricted Funds - Previous year

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

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Tangible fixed assets £	Net current assets / (liabilities) £	Net Assets £
Unrestricted funds			
<i>General</i>			
Accumulated general funds	3,753	102,474	106,227
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Community Fund	-	21,136	21,136
	3,753	123,610	127,363

Marches Counselling Service Ltd
Notes to the Financial Statements Continued
For the year ended 31 March 2025

Previous year

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

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 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENT		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	800	25
Grants receivable	101,817	12,687
	102,617	12,712
Charitable activities		
Counselling fees	75,799	78,619
Supervision fees	2,560	7,856
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