

BIRTHRIGHTS

England & Wales · Charity number 1151152

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2013-03-08

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Birthrights
Union House
111 New Union Street
Coventry
CV1 2NT

Phone 03004003400

Email info@birthrights.org.uk

Website www.birthrights.org.uk

Activities

Objects: The objects of the CIO are to promote the human rights of child-bearing women and people (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) in England and Wales by all or any of the following means: • Promoting awareness of the legal rights of child-bearing women and people during and connected to pregnancy, childbirth, the post-natal period (the 6 weeks subsequent to birth) and lactation; • Promoting respect for the legal rights of child-bearing women and people among healthcare organisations, medical and other professionals and in society at large; • Protecting the human rights of child-bearing women and people through the provision of legal information and advice and obtaining redress for victims of human rights abuse; • Campaigning in relation to human rights and related legal issues relating to child-bearing women and people; • Responding with technical advice to proposed legislation and policy affecting child-bearing women and people; • Providing technical advice to government and others on human rights and other legal and regulatory matters as they affect child-bearing women and people; • Contributing to the understanding and sound administration of human rights law as it affects child-bearing women and people, in particular, but not exclusively, through third-party interventions in legal cases; • Promoting the human rights and lawful treatment of child-bearing women and people by commissioning and conducting research; • Providing education and training to, among others, parents and parents-to-be, healthcare professionals and the public on human rights and the law as it affects child-bearing women and people. • Eliminating infringements of human rights of child-bearing women and people. • Other charitable activities that the trustees may from time to time determine to promote the human rights and legal status of childbearing women and people. (1) In furtherance of these objects but not otherwise, the trustees shall have power to engage in political activity provided that the trustees are satisfied that the proposed activities will further the purposes of the charity to an extent justified by the resources committed and the activity is not the dominant means by which the CIO carries out its objects. (2) Nothing in this constitution shall authorise an application of the property of the CIO for purposes which are not charitable in accordance with section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 or section 2 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

Activities: Provision of legal information and advice; policy work; campaigning; provision of education and training; empirical research, in each case relating to law surrounding childbirth and human rights. Birthrights will operate in England and Wales but work with organisations in other countries to share learning and experience.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research
- **What:** Education/training, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£642,424	£550,128	£227,800	16
2024-03-31	£311,737	£486,338	-	-
2023-03-31	£423,191	£382,564	-	-
2022-03-31	£350,613	£342,450	-	-
2021-03-31	£361,703	£193,951	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Sonia Adesara	Chair	2026-05-27
Amelia Christie		2024-08-14
Dr Annabel Sowemimo		2024-08-14
Dr Ria May Clarke		2022-07-26
Elise Denis-Ramirez		2024-08-14
Naomi Allen		2024-08-14
Roisin Mulroney		2024-08-14
Tatheer Fatima		2024-11-22

BIRTHRIGHTS

England & Wales - Charity number 1151152

Accounts

Charity no. 1151152

Birthrights
Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements
31 March 2025

Birthrights

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Charity number	1151152																										
Registered office	Birthrights Union House 111 New Union Street Coventry CV1 2NT																										
Trustees	The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows: <table><tr><td>Naomi Allen</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Alix-Louise Anderson</td><td>(resigned 31 December 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Amelia Christie</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Dr Ria May Clarke</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Inderjit Cross</td><td>(resigned 7 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>John Davis</td><td>(resigned 31 December 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Elise Denis-Ramirez</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Tatheer Fatima</td><td>(appointed 22 November 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Krystal Lashley-Scrivener</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Marcia Lord</td><td>(resigned 31 December 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Simon Mehigan</td><td>(resigned 16 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Roisin Mulronev</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Dr Annabel Sowemimo</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr></table>	Naomi Allen	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Alix-Louise Anderson	(resigned 31 December 2024)	Amelia Christie	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Dr Ria May Clarke		Inderjit Cross	(resigned 7 August 2024)	John Davis	(resigned 31 December 2024)	Elise Denis-Ramirez	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Tatheer Fatima	(appointed 22 November 2024)	Krystal Lashley-Scrivener	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Marcia Lord	(resigned 31 December 2024)	Simon Mehigan	(resigned 16 July 2024)	Roisin Mulronev	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Dr Annabel Sowemimo	(appointed 14 August 2024)
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Roisin Mulronev	(appointed 14 August 2024)																										
Dr Annabel Sowemimo	(appointed 14 August 2024)																										
Interim Chief Executive	Tracey Fletcher (appointed 18 June 2025)																										
Co-Chief Executives	Shanthi Gunsekera (resigned 18 June 2025) Janaki Mahadevan (resigned 18 June 2025)																										
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank Olympic House 6 Olympic Court Montford Street Salford M5 2QP																										
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD																										

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Introduction from our Interim Chair

Amid a system in crisis, it is the unwavering courage, clarity and determination of our staff and the communities we stand with that give me hope. Every day, people rise—refusing to be silenced, uplifting truths long ignored, and demanding the care, dignity and justice that every woman and birthing person is owed.

In a year when the scale of injustice in maternity care was laid bare repeatedly, we met it with fierce, strategic action – providing rights-based advice and support, training healthcare professionals, challenging harmful practices, and holding institutions to account. We've launched our ambitious campaign against Home-birth Restrictions, demanded legal reform through our SAFE Maternity Care Act, and amplified the experiences of those on the sharpest edge of inequality. And we've done all of this while strengthening the foundation of our organisation and expanding our vision through our new 10-year strategic framework.

This work has been made possible by the extraordinary leadership of our outgoing Co-CEOs, Shanthi Guneseckera and Janaki Mahadevan. Their vision, empathy and determination helped shape a more resilient, values-driven and justice-centred Birthrights. Under their leadership, we built a powerful 10-year strategy, deepened our commitment to racial justice, strengthened our internal culture and infrastructure, and renewed our connection to grassroots communities. We thank them both with deep respect and admiration.

We know systemic change can't happen in isolation. We are proud to work alongside funders who understand that the maternity crisis is a human rights crisis — and that meaningful progress requires long-term, values-driven investment in ways which work with and alongside communities to name injustice and centre the voices of those pushed to the margins.

To every woman and birthing person who trusted us with your story — we are deeply grateful, and your strength fuels our fight. To every ally, partner, supporter and funder who stood with us — we are honoured by your belief in us and it drives us forward in our mission to build a better system. As we enter a new year under new, exciting leadership, we are more determined than ever to co-create a future where every woman and birthing person can access maternity care that honours their autonomy, defends their rights, and protects their safety, free from coercion, discrimination or harm.

Krystal Lashley-Scrivener

Interim Chair of the Birthrights Board of Trustees

Gratitude

On behalf of the Birthrights team, our Board of Trustees and the communities we serve, we extend our deepest gratitude to the funders who stand with us as committed partners in justice. Your belief in our work and your investment in change make our mission possible.

We thank our Trust and Foundation funders— A&O Shearman Sterling Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, LEF (Legal Education Foundation), a private family charitable Trust, Rosa, Sigrid Rausing Trust, The Baring Foundation, and The Tudor Trust —along with our corporate allies Irwin Mitchell. You have chosen to back bold, rights-based change when it is most urgently needed.

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

To every individual who has contributed—whether through donations, partnerships or platforming our work—thank you. You are part of a growing movement that is unflinching in its demand for safe, respectful and equitable maternity care.

And to our wider community of supporters: we see your commitment, your courage and your solidarity. Together, we are not just imagining a better future—we are building it.

Structure, governance and management

Birthrights is a charitable incorporated organisation and is registered with the Charity Commission with charity number 1151152.

The method of recruitment and appointment of trustees is set out in its governing document: the constitution. During the year, 5 trustees stood down between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 following their end of terms as trustees, including: former Treasurer John Davis; Simon Mehigan; Alix Anderson; Inderjit Cross; and Marcia Lord. We have also welcomed seven new trustees to the Board – Krystal Lashley-Scrivener, Amelia Christie, Naomi Allen, Roisin Mulroney, Elise Denis-Ramirez, Annabel Sowemimo and Tatheer Fatima – all of whom have played an active role in the governance of the organisation throughout the year.

Our Board of Trustees currently consists of eight women, most of whom have lived experience of pregnancy and birth. Trustees bring a diverse range of professional experience including healthcare professionals, doulas, human rights, governance, finance, campaigns and communications, fundraising, academia and reproductive justice activism.

The trustees are responsible for making decisions on the management of all the affairs of Birthrights, including deciding on how the funds of the charity are to be spent. The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The full Board of trustees met four times during 2024/25, plus an additional trustee away day where the trustees carried out training and a review of Birthrights' strategy. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee also met four times in this period.

Objectives and Activities

About

Our vision is of a world where women and birthing people can access safe maternity care that fully respects their right to bodily autonomy and self-agency, free from discrimination, coercion and violence.

Birthrights is the leading authority on the fundamental human rights of women and birthing people during pregnancy and birth. We believe that everyone is entitled to respectful maternity care that protects their fundamental rights to dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality. We provide free advice and legal information to women and birthing people, train healthcare professionals and birth workers to deliver rights-respecting care and campaign to change maternity policy and systems. Our research shines a spotlight on those most at risk of human rights violations in pregnancy and birth due to structural disadvantage and discrimination.

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Our work is critical to not only transforming the experiences and outcomes for individuals, but also in shifting wider policy, practice and systems. We do this by empowering and supporting women and birthing people, training healthcare professionals, holding systems and institutions to account and making visible the diverse experiences of maternity care.

Aims

The aim of Birthrights is to promote the human rights of child-bearing women and birthing people in England and Wales. These rights are set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Our 10 year strategic framework, which was established in 2024, sets out our four strategic aims:

- Equip women and birthing people and their supporters with information and advice to advocate for their rights and navigate maternity systems, providing more intensive support and advocacy for those who are most likely to be marginalised and least likely to be heard;
- Increase awareness and understanding of how the law applies to maternity care and why this matters amongst women and birthing people and their supporters, and those who design, manage, deliver and regulate maternity care;
- Hold institutions to account and, using the law strategically, stand ever ready to take action where the law is not upheld in policy or practice; and
- Work in community to catalyse systemic change through research and evidence, policy and advocacy, litigation and campaigns.

Our strategic framework centres our work to create systemic change for the most marginalised communities in all that we do as an organisation. We have translated this into the following key priorities:

- Open-sourcing our expertise and knowledge, through increased training for civil society organisations and developing an online hub of rights based information;
- Sharing our power with communities and movements, through research to both shine a light on inequities of experience and outcomes and propose radical solutions for change; and
- Campaigning for radical and systemic change, through parliamentary engagement, policy influencing, strategic litigation and public awareness-raising.

Activities

The Objects of Birthrights, as set out in our Constitution, include:

- Promoting awareness of the legal rights of child-bearing women and people during and connected to pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period (the six weeks subsequent to birth);
- Promoting respect for the legal rights of child-bearing women and people among healthcare organisations, medical and other professions and in society at large;
- Protecting the human rights of child-bearing women and people through the provision of legal information and advice and obtaining redress for victims of human rights abuse;
- Campaigning in relation to human rights and related legal issues relating to child-bearing women and people;
- Responding with technical advice to proposed legislation and policy affecting child-bearing women and people;

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

- Providing technical advice to government and others on human rights and other legal and regulatory matters as they affect child-bearing women and people;
- Contributing to the understanding and sound administration of human rights law as it affects childbearing women and people, in particular, but not exclusively, through third-party interventions in legal cases;
- Promoting the human rights and lawful treatment of child-bearing women and people by commissioning and conducting research;
- Providing education and training to, among others, parents and parents-to-be, healthcare professionals and the public on human rights and the law as it affects child-bearing women and people;
- Eliminating infringements of human rights of child-bearing women and people; and
- Undertaking other charitable activities that the trustees may from time to time determine to promote the human rights and legal status of child-bearing women and people.

When planning our activities for the year, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the promotion of human rights.

The Trust has referred to the terms of the Scheme and the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing its aims and objectives and planning future activities. In particular the Trustees consider how proposed activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Achievements and Performance 2024/25

Highlights from the Year

This year has been one of momentum, courage and purpose for Birthrights. We have strengthened our position as a trusted expert on how human rights law applies to maternity care, while pushing forward a powerful shift in the way maternity care is received, practised and governed. Through every facet of our work – from direct support to campaigning – we have remained rooted in the voices, rights and hopes of women and birthing people. Some of the key highlights from 2024–25 include:

- **Our support services have remained a lifeline to many.** More than 2,000 unique visitors accessed our online factsheets, available in 16 languages, helping to make rights-based information accessible to a wider audience. Meanwhile, 599 individuals received one-to-one support through our email information and support service – a service grounded in empathy, trauma-informed care and deep legal knowledge.
- **We delivered 93 high-impact training courses across the UK,** reaching over 541 maternity professionals – including midwives, obstetricians, anaesthetists, and others working across maternity settings. Our training continues to build understanding, shift practice and spark real reflection among those delivering care.
- **We secured major funding to deepen our work in community power building.** This critical support enables us to work directly with grassroots civil society organisations that are trusted by their communities. Through free and subsidised training, we're equipping these community organisations with the knowledge and tools to challenge injustice and advocate for change – embedding rights-based care where it is needed most.

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For the year ended 31 March 2025

- **We launched our campaign for a new SAFE Maternity Care Act, calling for legislation that puts Safety, Accountability, Freedom of Choice and Equity** at the heart of maternity care. This campaign is underpinned by a strong theory of change and a multi-year strategy that spans public awareness, community activation, and parliamentary engagement. At its core is a commitment to centring the voices and radical visions of communities who have long been failed by the system.
- **We secured funding for ‘Communities Imagine’**, our new multi-year, community-led research programme building on the legacy of our 2022 Race Inquiry. Rather than only documenting systemic failures, this project creates space for communities to articulate bold, hopeful visions for the maternity care they want to see – care they want for their children and grandchildren – and supports them to organise and take action to bring that future closer.
- **In March 2025, we published our landmark report, Access Denied: Restrictions to Home Birth in the UK.** Drawing on data from our mass Freedom of Information request to every NHS Trust across the UK, alongside surveys from women, birthing people, healthcare professionals and birth workers, and insight from our support service and grassroots partners, this report provides the most comprehensive picture yet of the state of home birth services across the UK. It makes clear the impact of restrictions on autonomy and outlines what must change to protect the right to informed meaningful choice – including where and how to give birth.

***Strategic Aim 1:** Equipping women and birthing people and their supporters with information and advice to advocate for their rights and navigate maternity systems, providing more intensive support and advocacy for those who are most likely to be marginalised and least likely to be heard.*

We are determined to ensure that **every woman and birthing person has access to the information they need**, exactly when and how they need it—clear, accessible, and on their terms. Our commitment to open-sourcing our expertise reflects our belief in the power of self-advocacy: when people understand their rights, they are better able to assert them and demand the dignity and respect they are entitled to.

In the past year, we have worked with purpose to reach those most at risk of facing discrimination or poor maternity care. Our factsheets are now available in 16 languages, with plans to include three more—among them British Sign Language—so that no one is excluded from vital knowledge because of language barriers.

We’ve extended our reach by building trust within marginalised communities. From women in immigration detention to neurodivergent parents, and through groups such as The Motherhood Group during Black Maternal Mental Health Week and Pregnancy Sickness Support, we’ve gone beyond digital tools. Our 'Birth Rights Passport' is one such example—offering women and birthing people a practical, tangible way to assert their rights in healthcare settings where they may otherwise be dismissed or devalued.

We’ve also **amplified our voice in the public sphere, challenging systemic failures in maternity care** and reaching a broad, diverse audience. From media coverage in The Voice, Stylist, and The Sunday Times, to collaborating on a televised birth trauma storyline and working with playwright Phoebe McIntosh, we are shifting narratives and creating space for truth, healing, and accountability. Our Home Birth campaign secured national attention across ITV platforms, including a featured report with lasting presence on their website.

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For the year ended 31 March 2025

Our impact continues to grow. Our social media following rose by 3,500 this year—now totalling over 53,000. Our online resources were accessed more than 192,000 times by over 17,850 unique users, and our factsheets downloaded over 2,000 times—a measurable increase in demand for rights-based information.

When people need deeper, tailored support, our information and advice team is there. This year, we supported 599 women and birthing people with personalised advice, helping them understand their rights and navigate complex maternity systems. This work is rooted in trauma-informed, empathetic practice that validates people's experiences while equipping them to self-advocate with confidence.

We are proud that our work is reaching a broader spectrum of the population. Less than half of those who contacted us identified as white British, and 1 in 10 enquiries came from healthcare professionals—an encouraging sign that we are influencing both individuals and the systems around them. From remote rural communities to urban centres, we are building knowledge, strengthening resilience, and supporting people to secure rights-respecting maternity care.

This work has led to real, structural change. Together with individuals, we have:

- Secured funding for Independent Midwives during service suspension;
- Reversed an NHS Trust's blanket ban on maternal request caesareans;
- Stopped a discriminatory referral policy targeting autistic pregnant people;
- Challenged a Ministry of Defence policy that contravened UK law—leading to its review; and
- Supported people to access timely caesareans, water births, and enhanced postnatal care in vulnerable health situations.

The people we support tell us again and again how life-changing our help has been:

- "I felt empowered and ready to stand up for the birth I deserve."
- "As for the website—it's out of this world with information!"
- "At last, I have the language I need to advocate."
- "I feel so valued and cared about—this is so different from how I've been treated elsewhere."

Our work is more than information-sharing—it is transformational. It ensures that women and birthing people can step into their power, and that human rights are upheld in every stage of the maternity journey.

Strategic Aim 2: Increase awareness and understanding of how the law applies to maternity care and why this matters amongst women and birthing people and their supporters, and those who design, manage, deliver and regulate maternity care.

At Birthrights, we believe that legal literacy is a powerful tool for change. When individuals and institutions understand how human rights law applies to maternity care, they are better equipped to uphold those rights in practice—and to challenge systems that fail to deliver respectful, rights-based care.

We operate a frontline-to-policy model, where insights from our advice service directly shape our training content and advocacy priorities. This ensures our work remains grounded in lived experience and responsive to the evolving challenges people face in the maternity system.

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For the year ended 31 March 2025

Over the past year, we delivered 93 training sessions, reaching over 541 maternity professionals across 42 NHS Trusts in England and Wales. Our participants include midwives, anaesthetists, neonatologists, paramedics, birth workers, and staff from maternity regulatory bodies. Every session is co-led by two expert trainers—one with a legal background (often a practising lawyer) and one with a healthcare background (often a practising midwife)—ensuring both rigour and relevance.

To expand our reach and sustain the impact of this work, we recruited and inducted 13 new Associate Trainers this year, each bringing critical frontline experience and a shared commitment to advancing human rights in maternity care.

The feedback from our training remains consistently powerful and affirming. In our annual survey:

- **98% of attendees** said they would recommend Birthrights' training to others; and
- **89% said** the training would impact their practice going forward.

Some of the feedback we received includes:

- "Thank you so much—what a fantastic and insightful day. The passion, experience and expertise from the trainers helped me to leave feeling like I have a better understanding of human rights in maternity."
- "The trainers were amazing! The case studies brought the issues to life and helped us see how human rights apply in real-world maternity care."
- "Fantastic workshop today—great trainers who have sparked a reflection on my own practice, the environment, and the team I work with."
- "Excellent session—very useful, and something that should be offered to all midwives and health professionals working in maternity services."

We know that systemic change is only possible when power and knowledge are shared at every level. That's why, alongside professional training, we are **investing in community power-building**. With vital funding, we've begun delivering **free and subsidised training to grassroots civil society organisations**—many of whom are trusted voices within marginalised communities. These sessions equip them to support their communities to demand rights-based care, embedding long-term knowledge, capacity, and agency at the local level.

Beyond formal training, we are committed to creating change by engaging widely—bringing legal and lived expertise into the spaces where maternity policy is being shaped. Throughout the year, we have:

- Shared our insights on unassisted birth as part of a serious case review process convened by the **Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)**, while continuing our active membership of both the **NHS Maternity and Neonatal Stakeholder Council** and a newly formed **NHS taskforce on racial disparities in maternity**.
- Participated in the **NMC Midwifery Advisory Panel** and attended NMC briefings on unassisted birth, where we highlighted the disproportionate harms of regulatory failures on marginalised communities—and the resulting erosion of trust in maternity systems.
- Published detailed and principled responses to key sector reports, including **Lord Darzi's review of the NHS**, the **Care Quality Commission's maternity services review**, the MMBRACE maternal mortality report, and the **NHS 10-Year Plan**—ensuring that human rights remain central to the national conversation on maternity care.

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For the year ended 31 March 2025

- Strengthened our connections with grassroots organisations in Wales, including **Bawso** and **FTWW (Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales)**, helping to broaden the reach of our work across the UK.
- Contributed to a wide range of high-profile meetings and forums addressing systemic failings in maternity care, including:
 - The first Black Maternal Health APPG meeting under the new Labour government;
 - Equity and Equality Steering Group;
 - NHS Stakeholder Council and the NMC Midwifery Advisory Panel; and
 - The MBRRACE-UK event on “Childbirth in the Asylum System”.

Through this work, we are not only educating professionals and policy influencers—we are also shifting mindsets, building accountability, and creating a maternity system where **rights are understood, upheld, and fiercely defended**.

***Strategic Aim 3:** Hold institutions to account and, using the law strategically, stand ever ready to take action where the law is not upheld in policy or practice.*

We stand ready to act wherever the law is not upheld in maternity policy or practice. Over the past year, we have sharpened our legal voice and campaigning power, holding institutions accountable and pushing for meaningful change grounded in the lived experiences of women and birthing people.

In March 2025, we published our **landmark report Access Denied: Restrictions to Home Birth in the UK**, a powerful body of evidence exposing the widespread erosion of birth choice across the country. Drawing on:

- A mass Freedom of Information request sent to every NHS Trust in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland;
- Detailed surveys completed by women, birthing people, healthcare professionals and birth workers; and
- Our own frontline intelligence from our advice service and community partnerships.

This report documents not only the current state of home birth services, but also the emotional, physical and legal impact of blanket suspensions and restrictions. It makes clear, with urgency and clarity, what must change to protect the right of every person to make informed decisions about their care, including where and how they give birth.

We have developed a detailed dissemination plan to ensure the report’s findings reach healthcare leaders, policymakers, and communities most affected—amplifying voices that have too often been ignored and pressing for accountability at every level.

Our long-term vision is structural change. In 2024, we launched our campaign for a new **SAFE Maternity Care Act**, demanding a legal framework that puts **Safety, Accountability, Freedom of Choice, and Equity** at the heart of maternity care. We’ve built a multi-year strategy and theory of change, combining **community mobilisation, public awareness, and targeted parliamentary engagement** to ensure this vision becomes law.

We continue to stand in solidarity with wider human rights and reproductive justice movements, working in alliance with others to protect universal rights. This includes our membership in the **Save Our Human Rights Act Coalition** and our public support for **Dame Diana Johnson MP’s amendment** to the Criminal Justice Bill.

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For the year ended 31 March 2025

We've also taken swift and strategic action in response to rights violations on the ground. We wrote to multiple hospitals to challenge ongoing restrictions on birth partners—restrictions that have persisted far beyond the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. To enable broader pressure and action, we developed clear, accessible template letters and guidance for individuals and healthcare professionals to use in asserting their rights and holding institutions to account.

In moments of national crisis, we've acted decisively to demand protections for those most at risk. In the summer of 2024, as racist and Islamophobic violence erupted across parts of the UK, fuelled by dehumanising political rhetoric, we responded with urgency and resolve. We wrote to local, regional and national policymakers, insisting that emergency and resilience plans include pregnant people—particularly Black, Brown and Muslim communities—and that access to the full spectrum of maternity care be safeguarded. We also pushed for measures to protect the safety and wellbeing of maternity staff during times of social unrest.

To bolster our strategic legal capacity, we appointed a new internal **Legal Lead** in December 2024—a qualified lawyer tasked with developing high-impact legal strategies aligned with our campaign priorities. Already, this work is making a difference. We are:

- Using legal and quasi-legal routes to challenge hospitals and Trusts who are breaching human rights law, focusing on cases that align with organisational priorities and offer the potential for systemic change. So far, we have succeeded in changing a Trust's policy on automatic social services referrals for 'missed' appointments, sent a pre-action protocol letter to a Trust regarding a blanket ban on twin homebirth and are currently pressuring a Trust to alter their unlawful NHS charging procedures;
- Building networks with legal contacts, and setting up new pro bono relationships;
- Positioning ourselves as established thought leaders on the requirements of Human Rights Act and the law of informed consent in maternity care, through presenting at important events and contributing to written reports and blog articles; and
- Drafting instructions to leading counsel and interpreting the advice received to inform our campaign strategies and our training and advice work.

We know that change doesn't come easily. But with every letter, every campaign, every legal challenge, we are **raising the bar for accountability and building a maternity system where no one's rights can be ignored or denied**. We are unapologetic in our mission: **to stand up, speak out, and use the law to defend the dignity, autonomy and safety of all women and birthing people**.

Work in community to catalyse systemic change through research and evidence, policy and advocacy, litigation and campaigns.

A maternity system that truly upholds the rights and dignity of women and birthing people is not just a moral imperative—it is foundational to reducing trauma, delivering safe care, and improving outcomes for all. But we know that lasting change will only come through structural transformation. And we know that the most powerful change is **collective**—when it's rooted in community, led by those most impacted, and fuelled by solidarity.

At the heart of our approach is the belief that those who are most harmed and marginalised by the current system are also those best placed to imagine something better. That's why we invest in long-term, trusting relationships with grassroots and community-led groups—particularly those working with people facing multiple forms of oppression. Together, we are not just fighting against injustice—we are **building a future where birth justice is a reality for all**.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Community-led Research and Imaginings for the Future

This year, we secured vital funding from the Tudor Trust to launch '**Communities Imagine**'—a bold new multi-year, community-led research programme inspired by our Race Inquiry. But rather than simply documenting what's broken, Communities Imagine creates space for communities to articulate what maternity care could and should be: the care they want for their children, grandchildren, and future generations. It is a space for hope, strategy and action. This programme will shape the foundation of our future policy and legal campaigns, ensuring that any change to maternity legislation is **rooted in the visions and leadership of the communities most failed by the current system**.

Collective Action and Cross-Movement Solidarity

Our strength lies in collaboration. We continue to work alongside sister organisations to fight for change, including as proud members of the **Save Our Human Rights Act coalition** (hosted by Liberty). We've partnered with **We Level Up** in the campaign to end the imprisonment of pregnant women—contributing to vital changes in the Sentencing Council's guidelines—and we've worked with **BPAS** to advance abortion rights. Our reach extends through trusted partnerships with organisations including **Black Mothers Matter, Neurodivergent Birth, Happy Baby Community, Birth Companions, Maternity Action, The Motherhood Group, Bawso, and Fair Treatment of Women of Wales**. These alliances enable us to connect with a broad and diverse range of communities and ensure our work resonates at the grassroots.

We bring the voices of these communities directly to decision-makers, sitting on the **NHS Maternity and Neonatal Stakeholder Council**, the **NHS taskforce on racial disparities in maternity**, and regularly providing evidence to **parliamentary inquiries and public forums**.

Strengthening Our Foundations for Long-Term Impact

This past year has also been one of internal transformation for Birthrights. We've focused on **deepening our commitment to racial justice**, building organisational resilience, and recognising the emotional weight of the work we do. As we're increasingly exposed to traumatic accounts of birth trauma, consent violations and racism, we've made it a priority to ensure that our staff team has the support they need to continue this vital work with energy, integrity and care.

Through a series of workshops and staff surveys, we co-developed a wellbeing plan that has already seen impactful steps:

- We secured a one-off uplift in funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust to invest in staff wellbeing, including:
 - Clinical supervision for our information and advice team;
 - A crisis fund for emergency counselling support; and
 - A personal wellbeing allowance for every team member.

We've also been working since July 2024 with **JMB Consultancy**, alongside thought-leaders **Martha Awojobi** and **Khadijah Diskin**, to embed racial justice and anti-oppression across all areas of our work—from communications to service delivery. We know this is long-term, generational work. It requires space, reflection, and humility—and we are committed to staying with it for the long haul.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Looking Forward: Broadening Our Reach, Deepening Our Impact

As we look to the future, we are mapping opportunities to **connect our work across movements**—because the fight for justice in maternity care intersects with many other struggles: **feminism, racial justice, disability justice, migrant justice, queer and trans justice, and health equity**.

By reaching out beyond our immediate sector and building alliances across the wider social justice ecosystem, we can amplify our collective voice and accelerate the systemic change we all seek. It's this intersectional, collaborative approach that will help us forge the enabling environment needed to secure long-term, transformational change in maternity care—**not just for now, but for generations to come**.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The staff team are essential to the identification, evaluation and management of risks, and we have tried during the year to build wider thinking and planning of risks and mitigations into every layer of our team's planning. We try to approach risk management not as a compliance exercise, but as a vital tool in proactively protecting our people, our communities and our impact. We have regular, open discussion around immediate, emerging and long-term risks across a range of categories, including: governance, financial, operational and external, as well as identifying unexpected issues that have arisen within our operations.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee reviews the risk register regularly and Birthrights' trustees determine how much risk the charity is willing to take in the pursuit of its objectives. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee reviews the operational effectiveness of the risk management and it reports its findings to the Board, identifying any matters on which it considers action is needed, and making recommendations on the steps to be taken.

The following principal risks have been identified by the Board:

1. Staff Capacity and Wellbeing

Risk: The sheer volume and complexity of our work—from high-volume individual case support, to legal strategy, national campaigning, and deep grassroots community engagement—places a high emotional and logistical burden on a small and highly committed team. We have a bold and wide-reaching strategic agenda, with a strong sense of responsibility to act on multiple fronts, but the risk of stretching ourselves too thinly to meet demand needs to be managed proactively. Our work requires depth, focus, a core infrastructure to support it and an energised workforce to deliver it. The impact of this risk could lead to staff burnout; damaged relationships within the team; high staff turnover leading to low morale; slower progress on key projects; or a reduced quality/pause in service delivery.

Mitigations: Mitigations are already underway to safeguard against this risk, including the investment secured in staff wellbeing through clinical supervision, an emergency counselling fund and a personal wellbeing allowance – but this needs to be maintained, managed and built on further as our work deepens. Mitigations around the expansion of our services to meet the bold demands of our strategy are focussed around careful prioritisation of our work – as set out in our 3 year delivery plan – staged rollouts, better cross-team communication and ownership of projects; and realigning workstreams eg. our financial processes to ensure they are as streamlined as possible.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

2. Financial Sustainability

Risk: Birthrights, like many not-for-profit organisations, is operating in an uncertain funding environment, where there is a high level of demand for a reduced availability of funds across every facet of society. Alongside this, many of our funding sources are based around vital project-based work which is essential, but often focuses on short-term goals with restricted funding, placing greater pressure on us to find alternative ways to secure the resources for the generational work that needs to be done. The risk is that without adequate funding for core functions, such as our operations, legal strategy development, internal infrastructure and staff wellbeing, the capacity to drive generational change may be more limited. This could make us less agile to respond to emerging issues, sustain growth or invest in team development. It also means that we are more exposed as an organisation to changes in funding cycles, or if any key funders withdraw their support.

Mitigations: In response, we have worked hard this year to build long-lasting partnerships and deep relationships with funders who are aligned to long-term movement building work to drive systemic change. With the appointment of our new Fundraising Manager and under the leadership of our new CEO, we will continue to grow the proportion of unrestricted/core income for example through our training income and operating grants. We are also strengthening our financial controls, systems and reporting and investing in our finance function, to help support the core operations of the team, but also to improve management of our funding streams to ensure regular, accurate reporting to our funders. This will build trust within our partnerships as well as enabling the team to remain agile in reviewing the impact of our work with each funder.

3. Leadership Transition and Succession

Risk: The transition to a new Chief Executive (and upcoming permanent Chair recruitment) could lead to organisational instability and increased staff anxiety, with a potential impact on the momentum, pace and quality of delivery amidst senior leadership uncertainty. Alongside this, as a new CEO inevitably brings a fresh leadership style, we must be alert to the risk that this could potentially have in terms of staff and partner relationships; clarity of vision and wider trust around continuation of our deep-rooted values of anti-oppression, collective care and radical justice.

Mitigation: As a Board of Trustees we are very aware of the unsettling impact changes at senior levels of the organisation can have and have worked hard to mitigate against this. We have developed a strong communications plan to keep staff updated and reassured during the CEO recruitment campaign, including meeting separately with staff members and joining team meetings and away days; established a specific Working Group of the trustees to manage the process, ensuring smooth delivery of the recruitment with full input from key stakeholders – including staff engagement sessions as a formal part of the interview process. We have also prioritised our communications with key funders to continue to build these partnerships and have worked with an external recruiter to embed our values of anti-oppression into every stage of the recruitment process.

As the new CEO joins the organisation, we are developing a clear transition plan and onboarding strategy which will include a deep induction to our organisational culture, history and values of anti-oppression, as well as an ongoing plan for reflective leadership practice – continuing our journey on anti-racism with JMB as well as wider justice coaching and exploring ways to embed value-based leadership amongst the whole of SLT. The Board are also maintaining strong oversight and alignment to our strategic plan to ensure continued focus and momentum for driving change across the whole organisation.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Financial review

Summary of income and expenditure

In 2024/25 we secured an overall income of £642,424 compared to £311,737 in 2023/24. Restricted income changed from £50,000 in 2023/24 to £128,183 in 2024/25 and unrestricted income (including designated income) changed from £261,737 in 2023/24 to £514,241 in 2024/25. Of this overall unrestricted figure, the CEOs and Treasurer agreed to designate £84,167 of unrestricted funds for specific purposes, such as staff posts and projects. Total expenditure was £550,128 (compared to £486,338 in 2023/24) which was in line with budget expectations.

At the end of March 24, £135,504 of funds were carried forward, of which £32,692 was restricted funds from grants for planned activity in 2024/25 (due to projects being phased across multiple financial years). At the end of March 2025, £227,800 was carried forward into 2025/26, including £76,942 restricted funds, £84,167 designated funds and £66,691 general funds.

Reserves

At the end of 2024/25, we hold £66,691 in unrestricted reserves. In addition, £84,167 of core funding has been designated by the Trustees but could be reallocated if required.

Our reserves policy states that Birthrights will hold cash reserves to cover three months of operating costs. A three-month reserve would allow Birthrights the opportunity, if necessary, to wind down its programme of support in an orderly and managed fashion, including paying our staff reasonable notice. The Trustees believe this is the appropriate level of reserves to balance prudence and risk management against maximising the benefits the charity can deliver by not tying up too much of our funds in our reserves.

Within the year the trustees took a risk-based approach to our reserves position and enabled Birthrights to briefly operate below the policy threshold in order to maximise on opportunities and strengthen the staff team to provide capacity to build for the future. This analysis considered both the organisation's and external circumstances, as well as Birthrights' activities and principal risks.

For 2025/26, three months of operating costs would be £158,925 based on our planned income and expenditure budget.

Going concern

The trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved for the following reasons:

- The charity holds total reserves of £150,858 (including unrestricted and designated funds);
- The charity is carrying forward a significant unrestricted surplus into 2025/26 which has been designated for core staff costs; and
- The charity has grants in place which span 2025/26 and beyond.

The trustees therefore consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis for the preparation of the accounts, as detailed in note 1(b) to the financial statements. Fundraising will continue to be a major priority for the CEOs and senior team, to ensure sustainability and growth into the future.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees are to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the year. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charity during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 23 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by



Krystal Lashley-Scrivener - Interim Chair



Tatheer Fatima - Treasurer

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Birthrights

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Birthrights (the CIO) for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 17 to 30.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the CIO you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

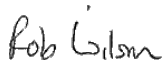
Since the CIO's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed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

Godfrey Wilson Limited also provides payroll and bookkeeping services to the CIO. I confirm that as a member of the ICAEW I am subject to the FRC's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, which I have applied with respect to this engagement.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material 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 CIO as required by section 130 of the Act; or the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.



Date: 23 September 2025

Robert Wilson FCA

Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Birthrights

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	128,183	339,765	467,948	199,792
Charitable activities	4	-	172,582	172,582	110,260
Investments		-	1,894	1,894	1,685
Total income		<u>128,183</u>	<u>514,241</u>	<u>642,424</u>	<u>311,737</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	65,966	65,966	42,620
Charitable activities		<u>83,933</u>	<u>400,229</u>	<u>484,162</u>	<u>443,718</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>83,933</u>	<u>466,195</u>	<u>550,128</u>	<u>486,338</u>
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds	6	44,250	48,046	92,296	(174,601)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>32,692</u>	<u>102,812</u>	<u>135,504</u>	<u>310,105</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>76,942</u></u>	<u><u>150,858</u></u>	<u><u>227,800</u></u>	<u><u>135,504</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 14 to the accounts.

Birthrights

Balance sheet

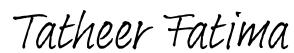
For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	9		<u>3,032</u>	<u>-</u>
Current assets				
Debtors	10	33,746		99,841
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>213,928</u>		<u>143,479</u>
		247,674		243,320
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	11	<u>(22,906)</u>		<u>(107,816)</u>
Net current assets			<u>224,768</u>	<u>135,504</u>
Net assets	13		<u>227,800</u>	<u>135,504</u>
Funds	14			
Restricted funds			76,942	32,692
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			84,167	80,103
General funds			<u>66,691</u>	<u>22,709</u>
Total charity funds			<u>227,800</u>	<u>135,504</u>

Approved by the trustees on 23 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by



Krystal Lashley-Scrivener - Interim Chair



Tatheer Fatima - Treasurer

Birthrights

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash used in operating activities:		
Net movement in funds	92,296	(174,601)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	1,166	-
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	66,095	(26,696)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(84,910)	28,628
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	74,647	(172,669)
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(4,198)	-
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	(4,198)	-
Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year	70,449	(172,669)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	143,479	316,148
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	213,928	143,479

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

Birthrights Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales. The registered office address is Union House, 111 New Union Street, Coventry, CV1 2NT.

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

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

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider to be appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves and future confirmed funding. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received under contracts, sponsorship agreements or in advance of provision of training is deferred and recognised when services are delivered.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the basis of staff time:

	2025	2024
Raising funds	14%	11%
Charitable activities	86%	89%

i) Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Computer equipment	3 years
--------------------	---------

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000.

j) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

k) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

l) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

m) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

n) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

o) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are the depreciation rates as described in note 1i.

2. Prior period comparatives

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Income from:			
Donations	50,000	149,792	199,792
Charitable activities	-	110,260	110,260
Investments	-	1,685	1,685
Total income	50,000	261,737	311,737
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	42,620	42,620
Charitable activities	107,018	336,700	443,718
Total expenditure	107,018	379,320	486,338
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds	42,410	(117,583)	(174,601)

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £
Donations	-	31,280	31,280
Grants > £5,000			
Baring Foundation	50,000	-	50,000
Esmée Fairbairn	7,060	83,600	90,660
John Ellerman	-	46,000	46,000
Joseph Rowntree	71,123	-	71,123
Legal Education Foundation	-	55,000	55,000
Sigrid Rausing	-	10,000	10,000
The Owl Trust	-	100,000	100,000
Other	-	10,000	10,000
Gifts in kind*	-	3,885	3,885
Total income from donations	128,183	339,765	467,948

Prior year comparative

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Donations	-	23,817	23,817
Grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	75,000	75,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	50,000	-	50,000
The Owl Trust	-	50,000	50,000
Gifts in kind*	-	975	975
Total income from donations	50,000	149,792	199,792

*Gifts in kind relate to pro bono legal advice, training, stationery, printed materials and room hire.

The charity received no government grants in the current or prior year.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

4. Income from charitable activities

	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Training, conferences and events	172,582	110,010
Other	<u>-</u>	<u>250</u>
Total income from charitable activities	<u>172,582</u>	<u>110,260</u>

All income from charitable activities in the current and prior year was unrestricted.

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2025 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	50,962	317,341	69,628	437,931
Legal and professional fees	-	37,783	-	37,783
Marketing and communications	-	1,121	-	1,121
Room hire	-	3,069	-	3,069
Accountancy	-	-	28,566	28,566
Staff recruitment and training	-	-	5,941	5,941
IT equipment and software	-	17,391	-	17,391
Travel and subsistence	-	12,863	610	13,473
Office costs	-	-	3,099	3,099
Insurance	-	-	588	588
Depreciation	<u>-</u>	<u>1,166</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,166</u>
Sub-total	50,962	390,734	108,432	550,128
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>15,004</u>	<u>93,428</u>	<u>(108,432)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>65,966</u>	<u>484,162</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>550,128</u>

Total governance costs were £2,397 (2024: £2,100). The prior year figure has been restated to more accurately reflect the total governance costs in the year.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

5. Total expenditure (continued)

Prior year comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	31,886	267,479	59,506	358,871
Research participation	-	750	-	750
Legal and professional fees	-	50,752	-	50,752
Marketing and communications	-	1,567	-	1,567
Room hire	-	4,155	-	4,155
Accountancy	-	-	9,333	9,333
Staff recruitment and training	-	-	26,221	26,221
IT equipment and software	78	12,241	-	12,319
Travel and subsistence	-	13,809	-	13,809
Office costs	-	3,578	3,978	7,556
Insurance	-	-	1,005	1,005
Sub-total	31,964	354,331	100,043	486,338
Allocation of support and governance costs	10,656	89,387	(100,043)	-
Total expenditure	42,620	443,718	-	486,338

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation	1,166	-
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed travel expenses	57	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (including VAT)	2,340	2,100
▪ Other services	-	7,233

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	372,307	299,342
Social security costs	27,799	20,190
Pension costs	8,400	6,284
Freelancers	29,425	33,055
	<u>437,931</u>	<u>358,871</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officers and Engagement Director. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £102,859 (2024: £117,208).

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Average head count	<u>16</u>	<u>12</u>

8. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

9. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2024	-	-
Additions in year	4,198	4,198
Disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2025	<u>4,198</u>	<u>4,198</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2024	-	-
Charge for the year	1,166	1,166
On disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2025	<u>1,166</u>	<u>1,166</u>
Net book value		
At 31 March 2025	<u>3,032</u>	<u>3,032</u>
At 31 March 2024	-	-

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

10. Debtors	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	29,450	95,965
Prepayments	4,296	3,876
	33,746	99,841
11. Creditors: amounts due within 1 year	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	4,364	2,989
Accruals	2,270	5,517
Deferred income (note 12)	12,000	99,310
Other creditors	4,272	-
	22,906	107,816
12. Deferred income	2025	2024
	£	£
At 1 April 2024	99,310	70,995
Deferred during the year	12,000	99,310
Released during the year	(99,310)	(70,995)
At 31 March 2025	12,000	99,310

Deferred income relates to training invoiced in advance to be delivered during 2023/24.

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	3,032	3,032
Current assets	76,942	84,167	86,565	247,674
Current liabilities	-	-	(22,906)	(22,906)
Net assets at 31 March 2025	76,942	84,167	66,691	227,800
Prior year comparative				
	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	32,692	80,103	130,525	243,320
Current liabilities	-	-	(107,816)	(107,816)
Net assets at 31 March 2024	32,692	80,103	22,709	135,504

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

14. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds					
John Ellerman Foundation	7,222	-	(515)	-	6,707
The Baring Foundation	-	50,000	(20,000)	-	30,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	25,470	71,123	(63,418)	-	33,175
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	7,060	-	-	7,060
Total restricted funds	32,692	128,183	(83,933)	-	76,942
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
Esmée Fairbairn, 2021 - 2025	31,276	83,600	(77,376)	-	37,500
Leigh Day Inquiry	5,000	-	-	(5,000)	-
Thirty Percy Foundation	43,827	-	(43,827)	-	-
The Legal Education Foundation	-	55,000	(8,333)	-	46,667
<i>Total designated funds</i>	80,103	138,600	(129,536)	(5,000)	84,167
General funds	22,709	375,641	(336,659)	5,000	66,691
Total unrestricted funds	102,812	514,241	(466,195)	-	150,858
Total funds	135,504	642,424	(550,128)	-	227,800

Purposes of restricted funds

John Ellerman Foundation

Two year grant for Birthrights to convene a national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, towards delivery and staff costs, including a new post to ensure the inquiry is co produced by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Restricted grant towards our work to centre anti-racism in all we do, including through enhanced training with JMB and contribution to staffing costs.

The Baring Foundation

Restricted grant to scale work centering community voice and power through training with civil society organisations, open-sourcing our legal knowledge, a strategic approach to legal action, and campaigning for legislative change.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Funding received from Esmee Fairbairn's 'Funding Plus' grant scheme to support the development of a multi-year fundraising strategy, aiming to increase the organisation's sustainability and stability.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

14. Movements in funds (continued)

Purpose of designated funds

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation 2021 - 2025

Funding over four years towards unrestricted core costs to protect human rights in maternity care through advice, training and influencing.

Leigh Day Inquiry

Unrestricted corporate donation designated for events, communications and consultancy costs.

Thirty Percy Foundation

Three year unrestricted grant designated for staff and operational costs, including a new senior post to lead and develop our communications and engagement work, to reach and support more women and birthing people with a diverse range of needs and experiences.

The Legal Education Foundation

Unrestricted core funding towards supporting Birthrights deliver against its 10-year strategic framework and influence systemic change in legislation, policy and practice.

Transfers between funds

Birthrights completed the Leigh Day Inquiry, the remaining funds were transferred from designated to unrestricted funds.

Prior year comparative

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds				
John Ellerman Foundation	50,479	-	(43,257)	7,222
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	37,231	50,000	(61,761)	25,470
The Hospital Saturday Fund	2,000	-	(2,000)	-
Total restricted funds	89,710	50,000	(107,018)	32,692
Unrestricted funds				
<i>Designated funds</i>				
Esmée Fairbairn, 2021 - 2025	97,832	25,000	(91,556)	31,276
Leigh Day Inquiry	-	5,000	-	5,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	87,825	-	(43,998)	43,827
<i>Total designated funds</i>	185,657	30,000	(135,554)	80,103
General funds	34,738	231,737	(243,766)	22,709
Total unrestricted funds	220,395	261,737	(379,320)	102,812
Total funds	310,105	311,737	(486,338)	135,504

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

15. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current year or prior year.

BIRTHRIGHTS

England & Wales - Charity number 1151152

Accounts

Charity no. 1151152

Birthrights
Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements
31 March 2024

Birthrights

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Charity number	1151152																																
Registered office	Birthrights Union House 111 New Union Street Coventry CV1 2NT																																
Trustees	The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows: <table><tr><td>Alix-Louise Anderson</td><td>Secretary</td></tr><tr><td>Tara Arnold</td><td>(resigned 16 December 2023)</td></tr><tr><td>Rachel Crasnow QC</td><td>(resigned 18 July 2023)</td></tr><tr><td>Inderjit Cross</td><td>(resigned 7 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>John Davis</td><td>Treasurer</td></tr><tr><td>Marcia Lord</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Dr Ria May Clarke</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Simon Mehigan</td><td>(resigned 16 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Sandra Nneoma Igwe</td><td>(resigned 28 January 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Elizabeth Prochaska</td><td>(resigned 1 November 2023)</td></tr><tr><td>Amelia Christie</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Naomi Allen</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Roisin Mulrone</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Krystal Lashley-Scrivener</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Annabel Sowemimo</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Elise Denis-Ramirez</td><td>(appointed 14 August 2024)</td></tr></table>	Alix-Louise Anderson	Secretary	Tara Arnold	(resigned 16 December 2023)	Rachel Crasnow QC	(resigned 18 July 2023)	Inderjit Cross	(resigned 7 August 2024)	John Davis	Treasurer	Marcia Lord		Dr Ria May Clarke		Simon Mehigan	(resigned 16 July 2024)	Sandra Nneoma Igwe	(resigned 28 January 2024)	Elizabeth Prochaska	(resigned 1 November 2023)	Amelia Christie	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Naomi Allen	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Roisin Mulrone	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Krystal Lashley-Scrivener	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Annabel Sowemimo	(appointed 14 August 2024)	Elise Denis-Ramirez	(appointed 14 August 2024)
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Annabel Sowemimo	(appointed 14 August 2024)																																
Elise Denis-Ramirez	(appointed 14 August 2024)																																
Co-Chief executives	Shanthi Gunsekera Janaki Mahadevan																																
Patron	Nadine Montgomery																																
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank Olympic House 6 Olympic Court Montford Street Salford M5 2QP																																
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD																																

1. Introduction from our Interim Chair

Last year, 2023 marked the 10th anniversary of Birthrights, founded by human rights lawyer Elizabeth Prochaska and writer and doula Rebecca Schiller with the understanding that at the heart of the poor experiences and outcomes of maternity care for so many, is a consistent failure to listen to the voices of women and birthing people and a complete disregard for their fundamental human rights.

A decade on and we know that our work is more urgent than ever. The maternity system in the UK is in deep crisis and the experiences and outcomes for many women and birthing people, and their babies, are alarming.

And so in this milestone year, we have taken the time to reflect on how far we have come, but also what more we have to do – building the right team, structure and strategy to make us resilient to the challenging environment we operate in, to drive forward meaningful, systemic changes in maternity care and to continue to demand the rights of women and birthing people are centred during pregnancy and childbirth.

We acknowledge the deep challenges and the essential work that still lies ahead. As we look to the forthcoming year, commencing the recruitment process for a number of new trustees and a new Chair of the Board marks the beginning of a new chapter, alongside the expansion of our face-to-face community advice, developing our training model for maximum impact and building our campaigns to influence real change to maternity care.

We would like to convey our sincere appreciation to the trustees that have stepped down this year following the end of their term of office. First and foremost, Elizabeth Prochaska, founder and former chair – for whom we extend our deep thanks for her vision, determination and all she has created at Birthrights; to Sandra Igwe, Rachel Crasnow and Tara Arnold, for their expertise, support and insights during their time with us.

We extend heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has played a part in our journey so far. Together, we enter our second decade with a strengthened resolve to make birth justice a reality – fighting for the fundamental rights of women and birthing people during pregnancy and birth, now and for the generations ahead.

Indy Cross, Interim Chair

2. Welcome from our Co-Chief Executives

Birth justice exists when women and birthing people have the right to give birth with whom, where, when and however they choose and when laws, policies and practice supports access to these rights for everyone. These rights exist in international human rights law and UK laws, but access to exercising them is under threat in the UK for everyone and is particularly restricted for the most marginalised and minoritised.

The consistent failure to listen to the voices of women and birthing people and the routine disregard of their human rights is resulting in individual birth trauma and contributing to community and societal trauma and distrust in the healthcare system more widely.

We are hearing of women and birthing people experiencing suspensions of and restrictions to core services without regard to individual need; coercive practice; breaches of consent; lack of respect for bodily autonomy; and referrals to police and social services for refusing interventions. We have also heard from those who feel the only option available to them, in the face of blanket hospital policies and lack of person-centred care, is unassisted birth. This should be a wake-up call to all those involved in decision-making, regulation, management and delivery of maternity services that radical change is urgently required.

A maternity service that understands and protects the rights of women and birthing people during pregnancy and birth is essential to reducing trauma and the provision of safe care. We believe a world where women and birthing people's bodily autonomy and informed decisions about their care are respected is not only possible, but crucial to a healthy, sustainable and just society.

Birthrights continues to exist to protect the human rights of all women and birthing people in the UK a decade after it was founded, and we move into our next decade with strengthened foundations. Over the past year we undertook an organisational restructure so Birthrights could allocate its limited resources most effectively, including building resilience in our services and bringing in the expertise needed to increase our reach and impact. The development of a new 10-year strategic framework has enabled us to focus and prioritise work towards long-term and systemic change. We have sought to improve the health and infrastructure of our organisation through the roll-out of organisational laptops to all staff, the introduction of customer relationships management (CRM) software, IT migration to Microsoft 365 and an extensive review and development of our internal policies. Whilst making this significant investment in our charity, we have continued to provide critical information, advice and training, and advocate for change.

We are deeply grateful to all those who have provided the vision and leadership for movements for justice and recognise the inspiration we take from their teachings and commit to continue our learning and journey towards anti-oppression. We also want to extend our heartfelt thanks to those who make our work possible - the incredible talent and dedication of our staff team and Associate Trainers who have demonstrated such commitment to championing the rights of women and birthing people throughout a rapidly changing external context, and a period of change for Birthrights. We are thankful to everyone who has supported us in this period of transition in an interim and freelance basis and to those who have generously contributed to Birthrights through poetry, visual media and storytelling. In particular, we wish to thank our founder and outgoing chair Elizabeth Prochaska for her support and faith in us as we undertook our first leadership role in the charity sector.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

We are delighted to welcome many new joiners to the Birthrights team in 2023/24 who are bringing dedicated capacity to our communications, campaigns and fundraising functions for the first time.

Together, in community with women and birthing people and their supporters who continue to fight, often against the odds for justice and equity, we believe a radically different maternity system is possible.

Shanthi Gunsekera and Janaki Mahadevan, co-CEOs

3. Gratitude

On behalf of the Birthrights' staff team, our Board and the communities we serve, we are grateful for the continued support from our funders. Thank you to our trust and foundation funders: Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Thirty Percy, Owl Trust, John Ellerman; Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust; National Lottery Community Fund and our corporate partners Leigh Day and Irwin Mitchell for believing in and advocating for our work in 2023/24. We would also like to thank all those who have donated so generously to support our work and champion our cause.

And finally, a huge thank you to all Birthrights' supporters for standing with us to champion the fundamental rights of women and birthing people during pregnancy and birth. Together we can fight for a world where women and birthing people can access safe maternity care that fully respects their right to bodily autonomy and self-agency, free from discrimination, coercion and violence.

4. Structure, governance and management

Birthrights is a charitable incorporated organisation and is registered with the Charity Commission with charity number 1151152.

The method of recruitment and appointment of trustees is set out in its governing document: the constitution. Four trustees stood down between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 – our former Chair and Founder, Elizabeth Prochaska – alongside Rachel Crasnow, Tara Arnold and Sandra Igwe; and one trustee – Simon Mehigan – stepped down after his third term in office in July 2024. Three trustees had their appointments renewed for a second term in line with the constitution – Alix Anderson, Indy Cross and Mars Lord.

The current trustees comprise a finance and business expert, experienced charity leaders, governance specialists, a doula and anti-racism campaigners. Most Trustees have lived experience of maternity care.

The trustees are responsible for making decisions on the management of all the affairs of Birthrights, including deciding on how the funds of the charity are to be spent. The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The full Board of trustees met five times during 2023/24, including one extraordinary board meeting. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee also met four times in this period.

5. Objectives and Activities

5.1 About

Birthrights launched in January 2013 when we were established as the UK charity that champions respectful care during pregnancy and childbirth by protecting human rights. We believe that everyone is entitled to respectful maternity care that protects their fundamental rights to dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality. We provide free advice and legal information to women and birthing people, train healthcare professionals and birth workers to deliver rights-respecting care and campaign to change maternity policy and systems. Our research shines a spotlight on those most at risk of human rights violations in pregnancy and birth due to structural disadvantage and discrimination.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Our vision for 2022-24 was to ensure everyone receives the respect and dignity they deserve in pregnancy and childbirth. Our mission in the same period was to be the authority on human rights in pregnancy and childbirth in the UK and use that influence to improve services and practice throughout the maternity system.

Birthrights does not promote any particular clinical perspectives in maternity care.

5.2 Aims

The aim of Birthrights is to promote the human rights of child-bearing women and people in England and Wales. These rights are set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

5.3 Activities

Birthrights is committed to:

- promoting awareness of the legal rights of child-bearing women and people during and connected to pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period (the six weeks subsequent to birth);
- promoting respect for the legal rights of child-bearing women and people among healthcare organisations, medical and other professions and in society at large;
- protecting the human rights of child-bearing women and people through the provision of legal information and advice and obtaining redress for victims of human rights abuse;
- campaigning in relation to human rights and related legal issues relating to child-bearing women and people;
- responding with technical advice to proposed legislation and policy affecting child-bearing women and people;
- providing technical advice to government and others on human rights and other legal and regulatory matters as they affect child-bearing women and people;
- contributing to the understanding and sound administration of human rights law as it affects childbearing women and people, in particular, but not exclusively, through third-party interventions in legal cases;
- promoting the human rights and lawful treatment of child-bearing women and people by commissioning and conducting research;
- providing education and training to, among others, parents and parents-to-be, healthcare professionals and the public on human rights and the law as it affects child-bearing women and people;
- eliminating infringements of human rights of child-bearing women and people; and
- undertaking other charitable activities that the trustees may from time to time determine to promote the human rights and legal status of child-bearing women and people.

When planning our activities for the year, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the promotion of human rights.

The Trust has referred to the terms of the Scheme and the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing its aims and objectives and planning future activities. In particular the Trustees consider how proposed activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

6. Achievements and Performance 2023/24

Highlights from the Year

- In 2023-2024, we supported more than 151,518 individuals in their journeys for birth justice (measured by unique visitors to our factsheets and just over 750 individuals accessing information and advice through our email service);
- We have begun to offer free community outreach and drop-in advice and information sessions for marginalised and minoritised women and birthing people and their immediate supporters, through community groups. The work commenced in November 2023 and to date we have attended four community group sessions supporting up to 20 women directly each time with information and advice;
- We led 100 training courses for Healthcare Professionals, which was an increase of 85.2% on the previous year, enabling us to reach approximately 2,752 professionals working in maternity settings. This included doctors, midwives, anaesthetists, neonatologists, paramedics, birth workers and maternity investigators;
- 98% of attendees across our training sessions stated that their 'knowledge and understanding of how human rights applies to maternity care' had improved;
- We provided heavily discounted training for community birth workers and peer supporters in 2023/24 and we delivered three sessions supporting 48 people with the tools to support others in their community to advocate for their rights;
- Birthrights' communications have improved in a number of areas including increased social media reach and influence which has seen us reach 180% more non-followers a month on Instagram; improvements to the Birthrights newsletter which saw us hit a 55.5% open rate in March 2024 (above the industry average of 40%); as well as improvements to the Birthrights website where we've increased the average visitor duration time by 146%;
- We advised policy makers, heads of midwifery and other midwifery leaders, and regulators on growing sector interest in out of guidelines care and unassisted births;
- We submitted evidence to module 3 of the Covid Inquiry, the Sentencing Council, the Birth Trauma APPG and the UN International Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls. In our submissions, we centred how poor culture and practice within the maternity system disproportionately impacts marginalised communities; and
- We continued to improve the health and resilience in the way we work so that we build a strong infrastructure to operate in. This has included implementing a new CRM System and migrating all staff to Microsoft 365.

6.1 Information and Advice

We support women and birthing people to get their voices heard so decisions about their bodies and their care are respected. We do this by equipping them with information about their human rights in maternity care so they can advocate for themselves. We are the only organisation in the UK to provide rights-based information on birth options from maternal request caesarean to unassisted births. And we provide practical advice and more intensive support via our email advice service. In 2023/24 we started offering free advice sessions in community settings, and trialling a telephony service to those for whom the scale of oppression they experience means self-advocacy is not possible. When women and birthing people have information and support to advocate for their rights, birth justice becomes a possibility.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

About the advice service

Our email information and advice service is grounded in a deep understanding of the law and how it relates to maternity care. We combine this with a commitment to provide trauma-informed and empathetic advice and information about rights to women and birthing people, and those supporting them, alongside practical advice on how to raise complaints and self-advocate in discussions with healthcare professionals. Our advice service also receives inquiries from individual maternity professionals who want to find out how to effectively uphold women and birthing people's reproductive choices and challenge concerning practice and policies in their Trusts using the legal framework.

We continue to see the voices of women and birthing people routinely ignored or dismissed. Trusts and hospitals continue to implement policies and practices that fail to take account of individual need; suspend or restrict access to core maternity services; and do not respect informed decision-making and bodily autonomy.

Within this context, the power of the information and advice Birthrights provides to ensure the experiences and decisions of women and birthing people are heard and supported is clear in the feedback we receive.

'I've honestly felt so empowered, relieved and validated reading the email'

(Feedback from a service user, Nov 2023)

It is crucial that our staff team have both the physical and emotional capacity to respond to increasingly complex and traumatic accounts they receive through the information and advice service. In 2023/24 in response to the changing nature of enquiries coming through to us, we increased capacity within the service to enable the team to respond to and carefully manage complex enquiries, including those about lack of consent, birth trauma and racism to ensure each team member's emotional wellbeing is safeguarded. We also introduced professional supervision for the information and advice manager and continue to explore ways to broaden our wellbeing support for the whole staff team.

Factsheets

In 2023/24, we had 150,768 unique visitors accessing our factsheets. Whilst we cannot know what proportion of these were pregnant, and what proportion were birthing partners, supporters, wider family members or healthcare professionals, we do know that there were 673,500 births recorded across the UK in 2022. Our factsheets about rights during pregnancy and birth therefore were potentially being accessed in relation to up to 22% of births across the UK.

The top 5 most viewed factsheets (and their unique visitor numbers) were:

- Rights to a caesarean birth (31,500);
- Human Rights in Maternity Care (17,200);
- Choice of place of birth (16,900);
- Unassisted birth (16,600); and
- Right to NHS Services (15,100).

Enquiries in 2023/24

In 2023/24, we received over 750 enquiries to our advice service. We have seen a reduction in basic numbers of enquiries by about 20% since the height of the Covid-19 pandemic when we received many relating to changing Covid-19 regulations, including the rules around wearing a mask, about the right to any birth partner, or the right to decline Covid-19 testing for appointments or requests for information about Covid-19 vaccinations.

However, the nature of the advice service has changed markedly across the last four years. A significant number of women and birthing people who had given birth during the pandemic, particularly at the height of restrictions, or who have experienced systemic racism or discrimination during their pregnancy, want to make complex and extensive complaints about the poor nature of their maternity care and human rights breaches. Complaints, particularly around consent and birth trauma, and a number of bereavements, made up the highest volume of all enquiries across the year. Very often, these are detailed and complex, requiring dedicated time, and personalised responses across multiple emails. In many cases, women and birthing people, particularly those identified as not speaking English as a first language, as neurodiverse or from other marginalised communities, or those who have suffered a stillbirth or neonatal death, will share their birth trauma story and require information and practical advice on how to set this out as a formal complaint.

We have extended our services to trial telephone conversations to women and birthing people for whom the scale of oppression they experience means self-advocacy is not possible. Using only email will not be sufficient to ensure they can access the legal advice and process information and support required and is a significant additional barrier for them, often because they have suffered a bereavement during birth. Since January 2024, we have provided additional telephony information and practical advice to four people – all of whom were racially minoritised women who had suffered a loss during birth and who are considering a legal claim. We continue to review the need for and potential to expand access to telephony support.

Advice sessions in communities

We recognise that when women and birthing people have information about their rights, they hold increased power. We want to expand access to this information in marginalised and minoritised communities at greatest risk of rights violations, and recognise the importance of working with community organisations to do this. In November 2023, we started offering free, half-day advice sessions to grassroots birth support groups wishing to invite us into trusted spaces for these communities. In 2023/24, we provided four advice sessions in a mix of online and in-person community settings, with 10-20 people attending each community session.

“You can no longer get pregnant and have a baby without educating yourself [...] The session this evening was free information from professionals within the industry and some thought-provoking ‘never would have thought of that’ type questions from a local doula. I mean does it get better than that?”

(community session attendee, February 2024)

Demand for this offer is increasing, and we have several sessions booked into 2024/25 with an ambition to grow this offer more widely across the UK.

6.2 Training

Birth justice can only be realised if those who design, manage, deliver and regulate maternity services understand how the law applies and why it is critical for the delivery of safe care. This is why we deliver training to frontline healthcare professionals.

About our training service

We provide training to frontline healthcare professionals in NHS trusts and hospitals, regulators, doulas and birth support workers on how the law relates to maternity care. Within training sessions, we continue to prioritise listening to the feedback and experience of those working in maternity services, and recognise the many challenges of their daily working lives.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Our training is always provided by two trainers - one with legal and the other clinical experience. We draw on our experienced staff team and a cohort of dedicated associate trainers to deliver training online and in person across the country.

We have focused in 2023/24 on building consistency into the delivery of our training and have developed a robust on-boarding and quality assurance system to support our Associate Trainers. All courses now contain detailed 'Trainer Notes' to allow consistency of information between trainers and we regularly observe our Associates and provide feedback on their delivery. We pair new trainers with more experienced trainers to allow them to develop confidence and independence during their initial sessions. We continue to offer our trainers 'Workshops' on a variety of topics to aid their continuing development and providing them with updates on core legislation and case law.

Across our training sessions, we collated feedback from 940 delegates. Of these, 98.2% of respondents stated that their 'knowledge and understanding of how human rights applies to maternity care' had improved, with 87.9% of respondents stating that attending the session has impacted on how they will carry out their roles going forward. 97.2% of respondents stated that they would recommend Birthrights' training to others.

Delivery to community birth workers

We offer subsidised training to those working outside the NHS as they do not have the same access to funding, but in many instances are the only trusted individual. In 2023/24 we delivered 'Human Rights in Maternity Care: Helping Others Navigate the System' for CSOs in Peterborough, Cardiff and online, supporting 44 doulas, birth workers and peer supporters. The sessions are designed for participants to:

- Learn how human rights law supports advocacy for safe and personalised care;
- Understand what informed consent is and what it means for their community; and
- Practice how to use human rights to challenge embedded and harmful practice.

Our standard training provision operates on a cost-recovery basis, meaning we are limited to how many subsidised sessions we provide and restricted to scheduling them when we know there is reduced demand from Trusts, most commonly during winter months.

"Such valuable training for all birth workers. I would love to see this ripple through the maternity system."

(Subsidised training session for community group, participant)

Delivery to Regulators in 23/24

It is critically important that regulators of maternity services are aware of human rights law, how it applies to maternity care and how it is critical to the delivery of safe care. In 2023/24 we delivered a series of eight training sessions to 117 staff at MSNI (formerly HSIB).

"Thank you for such a great session. Birthrights is so valuable in protecting the human rights of those mothers that may not be able to do this themselves or know how to."

(Participant of training delivered to regulator MSNI)

Delivery to NHS in 23/24

With increasing demand for our training services, this year we have tried to build resilience into the Training Team, welcoming an additional staff member alongside working with approximately 35 active Associate Trainers, having recruited more Healthcare Professional Trainers in early 2024. This has meant that we have been able to extend our reach, and in 2023/24 Birthrights ran 100 training courses.

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This was an increase of 85.2% (54 courses) on the previous year. Of this figure, 69% were held in local settings and 31% were held online. This marks a trend of a return to face-to-face sessions in comparison to the previous financial year whereby only 40% of sessions were delivered in person. As maternity services continue to recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, we expect to see this trend continue, with an increased preference for in-person training. We will continue to review the need for additional Associate Trainers as our demand increased and our geographical reach extends.

In 2023/24 we trained roughly 2,752 professionals working in maternity settings. Those who attended training included doctors, midwives, anaesthetists, paramedics, birth workers and maternity investigators. We continue to offer our core training to healthcare professionals in both a half and full-day format and over the past 12 months have continued to develop and expand an additional bespoke birth worker training, making it more accessible for those working outside the NHS, including doulas.

Our sessions are delivered in a variety of settings, to a broad mix of delegates. We work with organisations to identify who attends training sessions, with some sessions provided to set groups, e.g. student midwives, whilst others are cross-discipline. We have seen an increase in organisations utilising our offer of a 10% discount for multi-disciplinary teams, with four different organisations successfully applying for this. We offer a discount to encourage an organisational-based approach to rights-based care. Over the coming year we will continue to explore ways to encourage whole-organisation buy-in to our cause.

We have also worked on building more deep-rooted relationships with NHS Trusts, focussing on supporting Trusts to embed meaningful cultural and procedural change. One example is Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. Between November 2023 and March 2024, the Trust commissioned eight face-to-face 'Human Rights and Informed Consent in Maternity Care' courses with a total of 124 staff members attending. We worked closely with them to understand their needs and complete a post-course feedback report based on quantitative and qualitative data gathered during sessions and as part of the evaluation forms. This allowed us to provide more detailed recommendations for further sessions and how to embed cultural change. We provided a similar report to Bedford, Luton & Milton Keynes Trust and continue to explore ways to support organisations to make lasting, long-term cultural and structural changes.

"This has been one of the best training sessions I have attended in my three years of being qualified. Thank you so much."

(Feedback from a community midwife who participated in a training session)

Key themes

One of the unique aspects of our training programmes is that they allow us to hear first-hand from those working on the frontline of maternity services, across a broad range of Trusts, providing us with deeper insight into the issues being faced by NHS staff and women and birthing people. This includes lack of knowledge around informed consent, language barriers and difficulties accessing interpreters, suspension of homebirth services and uncertainty around care outside of guidance.

During this period, we have responded to emerging themes arising from our training sessions or queries received from our Advice Team, ensuring that our training is relevant and up to date, whilst also informing our wider campaigning work.

We ask participants through feedback forms to tell us what they believe needs to change to create a maternity culture in which human rights are always respected. Common responses include increased staffing and funding, expanding the training offer to reach more colleagues at all levels of the NHS including board and commissioning staff and more time to spend with service users to provide high quality individualised care. Hierarchical tensions between midwifery and obstetric colleagues and a culture of fear surrounding litigation and speaking out against poor practice were also highly evident in responses to this question.

In response to an increase in concerns relating to compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma we have provided additional support to our Associate Trainers to tackle these questions as they arise and adapted our training to include content relating to psychological safety in the workplace. Birthrights continues to be an advocate for better working conditions for those working within the maternity system and will continue to champion a system that is safe for all. Across the year we received multiple responses suggesting Birthrights training become mandatory across maternity care providers.

6.3 Policy, Campaigns and Influencing

We know that too often those involved in shaping maternity care do not understand how human rights applies, and that often healthcare professionals are prohibited from delivering the rights-respecting care they want by bullying and toxic work environments, and local policies they feel they must follow.

This is why we work behind the scenes as a critical friend and publicly hold institutions to account, through strategic use of the law and policy and campaigning work.

Public Affairs

In 2023/24 our public affairs work was focused on submitting evidence to key inquiries:

- The Women's and Equalities Committee published their report into black maternal health in April 2023, and drawing on evidence from Birthrights and others concluded the current Government and NHS measures to address the disparity in maternal deaths are "necessary but insufficient" and that the Government and NHS leadership have "underestimated" the extent to which racism plays a role in perpetuating inequalities. You can read our response to the report here:
['Government must eliminate racial disparities in maternal deaths' says Women & Equalities Select Committee - Birthrights](#);
- We were invited to submit evidence to the UK Covid-19 Public Inquiry Module 3 on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on healthcare systems, having also previously been invited to submit to Module 2 on political and administrative decision-making during the pandemic. In our module 3 submission in August 2023, we emphasised that the pandemic has brought the already precarious position of human rights in childbirth into sharp focus; set a harmful precedent for breaches of human rights and highlighted the long-term negative impacts on women and birthing people. We directed attention to the restrictions on birth partners, services and procedures and choices around place of birth, while emphasising the racial disparities and regional differences that had a disproportionate impact on marginalised communities;
- Our submission to the Sentencing Council consultation (along with a broad coalition of voices including Level Up and Birth Companions) on a new mitigating factor for pregnancy contributed to a significant widening of the factor;

- We submitted evidence to the Birth Trauma APPG where we centred the consistent failure to listen to voices of women and birthing people and a complete disregard for their fundamental human rights in maternity care. We highlighted that these do not only lead to individual trauma but also to community and societal trauma and distrust in the healthcare system. After the publication of the Birth Trauma Inquiry report, we highlighted the legal inaccuracy in the report which suggests that consent may be disregarded in “emergency situations”; and
- In our submission to the UN International Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls, during her UK visit, we reported that a lack of understanding around how human rights law applies to maternity care is resulting in violence against women and birthing people, disproportionately impacting those from marginalised communities.

Policy change

We are seen as a source of expert knowledge by many healthcare professionals, and in 2023/24 we have seen a particular interest in unassisted births. We shared our expertise behind the scenes to increase understanding and improve policy and outcomes including to:

- a serious case review which related to an unassisted birth;
- a multi-stakeholder working group convened by the Nursing and Midwifery Council on unassisted births; and
- NHS England to push for greater clarity on pathways to fulfil the legal duty to notify relevant authorities following an unassisted birth and shared our expertise with a newly established task and finish group.

“The decision to have an unassisted birth is completely lawful and for many women and birthing people, opting for free or unassisted birth is an empowering decision.

But we are deeply concerned that some people are opting for unassisted birth because they have been left with no other option, and for some people the decision comes from a deep fear of the maternity system, particularly given the horrific experiences and outcomes for so many. This should be a wakeup call that the voices and rights of women and birthing people must always be centred in maternity care.”



You can read our statement on unassisted births here:

<https://birthrights.org.uk/2024/02/07/birthrights-statement-on-unassisted-birth/>

or our factsheet here <https://birthrights.org.uk/factsheets/unassisted-birth/>.

We have also worked on creating policy change:

- We were reappointed to the NHS Maternity and Neonatal Stakeholder Council and at the first meeting of the reconvened group we focused attention on inequities at a systemic level;

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- We were invited to comment on the Equality and Human Rights Commission's draft briefing on using equality data in maternity care;
- We are part of the project advisory group of "The NoRePF Project- Improving maternal and child health and social inequalities for those with no recourse to public funds and irregular immigration status"; and
- We have been invited to contribute to national and regional work by providing specific information on the legal framework around unassisted birth and on maternity care that is significantly different from guidelines to Surrey Heartlands Partnership, NHS Lothian, NHS Grampian, and NHS England London Region.

Holding institutions to account

We engage directly with trusts and hospitals about policies and practices that are violating or restricting access to the rights of women and birthing people. We do this when self-advocacy is not working or is not possible for women and birthing people and when the breaches of rights appear to be institutional policy or practice.

"This is so great. I'm only 6 weeks away, so it might not change things for me, but hopefully will help others and if I have another child hopefully homebirth will be available then. I really appreciate your support. It's the first time I've felt listened to and supported during my pregnancy so it means so much."

(Feedback from someone contacting us regarding our letter to their local trust, March 2024.)

In 2023/24 we wrote to 10 trusts and hospitals across the UK about concerning policies and practices. These predominantly related to:

- Suspensions, restrictions and closures of home birth services;
- Visitor policies restricting birth partners presence before and after birth; and
- We are developing a decision framework to guide our next steps following initial letters to push for institutional and systemic change.

Campaigns

In 2023/24, we focused on building our relationships with other organisations and setting the groundwork for campaigns which have launched in 2024/25.

We continue to work in sisterhood with other organisations where there is strong alignment with protecting universal human rights and with reproductive justice, including:

- As a member of the Save Our HRA Coalition (a coalition of 270 charities and expert organisations working to protect human rights), where we support work to threats posed to human rights frameworks; and
- Joining calls led by RCOG and BPAS in support of Dame Diana Johnson MP's amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill which will ensure that vulnerable women in England and Wales will no longer be subject to years-long investigation, criminal charges, and custodial sentences for ending their own pregnancy.

6.4 Extending our reach through communications

In 2023/24 we focused on strengthening our social media, website and supporter newsletter including through building foundational analytic capacity, developing our assets and experimenting with different types of content and look and feel, with a view to extending our reach.

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Assets

To celebrate our 10th anniversary, we developed a video about our service offer across information, advice and training and the impact this has. It was important to us that we approached this video with the intention to do no harm, focusing on how our services have helped rather than traumatic experiences of those reaching our services. You can watch the video [here](#).

We also commissioned a poem by the incredible poet Desree which was performed at our 10th anniversary event. It was a deeply moving and powerful expression of our collective vision for maternity care and in 2024/25 will be filmed for use on our social media and website.

Social media

From January, we started to create and experiment with new types of social media content such as bringing the Birthrights' factsheets to life via infographic reels such as [this one](#).

Between Jan-April 2024 we started to see noticeable improvements in the performance of Birthrights social media channels as a result. On Instagram in January 2024, the organisation was reaching around 2,500 non-follower accounts per month but in February this climbed by 99% to almost 5,000 and in April this figure had climbed again to over 7,000.

Our post impressions on X (previously Twitter) also showed some improvement during this time and between Jan-Feb 2024 our post impressions increased by over 115%. On Meta (previously Facebook) there was also a 112% improvement in post reach during the same period.

The biggest growth however was seen on LinkedIn where organic impressions grew from 150 per month in January 2024 to 5,027 in March – an increase of over 3,000%.

Some of our top performing content on social media this year has been:

- On Instagram, our [gestational diabetes infographic reel](#) reached 3,757 accounts (2,017 non followers) and had 4,716 plays with total watch time of 5 hours 40 mins within its first month of posting;
- On X, our post about co-CEO Janaki Mahadevan's participation in the [Labour African Network's panel discussion "Why are Black women still four times more likely to die in childbirth than their peers?"](#) accrued 1,198 impressions with an engagement rate of 8.2%;
- On Meta, our International Women's Day post linking to a blog post all about our [UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls evidence submission](#) accrued 4,800 impressions and almost 500 interactions;
- On LinkedIn our post [linking new GP guidance around interpretation and translation services](#) with our 'Your Basic Birthrights' translated factsheets accrued 784 impressions and 56 clicks; and
- In January 2024 there were 238 referrals to the Birthrights website from our social media accounts, but by April this had increased by 53% to 366.

Website

Updating and increasing the performance, readability and engagement of our website is also an ongoing and priority area of work for the communications team to make sure that visitors are not siloed when they visit the site and that we take visitors between different areas of the Birthrights offering.

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For the 2023-24 financial year, the Birthrights website received 219,000 unique visitors and during this time we have managed to increase the page views per visit by 20%, reduce the bounce rate (the number of people who enter the website and leave after only viewing one page) by 7%, and increase the average visitor duration on the website by 145% to 59 seconds, where previously visitors only stayed on the website for an average of 24 seconds. Our most popular webpages (after the homepage) were our factsheets where visitor duration times varied from just over one minute all the way up to 13 minutes and 55 seconds. The average visitor duration time spent on our factsheets was just over six minutes in total, with visitors spending the longest time on 'Your Right to NHS Services' and 'Social Services and Maternity Care'. Throughout the year our racial injustice inquiry also remained popular with over 6,000 visitors spending an average of just over five minutes on this webpage.

Newsletter

We restarted our newsletter to supporters in Autumn 2023, and at the start of 2024 we gave the Birthrights newsletter a branding/graphics refresh to make the newsletter appear better in people's inboxes, increase readability and open rate, and improve conversions.

During February-October 2023 our newsletter had an approximate average open rate of 49% and click rate of 5%. By the end of March 2024, this had increased to an open rate of 55.5% and click rate of 6.5% – well above the non-profit sector average of 40% open rate and 3.27% click rate.

Press

Throughout the year, Birthrights has been quoted and/or referenced in a number of different news outlets including the BBC, The Sunday Post, Sky News, Telegraph, Health Service Journal. As well as an op-ed in the New Statesman on black maternal health, and an interview with Shanthi and Janaki in Third Sector about job-sharing.

Articles and their headlines (including online links where applicable) can be found below:

- BBC – '[End racial disparities in maternity care](#)';
- New Statesman – '[The scandal of black maternity deaths has to end](#)';
- Sunday Post - 'Home birth suspensions driven by gaps in midwifery workforce';
- Sky News - '[I've lost control of my birth': Caesarean sections delayed due to NHS strike](#)';
- Third Sector – '[The rise of charity job shares](#)';
- Health Service Journal - 'Exclusive: Rise in 'free births' raised with government and regulators'; and
- Telegraph - '[No doctor, no midwife – why more women are giving birth alone](#)'.

6.5 Strengthening our organisation

Over the past year we have worked hard to lay the foundations for the future of Birthrights, ensuring that we have the team and strategy to enable us to be a strong, efficient and resilient organisation in the years to come.

This has meant some hard decisions and deep reflection over 2022 to 2024 regarding our staff capacity, which resulted in a new team structure in 2023/24. This included building resilience in our advice and information and training teams, and a renewed focus on campaigning, communications, fundraising, policy and operations, recognising their critical importance in helping us to reach our core mission as a charity.

Alongside this we have also worked extensively to review, plan and create our new strategic framework which will come into effect in 2024/25, but for which much of the deep thinking has been carried out during this period. This sets out a framework for how we aim to achieve our vision of a world where women and birthing people can access safe maternity care that fully respects their right to bodily autonomy and self-agency, free from discrimination, coercion and violence.

At the operational level, we have focussed on strengthening our internal data security and professionalising our IT offer. We migrated to one single provider for our email and document storage system and partnered with a specialist IT company to provide full IT support and security, including premium level anti-virus and ransomware protection, data backup, automatic updates and remote employee device management. This has now resulted in a Best Practice Analysis review of our IT structure as 'outstanding' in the key areas of business continuity; physical infrastructure; device security; infrastructure security; user security; and productivity.

We have also worked reflectively towards our ambition of becoming an anti-oppression transformative organisation. We have started a series of extensive whole staff training sessions with thought-leaders JMB on racialisation and white supremacy, deepening our knowledge, challenging our own thinking and working towards dismantling embedded racism within our everyday personal and professional lives. This work will continue into 2024/25. We also undertook LGBTQ+ competency training with the Queer Birth Club to ensure that we are truly an organisation for all women and birthing people.

7. Principal risks and uncertainties

During the year Birthrights have further developed our risk management approach, embedding a framework designed to support the organisation's leadership to manage, rather than eliminate risk and support informed decision making. The framework supports colleagues to take a consistent approach to identifying and managing risk, ultimately ensuring risk is managed within the Board-agreed appetite and tolerance.

The staff team are essential to the identification, evaluation and management of risks, and we have tried during the year to build wider thinking and planning of risks and mitigations into every layer of our team's planning. Our approach is currently based on recognising and managing immediate and long-term risks, as well as identifying unexpected issues that have arisen within our operations. We consider all risks against the risk to the organisation, its people and the delivery of our strategic aims, and we plan to further build on this model – an area of work which will be led by our newly appointed Risk, Governance and Performance Operations Lead.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee reviews the risk register regularly and Birthrights' trustees determine how much risk the charity is willing to take in the pursuit of its objectives. The Finance, Audit & Risk Committee reviews the operational effectiveness of the risk management and it reports its findings to the Board, identifying any matters on which it considers action is needed, and making recommendations on the steps to be taken. Our principal strategic risks this year and the mitigations that have been/ are still in place are summarised below.

7.1 Financial Security

The risk: Internal and external financial pressures result in a greater level of financial risk to the organisation. These range from inflationary cost pressures to greater competition and uncertainty in fundraising. A number of our multi-year grant agreements are coming to an end and we no longer have the level of reserves we held previously, meaning the financial risk to the organisation has changed.

Our key mitigations:

- Birthrights has robust processes for budgeting, financial modelling, reporting, and forecasting that support the organisation's leadership to take informed timely decisions to manage its finances. This has been strengthened further with the appointment of a new accountancy firm to support our financial management and monitoring;
- Birthrights has established a new Head of Fundraising and Business Development role to lead the organisation's ambitions to diversify income streams and ensure greater long-term sustainability. Our leadership have also increased our external engagement with new funders, seeking a wider range of partners. Alongside this, we are developing how we measure the impact of our work to further evidence the tangible difference we make; and
- We have developed a strong ten-year strategy which sets out our ambition and roadmap to achieving real, lasting change in the maternity sector and we now have our full team in place to accelerate the pace of our work and drive forward our strategic goals.

7.2 Board development

The risk: we are anticipating significant change to the make-up of our Board of Trustees into the next financial year, with a number of trustee terms coming to an end or trustees needing to step away from their board commitments for personal reasons. We recognise that there is a risk this transition could impact board effectiveness.

Our key mitigating actions:

- We have planned recruitment to priority trustee positions and extended our current vice chair's term by a year to end of December 2024 to ensure continuity of trustees whilst new trustees bed into the organisation;
- We have Board development plans to support induction of new trustees, review ways of working of the Board and staff team and ensure development of a cohesive and effective Board; and
- An interim Chair has been identified amongst new trustees to oversee the Board development in the coming months and ensure effective operating of the organisation.

7.3 Staff well-being

The risk: our staff team are our greatest asset, holding so much knowledge and passion to further our strategic ambitions. We recognise that the violations of human rights in maternity care that our team are confronted with every day are deeply traumatising, particularly for so many of our staff team with lived experience of the issues. In addition to this, the wider climate in which we are operating can be deeply de-moralising. There is a risk that our staff experience emotional burn-out.

Our key mitigating actions:

- A significant driver for our restructure in 23/24 was to increase capacity in our staff team to be able to both respond to the demand on our services and create capacity to better strategically plan how to meet our strategic ambitions to create systemic change;
- We brought in some supervision for our Advice and Information Manager in 23/24 and are working to bring in supervision for the whole advice team and training team, as well as wider wellbeing support for the whole staff team; and
- We have started a staff well-being committee and have introduced quarterly in-person team meetings allowing time for collective strategising as well as down-time to simply connect.

8. Financial review

8.1 Summary of income and expenditure

In 2023/24 we secured an overall income of £311,737 compared to £423,191 in 2022/23. Restricted income changed from £106,134 in 2022/23 to £50,000 in 2023/24 and unrestricted income (including designated income) changed from £317,057 in 2022/23 to £261,737 in 2023/24. Of this overall unrestricted figure, the CEOs and Treasurer agreed to designate £80,103 of unrestricted funds for specific purposes, such as staff posts and projects. Total expenditure was £486,338 (compared to £382,564 in 2022/23) which was in line with budget expectations.

At the end of 2023, £310,105 of funds were carried forward, of which £89,710 was restricted funds from grants for planned activity in 2023/24 (due to projects being phased across multiple financial years). At the end of March 2024, £135,504 was carried forward into 2024/25, including £32,692 restricted funds, £80,103 designated funds and £22,709 general funds.

8.2 Reserves

At the end of 2023/24, we hold £22,709 in unrestricted reserves. In addition, £80,103 of core funding has been designated by the Trustees but could be reallocated if required.

Our reserves policy states that Birthrights will hold cash reserves to cover three months of operating costs. A three-month reserve would allow Birthrights the opportunity, if necessary, to wind down its programme of support in an orderly and managed fashion, including paying our staff reasonable notice. The Trustees believe this is the appropriate level of reserves to balance prudence and risk management against maximising the benefits the charity can deliver by not tying up too much of our funds in our reserves.

Within the year the trustees took a risk-based approach to our reserves position and enabled Birthrights to briefly operate below the policy threshold in order to maximise on opportunities and strengthen the staff team to provide capacity to build for the future. This analysis considered both the organisation's and external circumstances, as well as Birthrights' activities and principal risks.

For 2024/25, three months of operating costs would be £129,642, based on our planned income and expenditure budget.

8.3 Going concern

The trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved for the following reasons:

- The charity holds total reserves of £102,812 (including unrestricted and designated funds);
- The charity is carrying forward a significant unrestricted surplus into 2024/25 which has been designated for core staff costs; and
- The charity has grants in place which span 2024/25 and beyond.

The trustees therefore consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis for the preparation of the accounts, as detailed in note 1(b) to the financial statements. Fundraising will continue to be a major priority for the CEOs and senior team, to ensure sustainability and growth into the future.

9. Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees are to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the year. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

10. Independent examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charity during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 8 October 2024 and signed on their behalf by



Marcia Lord - Interim Chair



John Davis - Treasurer

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Birthrights

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Birthrights (the CIO) for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 22 to 33.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the CIO you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

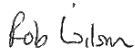
Since the CIO's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed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

Godfrey Wilson Limited also provides payroll and bookkeeping services to the CIO. I confirm that as a member of the ICAEW I am subject to the FRC's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, which I have applied with respect to this engagement.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material 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 CIO as required by section 130 of the Act; or the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.



Date: 8 October 2024

Robert Wilson FCA

Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Birthrights

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	50,000	149,792	199,792	369,404
Charitable activities	4	-	110,260	110,260	53,598
Investments		-	1,685	1,685	189
Total income		<u>50,000</u>	<u>261,737</u>	<u>311,737</u>	<u>423,191</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	42,620	42,620	52,265
Charitable activities		<u>107,018</u>	<u>336,700</u>	<u>443,718</u>	<u>330,299</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>107,018</u>	<u>379,320</u>	<u>486,338</u>	<u>382,564</u>
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds	6	(57,018)	(117,583)	(174,601)	40,627
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>89,710</u>	<u>220,395</u>	<u>310,105</u>	<u>269,478</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>32,692</u></u>	<u><u>102,812</u></u>	<u><u>135,504</u></u>	<u><u>310,105</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 13 to the accounts.

Birthrights

Balance sheet

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	2023 £
Current assets				
Debtors	9	99,841		73,145
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>143,479</u>		<u>316,148</u>
		243,320		389,293
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	10	<u>(107,816)</u>		<u>(79,188)</u>
Net current assets			<u>135,504</u>	<u>310,105</u>
Net assets	12		<u>135,504</u>	<u>310,105</u>
Funds	13			
Restricted funds			32,692	89,710
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			80,103	185,657
General funds			<u>22,709</u>	<u>34,738</u>
Total charity funds			<u>135,504</u>	<u>310,105</u>

Approved by the trustees on 8 October 2024 and signed on their behalf by



Marcia Lord - Interim Chair



John Davis - Treasurer

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

Birthrights 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).

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider to be appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves and future confirmed funding. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received under contracts, sponsorship agreements or in advance of provision of training is deferred and recognised when services are delivered.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the basis of staff time:

	2024	2023
Raising funds	11%	15%
Charitable activities	89%	85%

i) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

j) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

k) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

l) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

m) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

n) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

There are no sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

2. Prior period comparatives

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Income from:			
Donations	106,134	263,270	369,404
Charitable activities	-	53,598	53,598
Investments	-	189	189
Total income	106,134	317,057	423,191
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	52,265	52,265
Charitable activities	63,724	266,575	330,299
Total expenditure	63,724	318,840	382,564
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds	42,410	(1,783)	40,627

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Donations	-	23,817	23,817
Grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	75,000	75,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	50,000	-	50,000
The Owl Trust	-	50,000	50,000
Gifts in kind*	-	975	975
Total income from donations	50,000	149,792	199,792
Prior year comparative			2023 Total £
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	
Donations	-	41,065	41,065
Grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	97,500	97,500
John Ellerman Foundation	45,000	-	45,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	-	100,000	100,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	59,134	-	59,134
Best Beginnings	-	2,000	2,000
The National Lottery	-	10,000	10,000
The Hospital Saturday Fund	2,000	-	2,000
The Big Give	-	10,205	10,205
Gifts in kind*	-	2,500	2,500
Total income from donations	106,134	263,270	369,404

*Gifts in kind relate to pro bono legal advice, training, stationery, printed materials and room hire.

The charity received government grants, defined as funding from the National Lottery to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the year ending 31 March 2024 was £nil (2023: £10,000). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

4. Income from charitable activities

	2024	2023
	Total	Total
	£	£
Training, conferences and events	110,010	51,930
Other	250	1,668
Total income from charitable activities	<u>110,260</u>	<u>53,598</u>

All income from charitable activities in the current and prior year was unrestricted.

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	31,886	267,479	59,506	358,871
Research participation	-	750	-	750
Legal and professional fees	-	50,752	-	50,752
Marketing and communications	-	1,567	-	1,567
Room hire	-	4,155	-	4,155
Accountancy	-	-	9,333	9,333
Staff recruitment and training	-	-	26,221	26,221
IT equipment and software	78	12,241	-	12,319
Travel and subsistence	-	13,809	-	13,809
Office costs	-	3,578	3,978	7,556
Insurance	-	-	1,005	1,005
Sub-total	31,964	354,331	100,043	486,338
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>10,656</u>	<u>89,387</u>	<u>(100,043)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>42,620</u>	<u>443,718</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>486,338</u>

Total governance costs were £2,100 (2023: £1,920). The prior year figure has been restated to more accurately reflect the total governance costs in the year.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

5. Total expenditure (continued)

Prior year comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	36,706	204,744	55,861	297,311
Research participation	-	578	-	578
Legal and professional fees	-	20,195	-	20,195
Marketing and communications	-	2,243	-	2,243
Room hire	-	2,000	-	2,000
Accountancy	-	-	8,195	8,195
Staff recruitment and training	-	-	19,615	19,615
IT equipment and software	1,342	17,845	-	19,187
Travel and subsistence	-	7,587	-	7,587
Office costs	1,015	1,471	2,051	4,537
Insurance	-	-	1,116	1,116
Sub-total	39,063	256,663	86,838	382,564
Allocation of support and governance costs	13,202	73,636	(86,838)	-
Total expenditure	52,265	330,299	-	382,564

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2024 £	2023 £
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (including VAT)	2,100	1,920
▪ Other services	7,233	6,275

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	299,342	238,139
Social security costs	20,190	14,857
Pension costs	6,284	5,111
Freelancers	33,055	39,704
	<u>358,871</u>	<u>297,811</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officers and Engagement Director. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £117,208 (2023: £127,159).

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Average head count	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>
Average full time equivalent	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>

8. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

9. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	95,965	73,145
Prepayments	3,876	-
	<u>99,841</u>	<u>73,145</u>

10. Creditors: amounts due within 1 year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	2,989	761
Accruals	5,517	2,420
Deferred income (note 11)	99,310	70,995
Other creditors	-	5,012
	<u>107,816</u>	<u>79,188</u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

11. Deferred income	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April 2023	70,995	25,000
Deferred during the year	99,310	70,995
Released during the year	(70,995)	(25,000)
At 31 March 2024	<u>99,310</u>	<u>70,995</u>

Deferred income relates to training invoiced in advance to be delivered during 2023/24.

12. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	32,692	80,103	130,525	243,320
Current liabilities	-	-	(107,816)	(107,816)
Net assets at 31 March 2024	<u>32,692</u>	<u>80,103</u>	<u>22,709</u>	<u>135,504</u>
Prior year comparative				
	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	89,710	185,657	113,926	389,293
Current liabilities	-	-	(79,188)	(79,188)
Net assets at 31 March 2023	<u>89,710</u>	<u>185,657</u>	<u>34,738</u>	<u>310,105</u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

13. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds				
John Ellerman Foundation	50,479	-	(43,257)	7,222
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	37,231	50,000	(61,761)	25,470
The Hospital Saturday Fund	2,000	-	(2,000)	-
Total restricted funds	89,710	50,000	(107,018)	32,692
Unrestricted funds				
<i>Designated funds</i>				
Esmée Fairbairn, 2021 - 2025	97,832	25,000	(91,556)	31,276
Leigh Day Inquiry	-	5,000	-	5,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	87,825	-	(43,998)	43,827
<i>Total designated funds</i>	185,657	30,000	(135,554)	80,103
General funds	34,738	231,737	(243,766)	22,709
Total unrestricted funds	220,395	261,737	(379,320)	102,812
Total funds	310,105	311,737	(486,338)	135,504

Purposes of restricted funds

John Ellerman Foundation

Two year grant for Birthrights to convene a national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, towards delivery and staff costs, including a new post to ensure the inquiry is co produced by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Restricted grant towards our work to centre anti-racism in all we do, including through enhanced training with JMB and contribution to staffing costs.

The Hospital Saturday Fund

Grant funding to enable Birthrights to provide advice, training and support so that everyone receives the respect and dignity they deserve in pregnancy and childbirth.

Purpose of designated funds

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation 2021 - 2025

Funding over four years towards unrestricted core costs to protect human rights in maternity care through advice, training and influencing.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

13. Movements in funds (continued)

Leigh Day Inquiry

Unrestricted corporate donation designated for events, communications and consultancy costs.

Thirty Percy Foundation

Three year unrestricted grant designated for staff and operational costs, including a new senior post to lead and develop our communications and engagement work, to reach and support more women and birthing people with a diverse range of needs and experiences.

Prior year comparative

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds				
Baring Foundation, Legal Action	1,695	-	(1,695)	-
John Ellerman Foundation	33,226	45,000	(27,747)	50,479
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	11,588	59,134	(33,491)	37,231
King's College London	791	-	(791)	-
The Hospital Saturday Fund	-	2,000	-	2,000
Total restricted funds	47,300	106,134	(63,724)	89,710
Unrestricted funds				
<i>Designated funds</i>				
C and P	14,916	-	(14,916)	-
Esmée Fairbairn, 2021 - 2025	68,635	97,500	(68,303)	97,832
Esmée Fairbairn, COVID	10,886	-	(10,886)	-
Leigh Day Inquiry	7,194	8,000	(15,194)	-
Peabody	4,313	-	(4,313)	-
Safer Beginnings	7,479	2,000	(9,479)	-
Thirty Percy Foundation	37,475	100,000	(49,650)	87,825
<i>Total designated funds</i>	150,898	207,500	(172,741)	185,657
General funds	71,280	109,557	(146,099)	34,738
Total unrestricted funds	222,178	317,057	(318,840)	220,395
Total funds	269,478	423,191	(382,564)	310,105

14. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current year or prior year.

BIRTHRIGHTS

England & Wales - Charity number 1151152

Accounts

Charity no. 1151152

Birthrights
Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements
31 March 2023

Birthrights

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Charity number	1151152
Registered office	Birthrights Union House 111 New Union Street Coventry CV1 2NT
Trustees	The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows: Alix-Louise Anderson Tara Arnold Rachel Crasnow QC Inderjit Cross John Davis Julie Frohlich Carolyn Johnston Marcia Lord Dr Ria May Clarke Simon Mehigan Sandra Nneoma Igwe Elizabeth Prochaska Rebecca Schiller Treasurer Resigned 26 July 2022 Resigned 26 July 2022 Appointed on 26 July 2022 Chair Resigned 8 November 2022
Chief executive officer	Amy Gibbs Tracey Fletcher Shanthi Gunsekera Janaki Mahadevan Resigned 14 July 2022 Interim CEO appointed 11 July 2022 Appointed 3 January 2023 Appointed 3 January 2023
Patron	Nadine Montgomery
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank Olympic House 6 Olympic Court Montford Street Salford M5 2QP
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Introduction

In January this year, we celebrated 10 years since Birthrights was founded. We are proud of what we have achieved in that time, turning a tiny volunteer-led charity into the leading voice for women's rights in pregnancy and childbirth in the UK. Despite the increasing recognition and acceptance of people's rights in maternity care, our work has never been more urgent: maternity services are facing an unprecedented workforce crisis, the pandemic continues to affect people's experience of care and racial inequity still has a devastating impact on Black and Brown women and birthing people.

The past year has been an exceptional year for Birthrights: we published our inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, which revealed systemic racism in maternity services. The report brought a much needed focus on how race affects people's maternity experiences and we are committed to continuing to hold maternity services to account to achieve real change.

Our brilliant CEO, Amy Gibbs, left in the summer, after providing outstanding leadership to Birthrights for 3 years. We were very grateful to Tracey Fletcher, our interim CEO, for seeing Birthrights through the following 6 months and providing strong support to our team. In January, we welcomed our new joint CEOs, Shanthi Gunsekera and Janaki Mahadevan. We are thrilled to be able to model a job share at CEO level and we hope it will provide inspiration to other charities. Our new CEOs have huge ambitions to grow Birthrights' reach and impact and it is a privilege to work with them as we enter the next decade.

Elizabeth Prochaska (Chair)

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (effective from January 2019).

2. Welcome from our Co-Chief Executives

By championing the rights of women and birthing people throughout pregnancy and birth, we are working to ensure those currently going through their maternity journey feel supported, safe and heard. But we are also fighting for a system that will respect the bodily autonomy of our children and generations to come.

For years, the voices and decisions of women and birthing people in the UK have been ignored and dismissed. From Morecambe Bay to Shrewsbury and Telford, there is evidence that a failure to listen to women and birthing people results in trauma, discrimination, coercion and violence and, in far too many cases, tragedy.

But in the UK and around the world, women and birthing people are standing up and fighting for reproductive justice and against the erosion of their reproductive rights.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

We are honoured to have joined Birthrights at this critical time, leading Birthrights into its next decade.

This year's annual report shows the real difference Birthrights has made for women and birthing people who have accessed our information and advice, for healthcare professionals who have attended our training, and through our research to understand the stories behind the stark statistics of racial discrimination and a broken system.

We look forward to building on these strong foundations to fight for maternity systems that work for everyone in the UK, so women and birthing people feel heard, supported and safe throughout their pregnancy and birth, and are enabled to make decisions about their body and care that are respected.

Shanthi Gunesequera and Janaki Mahadevan, Co-Chief Executives

3. Gratitude

We express deep gratitude to everyone who contributed to our Race Inquiry and the subsequent groundbreaking report *Systemic Racism, not Broken Bodies*, the expert panel of obstetricians, midwives, experts by experience, academics, birth workers and lawyers, overseeing the inquiry, and to all the women and birthing people who contributed to the inquiry including over 300 Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people who gave evidence. Thanks to the co-chairs of the Panel - Shaheen Rahman QC, Sandra Igwe and Benash Nazmeen, and to former CEO Amy Gibbs and Race Inquiry lead Melissa Brown for their tireless work in supporting the panel, gathering evidence and doing so in a way which recognised and was mindful of the trauma experienced by those contributing their experiences of maternity care.

We are also grateful to Pamela Abiola, Ese-Roghene Agambi, Adelaide Harris and Nova Reid whose generous wisdom, expertise and robust challenge, enabled us to root this work in anti racist principles and practice, ensure we took a trauma informed approach to evidence gathering, and enabled us to scope and communicate our work effectively. We could not have reached so many women and birthing people without support from our fellow charities and community organisations, who helped to recruit and co-facilitate focus groups: the Happy Baby Community, the Raham Project, the Swansea Women's Asylum Seeker and Refugee Group, the African Community Centre, the Latin American and Iberian Association and Leeds NHS Trust Maternity Voices Partnership.

Thank you to all our funders and corporate partners for their generosity and belief in both the Race Inquiry and our wider work in 2022/23: Bolt Burdon Kemp, Esmee Fairbairn, Irwin Mitchell, John Ellerman Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Leigh Day and Thirty Percy.

A huge thank you to everyone who so generously donated to Birthrights either directly or through The Big Give Christmas Challenge, our incredible runners in The Royal Parks Half Marathon and those who supported them.

Our work is only possible because of the incredible talent and dedication of our staff team and associate trainers who have demonstrated such commitment to championing the rights of women and birthing people throughout a rapidly changing external context, and changes to Birthrights leadership team. And a particular thank you to interim Chief Executive Tracey Fletcher for guiding Birthrights through this transition in 2022.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Thank you to our Clinical Advisory Network who bring a wealth of expertise and experience to help inform our work.

And finally, a huge thank you to all Birthrights' supporters for standing with us to champion the rights of women and birthing people throughout pregnancy and birth. Together we can fight for a world where women and birthing people's bodily autonomy and informed decisions about their care are respected.

4. Structure, governance and management

Birthrights is a charitable incorporated organisation and is registered with the Charity Commission with charity number 1151152.

The method of recruitment and appointment of trustees is set out in its governing document: the constitution. Three trustees stood down between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 - Julie Frohlich, Carolyn Johnston and Rebecca Schiller. One new Trustee Dr Ria Clarke was appointed in July 2022, taking the Board to 10 members.

The current trustees comprise two senior lawyers, a frontline obstetrician, a Director of Midwifery, a finance and business expert, experienced charity leaders, communications and fundraising specialists, doulas and anti racism campaigners. Most trustees have lived experience of maternity care and five are Black and Brown women.

The trustees are responsible for making decisions on the management of all the affairs of Birthrights, including deciding on how the funds of the charity are to be spent. The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The full board of trustees met four times during 2022 to 23. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee also met four times in this period.

5. Objectives and Activities

5.1 About

Birthrights launched in January 2013. We are the UK charity that champions respectful care during pregnancy and childbirth by protecting human rights. We believe that everyone is entitled to respectful maternity care that protects their fundamental rights to dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality. We provide free advice and legal information to women and birthing people, train healthcare professionals and birth workers to deliver rights respecting care and campaign to change maternity policy and systems. Our research shines a spotlight on those most at risk of human rights violations in pregnancy and birth due to structural disadvantage and discrimination.

Our vision is to ensure everyone receives the respect and dignity they deserve in pregnancy and childbirth. Our mission is to be the authority on human rights in pregnancy and childbirth in the UK and use that influence to improve services and practice throughout the maternity system.

Birthrights promotes legal rights to receive evidence based care that conforms to the best medical and midwifery standards. We do not promote any particular clinical perspectives in maternity care.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

5.2 Aims

The aim of Birthrights is to promote the human rights of child bearing women and people in England and Wales. These rights are set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

5.3 Activities

Birthrights is committed to:

- promoting awareness of the legal rights of child bearing women and people during and connected to pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period (the six weeks subsequent to birth);
- promoting respect for the legal rights of child bearing women and people among healthcare organisations, medical and other professions and in society at large;
- protecting the human rights of child bearing women and people through the provision of legal information and advice and obtaining redress for victims of human rights abuse;
- campaigning in relation to human rights and related legal issues relating to child bearing women and people;
- responding with technical advice to proposed legislation and policy affecting child bearing women and people;
- providing technical advice to government and others on human rights and other legal and regulatory matters as they affect child bearing women and people;
- contributing to the understanding and sound administration of human rights law as it affects childbearing women and people, in particular, but not exclusively, through third party interventions in legal cases;
- promoting the human rights and lawful treatment of child-bearing women and people by commissioning and conducting research;
- providing education and training to, among others, parents and parents to be, healthcare professionals and the public on human rights and the law as it affects child bearing women and people;
- eliminating infringements of human rights of child bearing women and people; and
- undertaking other charitable activities that the trustees may from time to time determine to promote the human rights and legal status of child-bearing women and people.

When planning our activities for the year, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the promotion of human rights.

6 Achievements and Performance 2022/23

6.1 Information and Advice

"Amazing advice, I cried reading her email (happy tears) in thoughts that there might be some hope for what I would like my labour and birth to look like for me and my baby"

Our email information and advice service is grounded in a deep understanding of the law and how it relates to maternity care. We combine this with a commitment to provide trauma informed and empathetic advice and information about rights to women and birthing people, and those supporting them, alongside practical advice about how to raise complaints and advocate for themselves in discussions with healthcare professionals.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

We continue to see the voices of women and birthing people routinely ignored or dismissed within the maternity system, and Trusts and Hospitals continue to implement policies that do not take account of individual need; suspend or restrict access to core maternity services; and do not respect informed decision making and bodily autonomy.

Within this context, the power of the information and advice Birthrights provides to ensure the experiences and decisions of women and birthing people are heard and validated and to lift up, support and empower women and birthing people is clear in the feedback we receive:

"You guys were amazing and only people that listened to me"

"It has given me reassurance that when I start my journey into motherhood I'll be able to make choices that are right for me and my pregnancy. It is also comforting to know that your organisation exists to guide me, should I encounter any hiccups along the way."

"It was really affirming to read "hard" evidence that what happened to me was wrong and not just necessary at the time."

"Thank you for your help and support and knowledge and information you gave me. I honestly believe it was because of this my problem was finally sorted out."

"I cried with relief and truly feel this will make such a difference to my mental well-being "

"Thank you so much for your email. I cried when I received it. The information you have provided has been really useful thank you."

"I doubt that the conversation would have been as productive and successful if I had not contacted yourselves."

"Your response really helped me fight my case with and I'm so grateful for that! It's so important that expectant mums feel they have a place to turn to for support."

"I felt empowered and ready to stand up for the birth I deserve."

It is crucial that our staff team have both the physical and emotional capacity to respond to increasingly complex and traumatic accounts they receive through the information and advice service. In 2022/23 in response to the changing nature of enquiries coming through to us, we increased capacity within the service to enable the team to respond to and carefully manage complex enquiries, including those about lack of consent, birth trauma and racism so as to ensure each team member's emotional wellbeing is safeguarded.

Enquiries to our information and advice service remain at almost three times the number that Birthrights received in 2019 to 2020. We saw a slight drop (13%) in the basic numbers of enquiries on our information and advice service (from 1,112 to 969) which corresponds to the end of the pandemic and to the end of enquiries about the fundamental right to a birth partner or the right to decline Covid testing for appointments (key themes for the past two years).

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

However, the nature of the advice service changed markedly with a larger number of women and birthing people who had given birth during the pandemic, particularly at the height of restrictions, wanting to complain about the poor nature of their care and human rights breaches. Complaints, particularly about consent and birth trauma, made up the highest volume of all enquiries across the year. Very often, these are detailed and complex complaints which require dedicated, personalised and trauma informed responses. In many cases, women and birthing people, particularly those identified as not speaking English as a first language, as neurodiverse or from marginalised communities, will share their birth trauma story and require personalised support, information and practical advice in how to set this out as a formal complaint. People who are already within the complaints process, often send the team any response they receive to their complaint which is dismissive of their lived experience and defensive over a breach of rights. The team then offers practical advocacy advice on how to respond further and/or escalate the complaint further to the Trust or to the ombudsman and other regulator.

We have also seen a significant increase in the number of queries about unassisted birth, home birth and choice of place of birth compared to 2021 to 2022. This signals a post covid landscape shift in people choosing to give birth outside of the hospital and the issues that arise when trying to make this lawful choice. Primarily these revolve around the lack of staffing for midwifery led units to remain open, a lack of staffing and service provision for home births, and a lack of clarity in the legalities of unassisted birth and the processes for registering a baby after an unassisted birth. Enquiries related to access to medical notes increased as more people want to see their notes as they complain.

Notably and concerningly we saw a 100% increase in enquiries about referrals to social services. A number of these were about vulnerable women and birthing people already working with social services, facing further allegations of neglect on the basis of them declining routine examinations or the offer of an induction during their pregnancy.

We continue to review how we increase our reach to more women and birthing people. In 2022 to 2023 we trialled blog posts on key issues such as home birth, which led to an increase in engagement with our information and advice. But we know there is potential for us to grow our service to reach more women and birthing people in 2023 to 2024 and beyond. Only half of the women and birthing people using our service currently share their demographic information with us - of those who do we know that 80% identify as "White British".

6.2 Online Resources

In addition to our information and advice service, we have a number of factsheets on our website setting out the latest information on women and birthing people's rights during pregnancy and birth, where they come from in law, and how they are backed up in guidance.

Our factsheet on right to a caesarean section continues to be our most popular with over 40,000 unique page views in 2022 to 2023, with factsheets on human rights in maternity care and choice of place of birth around 20,000 unique views each, and factsheets on accessing your records and unassisted freebirth over 16,000 unique views each.

6.3 Training

"The training has made me feel more confident supporting people in all situations and evaluating my own practice - it's reminded me why I'm a midwife and I'm so grateful."

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

We provide training to frontline healthcare professionals in NHS trusts and hospitals, as well as doulas and birth support workers on how the law relates to maternity care. Our training is always provided by two trainers - one with legal expertise and the other with clinical experience. We draw on our experienced staff team and a cohort of dedicated associate trainers to deliver training online and in person across the country.

The Covid-19 pandemic threw an already under resourced NHS into deep crisis. As maternity services struggle to retain staff and healthcare professionals face unsafe and poorly paid working conditions the crisis has continued. But with report after report showing that the voices of women and birthing people are ignored or dismissed, we are seeing interest in our training sessions continue to grow.

In 2022 to 2023 Birthrights ran 54 training courses which is more than double the number delivered in the previous year (22 courses). We have also seen a move towards full day sessions - in the previous year all but one of the training sessions were half day sessions; whereas this year almost a third of the training delivered were full day sessions with 17 full day and 32 half day sessions. As a result of easing Covid restrictions, this year Birthrights delivered many more in person sessions with 21 (approximately 40%) in person training sessions compared to only one in the previous year.

Birthrights does not underestimate the importance of our training being accurate, accessible and impactful – being invited into spaces to share our expertise and listen to the lived experience of healthcare professionals and birth workers is something we continue to be grateful for. With this growth in training, quality control has been key to the work of the training team. Shadowing sessions with detailed feedback have become a routine part of our programme and we are supporting our associate trainers in various ways to ensure that they feel empowered and informed to deliver Birthrights training which ensures that participants attending Birthrights training are receiving the same consistent and detailed message. We have also reviewed all of our training resources to ensure that they reflect both any updates in law, but also the current work environment in which maternity care operates. Part of our work has been developing a Padlet, which all participants who have attended our training can access, ensuring that their learning continues after the session.

In 2022 to 2023 Birthrights trained roughly 660 professionals working in maternity including 520 healthcare professionals. Those who attended training included doctors, midwives, anaesthetists, paramedics, birth workers and maternity investigators. Midwives comprised the largest profession of those trained, making up more than half of attendees. Others who attended in high numbers were doctors and student midwives, each comprising approximately 15% of attendees. Two roles that had the lowest attendance were anaesthetists and trainee doctors which comprised roughly 0.5% and 2.2% of attendees respectively.

The safe space that is facilitated during Birthrights training sessions allows us insight into how healthcare professionals are experiencing the current maternity care system (and indeed the broader experience of working in the NHS). Many healthcare professionals who attend report barriers to delivering rights-respecting care include poor working conditions, including a lack of resources and time; toxic workplace cultures, and lack of support and understanding from leadership. The experience that healthcare professionals share with us during training sessions are key to forming our approach and strategy. Women and birthing people cannot receive rights respecting care if staff do not feel safe, supported and empowered to provide it.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

As we move forward and develop our training offer for the months and years ahead we are considering how we best target our services and wider campaigns to address the issues that we consistently hear prevent those on the frontline from delivering the care all women and birthing people have a right to receive.

The vast majority of respondents, 94% (286 out of 303), self reported that their knowledge of human rights law in maternity care increased after attending a Birthrights training session. Our evaluation asks participants to rate the overall training between 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. This data was collected from the second to final quarter of 2022 to 2023 with an average rating from this period being 4.5.

Our trainers also received consistently excellent scores. When asked to rate their performance on the same 1 to 5 scale, participants gave both our legal trainers an average score of 4.4 and our healthcare professional trainers an average score of 4.5. This is not significantly different from last year where both trainers received a score of 4.7.

Following the session 41% of attendees said they regularly encountered situations in their work they would define as human rights situations. More than half (56%) of attendees said they encountered these situations occasionally and 2% said they never have encountered these situations.

92% (349 out of 377) of respondents said that Birthrights training impacted the way they plan to work with women and birthing people (seven said "I don't know" and 13 said "No"). While 98% (396 out of 406) of respondents said they would recommend Birthrights training to others.

Birthrights training is central to the broader culture change that is required to ensure that women and birthing people (as well as their families) are accessing rights respecting care. To ensure our training is dynamic and fulfilling this purpose, we must be looking at the long term impact to help us understand what other resources we can create to support healthcare professionals as well as women and birthing people. This year, we are beginning to follow up with those who have attended our training sessions 2022/2023 to understand if they still feel supported and empowered by that training six to 12 months on. Anecdotally, we are told by participants they have started work implementing the Birthrights message, including by reviewing guidelines, reviewing educational materials and adapting language.

"This training was so informative and interesting to participate in, it was extremely thorough and I felt that the trainers created a safe space in which all the students could participate in. Amazing session!" (Student midwife)

"Thank you for the session. It was a useful refresher of human rights in practice and really good to see the impact that Birthrights is having in maternity care. It is incredibly important to me." (Head of Midwifery)

"Absolutely brilliant day. All health professionals working with pregnant people and their families should go on this training." (Digital Transformation midwife)

"Best training I have been on for a while! Thank you for your time." (Community Midwife Team Leader)

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

"I always enjoy your sessions and the discussions created by them. I also feel that this would have been very beneficial as a junior trainee when you're forming your 'way with women' - forming good habits is much easier than breaking bad ones!" (Obstetrician & Gynaecologist ST6)

"I want to finish training to be able to fully advocate for women and join Birthright's mission to continue advocating for all women." (Trainee doctor)

"Thank you for a wonderful and insightful session into the legal aspects of human rights" (Specialty Doctor Anaesthetics)

"Thank you- there was so much information and it was so helpful to be trained by people who hear real stories every day. Such valuable training for all birth workers. I would love to see this training ripple through the maternity system." (Doula)

"I would absolutely recommend Birthrights training to all obstetricians and midwives." (Professional Midwifery Advocate/ Birth Options Clinic)

6.4 Campaigns and Influencing

In May 2022, we published our report *Systemic Racism, not Broken Bodies* - the culmination of the year long inquiry into racial injustice in the maternity services. The report documented the traumatic experiences of Black and Brown women who felt unheard and dehumanised through their pregnancy and birth, shining a spotlight on the stories behind the statistics.

We heard accounts of women whose worries were dismissed, including a Black woman who almost died of sepsis after healthcare professionals failed to hear her concerns or identify symptoms due to the colour of her skin. One of the most common experiences described in the testimonies we received was of Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people's pain being ignored or denied, and of pain relief being withheld due to disbelief among staff that labour had begun.

The key themes that appeared from the testimonies of women and birthing people were:

- racial microaggressions and stereotyping;
- failure to recognise serious medical conditions due to skin colour; and
- lack of respect for culture and religion, breaches of consent, and trauma.

From healthcare professionals we heard about:

- the NHS culture of blame and fear;
- lack of diverse senior representation; and
- direct witnessing or experience of overt racism – with no process or protection to escalate concerns.

In contrast, our Inquiry heard that positive accounts of maternity care focused on good communication, person centred and culturally sensitive care. This emphasises the critical importance of upholding the principles of respectful, individualised care and effective communication.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Based on the evidence gathered through the inquiry, together with our expert panel we identified five calls for all parts of the maternity system:

- commit to be an anti racist organisation;
- decolonise maternity curriculums and guidance;
- make Black and Brown women and birthing people decision makers in their care and the wider maternity system;
- create safe, inclusive workforce cultures;
- dismantle structural barriers to racial equity through national policy change.

Our report has been downloaded nearly 5,000 times and we continue to have press interest in this work and have featured in different media outlets (including Women's Health, Grazia, Vogue, the Guardian, the BBC and the Lancet).

We have also spoken publicly about the report throughout the year to key organisations and events, including: Saving Babies Lives, National Childbirth Trust (NCT) Lunch & Learn, NHS England Nuggets, CORE20Plus5 connectors online learning event and the NHS England Maternity Transformation Programme stakeholder council meeting. Our team were also invited to speak in Parliament at the Maternity Disparities Taskforce and at the APPG for Black Maternal Health, and our co chairs Sandra Igwe and Benash Nazmeen have spoken on the reports findings at more than 100 different events including conferences, podcasts, on TV and at workshops and seminars. Within the Maternity sector our findings have been widely reported and commented on, including by: the Royal College of Midwives; Patient Information Forum online; the British Medical Journal; the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists; Nursing in Practice; Patient Safety Learning; Maternity and Midwifery Forum; and the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

We gave evidence to the Women and Equalities Select Committee in March 2022 as part of its 2022 to 2023 report into Black maternal health, published in April 2023, leading to another surge of interest in Birthrights' work in this area.

The Race inquiry continues to be held up by stakeholders as a rich body of evidence which looks at the drivers of the stark inequities of maternity experiences and outcomes. Birthrights has held meetings with the National Midwifery Council, Royal College of Midwives, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence about how they plan to incorporate the asks from the report into their organisational strategies and to seek future prospective collaborations. This demonstrates the opportunity for our charity to hold institutions to account, make them reflect on their work and practices, and explore ways we could work together to improve the services for Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

In September, NHS England published a full paper detailing their response to the Race Inquiry's findings, which was discussed during the NHS England's Stakeholder Council. We have contributed to a working group on the CQC Maternity Survey for 2023, which will be the first time the survey will consider more explicitly the disparities in care for Black, Brown and minority ethnic women and birthing people. We have also peer reviewed the proposed Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists maternity triage guidelines.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

The unprecedented interest in the findings of the Race Inquiry report are testament to the quality of the work produced and we are indebted to the hundreds of women and birthing people who shared their experiences with us. The findings demonstrate the breadth of work and commitment to challenging racial inequity that is required across all parts of the system to build back trust, improve service provision and eliminate racial disparities in maternity care.

6.5 Wider Campaigning and Advocacy

Alongside this landmark report, we also continued to mount pressure on the Government and NHS Trusts to provide safe and effective maternity care. Most notably:

- In September 2022, Birthrights led the coordination of more than 30 organisations in a letter to the then Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Thérèse Coffey, outlining the crucial issues facing maternity service delivery and calling on the Government to make meaningful interventions to meet their 2019 manifesto commitment to make the NHS the ‘best place in the world to give birth’ a reality.
- In March 2022, we gave evidence to the Women and Equalities Committee, contributing to their final report released in April 2023 calling on the Government to set a definitive target to eliminate “appalling” disparities in maternal deaths.
- In June 2022, we gave evidence to the Health Committee of the London Assembly on the response of London maternity services to Covid-19 and on the results of our Race Inquiry. The London Assembly’s final report was issued in April 2023, highlighting the negative impact the pandemic had on the mental health of pregnant women and finding that there were clear disparities in the levels of care provided between different NHS Trusts as they took different approaches to enforcing Covid-19 restrictions.
- We submitted evidence to the Module 2 UK Covid-19 Inquiry, set up to examine the UK’s response to and impact of the pandemic and to learn lessons for the future.

6.6 Extending our reach through communications

Press

Throughout the year we have continued to pursue and attract high profile press coverage on a range of issues covering Birthrights work. Notable successes in terms of communicating our message to wider audiences throughout the year have included:

- Birthrights quoted in the Guardian and Birmingham Mail on the epidural shortage in September;
- Appearance on local BBC Radio (Berkshire, Newcastle Live, West Midlands, Three Counties and Cumbria) in relation to the BBC analysis that more than half of maternity units in the UK are failing to meet safety standards;
- Our letter to the Secretary of State Thérèse Coffey received coverage in Glamour UK;
- Birthrights has been able to address the NHS staffing crisis and call for urgent Government investment through a number of media outlets, including ITV News, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 5 Live and BBC Radio Wales and The Times;
- We have had repeated coverage in the Guardian, covering topics such as NHS charging and caesarean birth and several local press outlets on human rights in childbirth.

Birtherights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Social Media

We have seen nearly a 15% increase in followers on Instagram and 5% increase in followers on Twitter and Facebook in 2022/23. Having reviewed the datasets collated for social media in 2022/23, we plan to create a suite of data sets that provides consistent data across all social media types. This would focus more on engagement levels so better analysis can be undertaken on how to increase engagement with Birtherights. Based on the data we currently have available we estimate our posts made over 600,000 impressions on Twitter, 260,000 impressions on Instagram and 10,000 impressions on LinkedIn, with post engagement averaging 7.5% on Twitter and 3% on Instagram and LinkedIn. This suggests that those who are following our social media channels have a strong engagement with our content, which we will seek to build on as we look to extend our reach in 2023/24 and beyond.

6.7 Strengthening our organisation

As Birtherights entered its 10th year, we focused on strengthening our foundations to support aspirations to build Birtherights reach and impact in 2023/24 and beyond.

During the year we have continued to strengthen our core areas of Advice and Training, adding increased capacity to both teams through additional hours for team members and the appointment of a Training Coordinator to support the growing Training function. Central to this has been a clear focus on maintaining and continuously striving for the highest quality in the service we offer to our clients – through our in depth responses to the complex advice queries we receive and by bringing a new process of quality assurance into our training programme to ensure consistency in approach. During the year, we have also received board approval to continue to strengthen the capacity of our fundraising, communications, policy and advocacy functions and are currently driving forward the initial phase of this recruitment process.

Throughout the year we have focussed on improving our operational arm of the charity, recognising the critical role this function plays in ensuring efficient, effective and robust systems and processes to enable the whole organisation to deliver on our mission. We have procured and implemented a new Customer Relationship Management System (CRM), partnering with Beacon to enable us to better connect and understand all of the information we have across the organisation, and to ensure that we use all of our data to provide real, tangible insight into how we are performing and where we need to improve further.

Alongside this, a wider programme of professionalising the organisation has been underway this year. Following significant employee growth last year, we have implemented a new HR employee software package to better manage our key staff data, such as sickness and absence, holidays and staff demographics. This is critical in ensuring that we are able to effectively monitor key information regarding our staff, for example retention levels and staff diversity, as well as providing a secure portal for sensitive information. Similarly, we have also partnered with HR professionals to provide regular support to the organisation, ensuring that we are fully compliant with employment law. We are also working with our partners on a full review of all organisational policies, challenging ourselves to continually rethink and build on our working practices and benefits to help to support a happy, healthy and motivated workforce. Linked to this is a new wellbeing support package that has been developed and approved by the board of trustees, and will begin implementation in the new financial year.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

This year we have also moved towards implementing better IT processes across the organisation, investing in standardised equipment for all of our staff to ensure that everyone has access to the IT they need to carry out their roles effectively whilst also ensuring that we maintain a strong level of data security control. We have also partnered with an IT specialist to drive forward our migration to Microsoft 365. This will enable us to bring together our document management, emails and virtual meeting systems and in turn provide significant financial savings to the organisation whilst also improving our internal processes.

Our key focus continued to be on securing funding for the future sustainability of the organisation in order that we can continue our vital work. Key funding secured and sustained during the year included:

- We confirmed the continuation of our valued partnerships with Irwin Mitchell and Leigh Day for the next three years;
- JRCT approved the continuation of funding £100,000 over two years to support the delivery of the next phase of the racial injustice inquiry;
- We received a one-off grant of £50,000 from Thirty Percy;
We received a commitment from John Ellerman of £90,000 over two years to go towards our core funding;
- The National Lottery granted us a one off payment of £10,000 to go towards building lived experiences into our work;
- We received cost of living uplifts from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and JRCT to be added to their existing grant funds, recognising the almost £3,500 was secured from the Women and Girls Match Fund programmes.

Diversification of our fundraising efforts also continued to be a priority for the organisation in 2022/23 as we branched out into new areas of income generation. We ran our first ever public fundraising campaign; The Big Give Christmas Challenge, which raised almost £18,000 towards the next phase of the racial injustice inquiry. The campaign also performed well on social media with the launch day reel seeing over 29,000 views and an overall campaign social media reach of over 56,000. We also began fundraising through events, placing three runners in The Royal Parks Half Marathon and securing almost £2,500 for the initiative.

7 Financial review

7.1 Summary of income and expenditure

In 2022/23 we secured an overall income of £423,191 compared to £350,613 in 2021/22. Restricted income changed from £106,115 in 2021/22 to £106,134 in 2022/23 however unrestricted income (including designated income) changed from £244,498 in 2021-22 to £317,057 in 2022/23. Of this overall unrestricted figure, the CEOs and Treasurer agreed to designate £207,500 of unrestricted funds for specific purposes, such as staff posts and projects. Total expenditure was £382,564 (compared to £342,450 in 2021-22) which was in line with budget expectations.

At the end of 2022, £269,478 of funds were brought forward, of which £47,300 was restricted funds from grants for planned activity in 2022/23 (due to projects being phased across multiple financial years). At the end of March 2023, £310,105 was carried forward into 2023/24, including £89,710 restricted funds, £185,657 designated funds and £34,738 general funds.

Birtherights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

7.2 Reserves

At the end of 2022-23, we hold £34,738 in unrestricted general reserves. In addition, £185,657 of core funding has been designated by the trustees, but could be reallocated if required.

Our reserves policy states that Birtherights will hold reserves to cover three months of operating costs. A three-month reserve would allow Birtherights the opportunity, if necessary, to wind down its programme of support in an orderly and managed fashion, including paying our staff reasonable notice. The trustees believe this is the appropriate level of reserves to balance prudence and risk management against maximising the benefits the charity can deliver by not tying up too much of our funds in our reserves.

For 2023/24, three months of operating costs would be £129,642, based on our planned income and expenditure budget.

7.3 Going Concern

The trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved for the following reasons:

- The charity holds total reserves of £220,395 (including unrestricted and designated funds);
- The charity is carrying forward a significant unrestricted surplus into 2023/24 which has been designated for core staff costs; and
- The charity has grants in place which span 2023/24 and beyond.

The trustees therefore consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis for the preparation of the accounts, as detailed in note 1(b) to the financial statements. Fundraising will continue to be a major priority for the CEOs and senior team, to ensure sustainability and growth into the future.

8. Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the year. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

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

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charity during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 17 October 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Elizabeth Prochaska

J A Davis

Elizabeth Prochaska - Chair

John Davis - Treasurer

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Birthrights

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Birthrights (the CIO) for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages 18 to 31.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the CIO you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

Godfrey Wilson Limited also provides payroll and bookkeeping services to the CIO. I confirm that as a member of the ICAEW I am subject to the FRC's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, which I have applied with respect to this engagement.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material 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 CIO as required by section 130 of the Act; or the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.

Laura May Richards

Date: 23 October 2023

Laura Richards ACA

Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Birthrights

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	106,134	263,270	369,404	323,808
Charitable activities	4	-	53,598	53,598	26,765
Investments		-	189	189	40
Total income		<u>106,134</u>	<u>317,057</u>	<u>423,191</u>	<u>350,613</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	52,265	52,265	40,525
Charitable activities		<u>63,724</u>	<u>266,575</u>	<u>330,299</u>	<u>301,925</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>63,724</u>	<u>318,840</u>	<u>382,564</u>	<u>342,450</u>
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds	6	42,410	(1,783)	40,627	8,163
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>47,300</u>	<u>222,178</u>	<u>269,478</u>	<u>261,315</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>89,710</u></u>	<u><u>220,395</u></u>	<u><u>310,105</u></u>	<u><u>269,478</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 13 to the accounts.

Birthrights

Balance sheet

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	2022 £
Current assets				
Debtors	9	73,145		34,631
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>316,148</u>		<u>262,892</u>
		389,293		297,523
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	10	<u>(79,188)</u>		<u>(28,045)</u>
Net current assets			310,105	269,478
Net assets	12		310,105	<u>269,478</u>
Funds	13			
Restricted funds			89,710	47,300
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			185,657	150,898
General funds			<u>34,738</u>	<u>71,280</u>
Total charity funds			310,105	<u>269,478</u>

Approved by the trustees on 17 October 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Elizabeth Prochaska

J A Davis

Elizabeth Prochaska - Chair

John Davis - Treasurer

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

Birthrights 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).

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider to be appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves and future confirmed funding. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received under contracts, sponsorship agreements or in advance of provision of training is deferred and recognised when services are delivered.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the basis of staff time:

	2023	2022
Raising funds	15%	15%
Charitable activities	85%	85%

i) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

j) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

k) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

l) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

m) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

n) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

There are no sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

2. Prior period comparatives

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Income from:			
Donations	103,865	219,943	323,808
Charitable activities	2,250	24,515	26,765
Investments	-	40	40
Total income	106,115	244,498	350,613
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	40,525	40,525
Charitable activities	166,242	135,683	301,925
Total expenditure	166,242	176,208	342,450
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds	(60,127)	68,290	8,163

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Donations	-	41,065	41,065
Grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	97,500	97,500
John Ellerman Foundation	45,000	-	45,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	-	100,000	100,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	59,134	-	59,134
Best Beginnings	-	2,000	2,000
The National Lottery	-	10,000	10,000
The Hospital Saturday Fund	2,000	-	2,000
The Big Give	-	10,205	10,205
Gifts in kind*	-	2,500	2,500
Total income from donations	106,134	263,270	369,404
Prior year comparative			2022
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £
Donations	-	81,971	81,971
Grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	17,300	75,000	92,300
John Ellerman Foundation	50,000	-	50,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	-	50,000	50,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	30,000	-	30,000
Best Beginnings	-	9,000	9,000
Kickstart Scheme	6,565	-	6,565
Gifts in kind*	-	3,972	3,972
Total income from donations	103,865	219,943	323,808

*Gifts in kind relate to pro bono legal advice, training, stationery, printed materials and room hire.

The charity received government grants, defined as funding from the National Lottery and the Kickstart Scheme to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the year ending 31 March 2023 was £10,000 (2022: £6,565). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

4. Income from charitable activities

	2023 Total £
Training, conferences and events	51,930
Other	<u>1,668</u>
Total income from charitable activities	<u>53,598</u>

All income from charitable activities in the year was unrestricted.

Prior year comparative

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Training, conferences and events	-	23,585	23,585
Other	<u>2,250</u>	<u>930</u>	<u>3,180</u>
Total income from charitable activities	<u>2,250</u>	<u>24,515</u>	<u>26,765</u>

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	36,706	204,744	55,861	297,311
Research participation	-	578	-	578
Legal and professional fees	-	20,195	-	20,195
Marketing and communications	-	2,243	-	2,243
Room hire	-	2,000	-	2,000
Accountancy	-	-	8,195	8,195
Staff recruitment and training	-	-	19,615	19,615
IT equipment and software	1,342	17,845	-	19,187
Travel and subsistence	-	7,587	-	7,587
Office costs	1,015	1,471	2,051	4,537
Insurance	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,116</u>	<u>1,116</u>
Sub-total	39,063	256,663	86,838	382,564
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>13,202</u>	<u>73,636</u>	<u>(86,838)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>52,265</u>	<u>330,299</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>382,564</u>

Total governance costs were £16,297 (2022: £7,608).

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

5. Total expenditure (continued)

Prior year comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2022 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	25,177	138,474	50,860	214,511
Research participation	-	32,436	-	32,436
Legal and professional fees	1,920	22,724	18,564	43,208
Marketing and communications	-	21,358	-	21,358
Room hire	-	9,928	-	9,928
Accountancy	-	-	7,433	7,433
Staff recruitment and training	-	3,323	1,232	4,555
IT equipment and software	168	905	3,145	4,218
Travel and subsistence	-	1,972	-	1,972
Office costs	-	782	1,042	1,824
Fundraising	528	-	-	528
Insurance	-	-	479	479
Sub-total	27,793	231,902	82,755	342,450
Allocation of support and governance costs	12,732	70,023	(82,755)	-
Total expenditure	40,525	301,925	-	342,450

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (including VAT)	1,920	1,740
▪ Other services	6,275	5,693

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries and wages	238,139	192,655
Social security costs	14,857	12,720
Pension costs	5,111	4,339
Freelancers	39,704	4,797
	<u>297,811</u>	<u>214,511</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, Programmes Director and Engagement Director. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £127,159 (2022: £121,145).

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Average head count	<u>13.0</u>	<u>8.0</u>
Average full time equivalent	<u>7.0</u>	<u>5.0</u>

8. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

9. Debtors	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	73,145	30,995
Prepayments	-	2,495
Accrued income	-	765
Other debtors	-	376
	<u>73,145</u>	<u>34,631</u>
 10. Creditors: amounts due within 1 year	 2023	 2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	761	824
Accruals	2,420	2,221
Deferred income (note 11)	70,995	25,000
Other creditors	5,012	-
	<u>79,188</u>	<u>28,045</u>
 11. Deferred income	 2023	 2022
	£	£
At 1 April 2022	25,000	5,000
Deferred during the year	70,995	25,000
Released during the year	<u>(25,000)</u>	<u>(5,000)</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>70,995</u>	<u>25,000</u>

Deferred income relates to training invoiced in advance to be delivered during 2023/24.

12. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	89,710	185,657	113,926	389,293
Current liabilities	-	-	<u>(79,188)</u>	<u>(79,188)</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2023	<u>89,710</u>	<u>185,657</u>	<u>34,738</u>	<u>310,105</u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

12. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Prior year comparative	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	47,300	150,898	99,325	297,523
Current liabilities	-	-	(28,045)	(28,045)
Net assets at 31 March 2022	<u>47,300</u>	<u>150,898</u>	<u>71,280</u>	<u>269,478</u>

13. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds					
Baring Foundation, Legal Action	1,695	-	(1,695)	-	-
John Ellerman Foundation	33,226	45,000	(27,747)	-	50,479
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	11,588	59,134	(33,491)	-	37,231
King's College London	791	-	(791)	-	-
The Hospital Saturday Fund	-	2,000	-	-	2,000
Total restricted funds	<u>47,300</u>	<u>106,134</u>	<u>(63,724)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>89,710</u>
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
C and P	14,916	-	(14,916)	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn, 2021 - 2025	68,635	97,500	(68,303)	-	97,832
Esmée Fairbairn, COVID	10,886	-	(10,886)	-	-
Leigh Day Inquiry	7,194	8,000	(15,194)	-	-
Peabody	4,313	-	(4,313)	-	-
Safer Beginnings	7,479	2,000	(9,479)	-	-
Thirty Percy Foundation	37,475	100,000	(49,650)	-	87,825
<i>Total designated funds</i>	<u>150,898</u>	<u>207,500</u>	<u>(172,741)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>185,657</u>
General funds	<u>71,280</u>	<u>109,557</u>	<u>(146,099)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>34,738</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>222,178</u>	<u>317,057</u>	<u>(318,840)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>220,395</u>
Total funds	<u>269,478</u>	<u>423,191</u>	<u>(382,564)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>310,105</u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

13. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Baring Foundation, Legal Action

Grant for legal costs and increased staff capacity to challenge human rights violations in maternity care due to COVID-19, through strategic litigation and other legal campaigning tactics.

John Ellerman Foundation

Two year grant for Birthrights to convene a national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, towards delivery and staff costs, including a new post to ensure the inquiry is co produced by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Two year grant for Birthrights to convene a national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, towards delivery and staff costs, including a new post to ensure the inquiry is co produced by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

King's College London

Funding for Birthrights' contribution to a research study, looking at strengthening the disclosure of harm with women and families under NHS maternity care.

The Hospital Saturday Fund

Grant funding to enable Birthrights to provide advice, training and support so that everyone receives the respect and dignity they deserve in pregnancy and childbirth.

Purpose of designated funds

C and P

Major donation designated for operational costs, specifically upgrading the Operations Coordinator post to Manager and creating a new Team Coordinator post to boost capacity.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation 2021 - 2025

Funding over four years towards unrestricted core costs to protect human rights in maternity care through advice, training and influencing.

Esmée Fairbairn, COVID

Additional unrestricted funding to support staff and operational costs during the pandemic, designated for a new post to boost capacity to deliver our training programme for healthcare professionals and birth workers, including reviewing future delivery models.

Leigh Day Inquiry

Corporate donation designated for delivery of the racial injustice inquiry, specifically expert panel payments, anti-racism expertise, focus groups, transcription, report design and polling.

Peabody

Major donation designated for campaigning on COVID restrictions and to create a new video on making complaints in maternity care, co produced by people with lived experience.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

13. Movements in funds (continued)

Safer Beginnings

Funding from the Tampon Tax to be a delivery partner (sub grantee) for the White Ribbon Alliance and Best Beginnings programme to improve maternity outcomes and postpartum safety of 70,000 women by developing specialist information, services and interventions that enable self-advocacy in the context of obstetric and domestic violence, and female genital mutilation.

Thirty Percy Foundation

Three year unrestricted grant designated for staff and operational costs, including a new senior post to lead and develop our communications and engagement work, to reach and support more women and birthing people with a diverse range of needs and experiences.

Prior year comparative

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds					
Baring Foundation, Legal Action	23,468	-	(21,773)	-	1,695
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	31,139	-	(31,139)	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Crisis Comms	-	9,800	(9,800)	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Strategy	-	7,500	(7,500)	-	-
John Ellerman Foundation	32,887	50,000	(49,661)	-	33,226
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	19,933	30,000	(38,345)	-	11,588
Kickstart	-	6,565	(6,565)	-	-
King's College London	-	2,250	(1,459)	-	791
Total restricted funds	107,427	106,115	(166,242)	-	47,300
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
C and P	-	25,000	(10,084)	-	14,916
Esmée Fairbairn, 2021 - 2025	-	75,000	(6,365)	-	68,635
Esmée Fairbairn, COVID	25,000	-	(14,114)	-	10,886
Leigh Day Inquiry	-	20,000	(12,806)	-	7,194
Peabody	20,000	-	(15,687)	-	4,313
Safer Beginnings	-	9,000	(1,521)	-	7,479
Thirty Percy Foundation	50,000	50,000	(62,525)	-	37,475
<i>Total designated funds</i>	95,000	179,000	(123,102)	-	150,898
General funds	58,888	65,498	(53,106)	-	71,280
Total unrestricted funds	153,888	244,498	(176,208)	-	222,178
Total funds	261,315	350,613	(342,450)	-	269,478

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

14. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current year. In the prior year trustee donations made to the charity were £25,000.

In the prior year two trustees received payment of £2,800 for their participation in an advisory panel, along with external contributors.

BIRTHRIGHTS

England & Wales - Charity number 1151152

Accounts

Charity no. 1151152

Birthrights
Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements
31 March 2022

Birthrights

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Charity number	1151152
Registered office	Birthrights Union House 111 New Union Street Coventry CV1 2NT
Trustees	The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows: Alix-Louise Anderson Tara Arnold (appointed 26 July 2021) Rachel Crasnow QC Inderjit Cross John Davis (Treasurer) Julie Frohlich Carolyn Johnston Marcia Lord Simon Mehigan Sandra Nneoma Igwe Elizabeth Prochaska (Chair) Rebecca Schiller
Chief executive officer	Amy Gibbs (resigned 14 July 2022) Tracey Fletcher (interim CEO appointed 11 July 2022)
Patron	Nadine Montgomery
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank Olympic House 6 Olympic Court Montford Street Salford M5 2QP
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Introduction

The past year has seen exciting developments for Birthrights. We have grown our team and funding. Our work has reached new audiences and achieved huge impact, in the face of the ongoing pandemic and growing challenges in the under-resourced and demoralised maternity sector.

Our continuing work on the effects of Covid-19 on women and birthing people achieved real impact, reducing the restrictions in maternity units across the country. As we learnt from the impact studies carried out by NCVO, our advice and training are highly valued by those who received them. One person we supported said, *"I felt listened to and advocated for. So, so helpful in many ways"*. Our training reached hundreds of health professionals, 95% of whom said that the training would change the way they work with women and birthing people.

This year, our work on our national inquiry into racism in maternity care began in earnest. We worked with the highly committed and expert people on our inquiry panel, holding evidence gathering sessions to hear from leading organisations in the maternity sector, receiving hundreds of responses to our call for evidence and conducting multiple interviews and focus groups with people from multiple minoritised ethnic backgrounds. The inquiry has helped us to deepen our own commitment to inclusion and anti-racism and led to positive recognition of our approach from our stakeholders and funders.

We are deeply grateful to our dedicated team and trustees, campaign partners, supporters and volunteers, donors and funders. The support of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Thirty Percy Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation, the Baring Foundation and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust is essential to our ability to deliver our mission. Our corporate partners have been an incredible support, not only for funding and in-kind support, but for their expertise on maternity care and passion for our mission. We thank Bolt Burdon Kemp, Leigh Day and Irwin Mitchell and our new corporate partner, the antenatal course provider, Komu.

Birthrights is at an exciting point as we set out new strategy for the next three years and approach our 10th anniversary. We know we will build on our success and scale up our work across our three core areas – advice, training and influencing – and look forward to the publication of our report into racism in maternity care. We will continue to strengthen and evolve our dedication to inclusion and anti-racism, helping to ensure that all women and birthing people are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

elizabeth prochaska

Elizabeth Prochaska (Chair)

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (effective from January 2019).

2. Structure, governance and management

Birthrights is a charitable incorporated organisation and is registered with the Charity Commission with charity number 1151152.

The method of recruitment and appointment of trustees is set out in its governing document: the constitution. One new Trustee (Tara Arnold) was appointed in July 2021, taking the board to 12 members.

The current trustees comprise two senior lawyers, a frontline obstetrician, a Director of Midwifery, a finance and business expert, experienced charity leaders, communications and fundraising specialists, doulas and anti-racism campaigners. Most trustees have lived experience of maternity care and five are Black and Brown women.

The trustees are responsible for making decisions on the management of all the affairs of Birthrights including deciding on how the funds of the charity are to be spent. The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The full board of trustees met four times during 2021-22, with an average level of attendance via Zoom of 82%. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee also met four times in this period.

3. Objectives and activities

3.1 About

Birthrights launched in January 2013. We are the UK charity that champions respectful care during pregnancy and childbirth by protecting human rights. We believe that everyone is entitled to respectful maternity care that protects their fundamental rights to dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality. We provide free advice and legal information to women and birthing people, train healthcare professionals and birth workers to deliver rights-respecting care and campaign to change maternity policy and systems. Our research shines a spotlight on those most at risk of human rights violations in pregnancy and birth due to structural disadvantage and discrimination.

Our vision is to ensure everyone receives the respect and dignity they deserve in pregnancy and childbirth. Our mission is to be the authority on human rights in pregnancy and childbirth in the UK and use that influence to improve services and practice throughout the maternity system.

Birthrights promotes legal rights to receive evidence-based care that conforms to the best medical and midwifery standards. We do not promote any particular clinical perspectives in maternity care.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

3.2 Aims

The aim of Birthrights is to promote the human rights of child-bearing women and people in England and Wales. These rights are set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

3.3 Activities

Birthrights is committed to:

- promoting awareness of the legal rights of child-bearing women and people during and connected to pregnancy, childbirth and the post-natal period (the 6 weeks subsequent to birth);
- promoting respect for the legal rights of child-bearing women and people among healthcare organisations, medical and other professions and in society at large;
- protecting the human rights of child-bearing women and people through the provision of legal information and advice and obtaining redress for victims of human rights abuse;
- campaigning in relation to human rights and related legal issues relating to child-bearing women and people;
- responding with technical advice to proposed legislation and policy affecting child-bearing women and people;
- providing technical advice to government and others on human rights and other legal and regulatory matters as they affect child-bearing women and people;
- contributing to the understanding and sound administration of human rights law as it affects childbearing women and people, in particular, but not exclusively, through third-party interventions in legal cases;
- promoting the human rights and lawful treatment of child-bearing women and people by commissioning and conducting research;
- providing education and training to, among others, parents and parents-to-be, healthcare professionals and the public on human rights and the law as it affects child-bearing women and people;
- eliminating infringements of human rights of child-bearing women and people; and
- undertaking other charitable activities that the trustees may from time to time determine to promote the human rights and legal status of child-bearing women and people.

When planning our activities for the year, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the promotion of human rights.

This year, the board agreed to extend our 2018-2021 strategic goals into 2021-22, as the pressures of the pandemic response meant a strategy review was not possible in 2021. We are committed to delivering a new three year strategy in 2022. Birthrights delivered to our three goals, with two specific strategic priorities – COVID-19 and racial justice:

1. **Empower and support women and birthing people** to know and advocate for their rights through free advice and resources, reaching those most at risk through our partnerships;
2. **Change culture and practice** in maternity care through training for healthcare professionals and other caregivers; and
3. **Change policy and systems** through research, influencing, campaigns and legal interventions – with a focus on women and birthing people most at risk of poor, disrespectful, or unsafe care.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

As set out in the financial statements, our major activities in 2021-22 have been:

- Responding to year two of the pandemic, managing an ongoing higher demand for advice, flexing our training programme to meet demand for a hybrid model, and influencing to safeguard basic rights under threat due to COVID restrictions – including pursuing national and local legal action, funded by The Baring Foundation;
- Continuing to deliver our core programmes and policy work, conducting an external strategy review, and strengthening our crisis comms skills and processes, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation;
- Delivering an in-depth, wide-ranging national inquiry on racial injustice in maternity care, funded by John Ellerman Foundation and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust;
- Growing our small staff team to boost our communications, fundraising, operations and programmes capacity, thanks to funding from Thirty Percy Foundation, the government's Kickstart scheme, and major donors;
- Continuing to invest in our inclusion journey, training all staff and trustees in anti-racism and LGBTQ+ competency, and standing firm on our trans inclusive ethos and language; and
- Fundraising to ensure Birthrights' future sustainability throughout and beyond COVID.

4. Achievements and performance

4.1 Advice and resources

Our first strategic goal is to **empower and support women and birthing people** to know and advocate for their rights through free advice and resources, reaching those most at risk through our partnerships.

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have a far reaching impact on human rights in maternity care. Despite some reductions in restrictions in maternity care, the number of women and individuals who have contacted us for advice and used our online resources remains at the same high level as in the first year of the pandemic.

This year, we gave advice to 1,108 people on their rights, maintaining the significantly increased level in 2020-21. Enquiries encompassed a broad range of issues, from individuals wanting to confirm their right to make choices in maternity care, to a large number of more complex circumstances, involving multiple emails from our small team. The most common concerns involved complaints about traumatic births where informed consent had not been respected and poor postnatal care where basic dignity was not upheld. Restrictions on birth partners, particularly second birth partners or the length of time allowed for postnatal visits, continued to be a key issue. Choice of place and mode of birth came under threat with midwifery-led services or birth centres closing for many months at a time, and water births or caesareans being denied. Some concrete outcomes we secured for individuals were:

- Reuniting mothers who had been separated from their newborn baby in NICU due to the mother being in close contact with a person testing positive for COVID-19. (Mother and baby both continued to test negative);
- Upholding the right to choose place of birth for individuals with additional health considerations (such as epilepsy or diabetes) who choose to birth in midwifery led settings outside of usual Trust/Board guidelines;
- Exceptions to second birth partner restrictions for people with additional needs e.g. very young mother, a disability, mental health issues, multiple births or previous birth trauma;

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

- Upholding the right to choose home birth by advocating for constructive solutions – e.g. bank contracts to independent midwives or a neighbouring Trust with a home birth team accepting a late transfer of care; and
- Protecting people's right to informed choice of maternal request caesarean section by securing a change in caregiver where healthcare professionals were not following the Nice Guidance and Interim Ockenden Report Essential Action 7.

We worked with a diverse group of people with lived experience and an external copy-writer to fully review and refresh our suite of factsheets, and the new set was published in August 2021. Views on our factsheets continued to grow exponentially - in comparison to the previous financial year, total factsheet views has increased by almost 50% (49.9%), with views on most of the individual factsheets increasing by 40% and over. Our factsheet on right to a c-section was the most frequently viewed factsheet page this year, up 60.11% from last year (47.2k views up from 29k).

In August 2021, we also published a basic birth rights factsheet translated into Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Kurdish Sorani, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya and Urdu. In total, the translated factsheet home page has been accessed 2,060 times and the factsheets have been downloaded 686 times.

With thanks to the generous donation from the Peabody family, we were able to appoint award-winning screenwriter Faryal Vemi to produce our short film 'Speak Up, Speak Out', which featured three women and how, referencing their personal birth experiences, one can make a complaint (or feedback) about poor maternity care.

We escalated numerous advice cases to Trusts and Healthboards to change local policies that contravene basic rights, writing formally to 21 Trusts/Healthboards. We also wrote to all Trusts and Healthboards with visiting hours of less than 2 hours as part of a joint campaign with the ButNotMaternity Alliance. This led to positive policy change or exceptions being made in at least 13 cases. Some examples include:

- UCLH changed their policy of separating parents who were close contacts of someone with COVID from their baby, even if they themselves were testing negative. The Trust's Deputy Chief Nurse was also keen to work with us in future to ensure human rights are incorporated into decision making;
- Cwm Taf changed their inpatient visiting policy from one hour to 2.5 hours in February, just before we were about to launch our judicial review against them;
- Southern Trust in Northern Ireland acquiesced after our intervention, to support a woman who wanted to give birth at her local hospital rather than a specialist unit further away due to previous trauma there. In the end she did give birth in her local hospital and thanked us from the "bottom of her heart" and described her birth as the "perfect birth experience";
- After correspondence with us, Leeds agreed to make an exception for a second birth partner for someone who had a strong case for additional support due to previous birth trauma; and
- We launched a legal challenge against Betsi Cadwaladr in Wales for not allowing any postnatal visiting - the Board quickly changed policy to an hour and have continued to gradually increase it.

We are grateful to the Baring Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and major donors for supporting the development of our advice service and resources in the face of continued higher demand and complexity of casework.

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

4.2 Training and education

Our second strategic goal is to **change culture and practice** in maternity care through training for healthcare professionals and other caregivers.

Pre-pandemic, our core training model was based on in-person, interactive workshops to explore human rights legal principles and practical scenarios applying this learning to common issues in maternity care – provided in-house for NHS Trusts and local maternity systems, and as standalone ticketed events. Birthrights training has looked very different because of COVID-19.

As restrictions eased, we maintained a mainly online delivery model for training. We invested in a second Zoom account for solely training, which freed up our availability as we did not have to avoid any clashes with other Zoom meetings.

We had 19 speaking engagements this year, including RCOG's Management of the Labour Ward, British Intrapartum Society, Consultant Midwife Network and Norfolk LMS. Through these speaking engagements we reached around 1,400 people.

We also ran 21 training sessions, one of which was a face-to-face session, reaching a total of 484 participants - surpassing our target of 20 events and 400 participants. Five of those sessions were delivered to Doula organisations: Doulas without Borders, the Doula Association and Doula UK. In total an estimated 118 doulas attended our training this year.

We ran 15 in-depth training events for a total of 366 healthcare professionals (including student healthcare professionals). We continued to encourage multi-disciplinary teams to attend training through our discount offer, four sessions paid a reduced training fee after successfully applying for the 10% MDT discount. NHS staff received training at Barnsley, Cambridge, Oxford University Hospital, St Mary's Hospital and Royal Berkshire. We also delivered two sessions to Milton Keynes Hospital, who then got in touch to commission a large number of sessions for the coming year (as seen below).

We were pleased to see an increase in our training's presence in Wales. We delivered sessions to Cardiff and Vale University Hospital Board and Hywel Dda. We also delivered sessions to three of the four universities in Wales that offer midwifery (with the fourth one booked for August 2022). We also delivered a session to students at the Northumbria Midwifery Society (Northumbria Midsoc).

We had 221 feedback responses from participants who had attended our training 2021-22. The average quality rating was 4.7 (scale of 1-5, where 5 is excellent). 95% said that the training had impacted the way they plan to work with pregnant women and birthing people. 95% said they would recommend our training to others. We also commissioned an impact study into our training, with volunteers interviewing healthcare professionals and birth workers who have attended our training (six midwives, two HSIB workers and one doula). The findings were published in a report in October 2021 with a lot of positive feedback on how our training has changed delivery of care and how professionals had incorporated a lot of it into their own teaching. The study did identify that those who choose to attend Birthrights training tend to already have an interest in human rights, so may not be those professionals that need our training the most. The importance and impact of multidisciplinary training was also identified, with a particular emphasis on the challenge of getting more obstetricians to attend our training. These points were also echoed in the qualitative feedback from this year's training participants. Other themes included:

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For the year ended 31 March 2022

- Calls to make our training mandatory for professionals: “I feel this should be mandatory training at least bi-annually for all HCPs in maternity care.” (HCP)
- Concerns about litigation: “The fear of litigation may impact the way personalised care can be provided which may in turn impact the way human rights are respected.” (Midwifery student)
- Concerns about staffing levels: “The thing that I think impacts most is chronic, constant shortage of staff. Whilst the ideals are great, the practicalities mean there is never enough time to give the care we want to give.” (HCP)

Training continued to be an important source of unrestricted income this year, bringing in over £24,000 plus an additional contract secured in March 2022 for £25,000 to deliver training across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes local maternity system (income deferred into 2022-23).

4.3 Campaigns and influencing

Our third strategic goal is to **change policy and systems** through research, influencing, campaigns and legal interventions – with a focus on women and birthing people most at risk of poor, disrespectful, or unsafe care. We are grateful to the Baring Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Thirty Percy Foundation and major donors for investing in our policy, campaigns and communications work.

The **racial injustice inquiry**, which was launched in February 2021, has spanned the whole of this period of the annual report and the final report *Systemic Racism, not Broken Bodies* was published in May 2022.

COVID campaigning has continued to be a core priority this year. Positive outcomes include:

- New national guidance being issued on visiting restrictions in maternity services on 15 April 2021 after we wrote to the Secretary of State with ButNotMaternity partners asking for a roadmap out of restrictions;
- Publishing analysis carried out by health economist Rachael Hunter at UCL to quantify the mental health impact of COVID on pregnant women/birthing people at £17.5bn. The analysis showed that social support was a key protective factor and therefore relaxing visiting restrictions in maternity services could significantly decrease this mental health burden;
- Writing to the Secretary of State for Health in Wales asking the Welsh Government to revise their guidance given that only one unit had inpatient visiting hours of more than two hours. The letter received coverage on the BBC News website and we were interviewed for BBC Radio Wales;
- Sending pre-action letters to both Betsi Cadwaladr and Cwm Taf which both resulted in the Health Boards reintroducing visiting to the postnatal wards. In the latter case this happened hours before we launched a full judicial review;
- Issuing a joint press release with BPAs and other charities calling for an urgent rethink in how we communicate risk in pregnancy which is likely to have contributed to vaccine hesitancy. We also took part in a meeting with Stella Creasy MP, the Royal Colleges and Pregnant then Screwed to emphasise that communication on vaccination must be clear and honest about why guidance had changed, and that the vaccine should be readily accessible to pregnant women who may not want to mix with hundreds of others at a vaccine centre;
- UCLH changing their policy on separating parents, who had been a close contact of someone with COVID, from their own babies on the neonatal unit, even when they were testing negative, following our intervention; and
- Being on the Steering Group for the ASPIRE and also the RESILIENT research projects that have been seeking to learn lessons from how maternity services responded to COVID.

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For the year ended 31 March 2022

Other policy and influencing highlights this year included:

- NICE dropping the proposal to offer induction to black and brown women and birthing people two weeks earlier than white women, following the consultation response from Birthrights and others;
- Working with the Patient Information Forum to draft a survey about women and birthing people's experience of induction, and appearing on the Panel to share the results to emphasise the gap between the NICE guideline and reality in terms of how conversations about induction are conducted;
- Taking an active part in the steering committee for the Re:birth project led by the Royal College of Midwives, seeking to garner a consensus around language used in maternity care;
- Writing to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in November calling on the Government to implement the Health and Social Care Committee's recommendation that an extra £200-£350m per year is invested in maternity services, to coincide with the launch of our new Speak Up, Speak Out film;
- Submitting a response to the Ministry of Justice consultation on replacing the Human Rights Act with a Bill of Rights;
- Providing a briefing to Siobhan Baillie for the adjournment debate to discuss the issue of staffing shortages in maternity services on the 17 January – Siobhan referred to Birthrights in the debate;
- Collaborating with the White Ribbon Alliance and Best Beginnings on the “Safer Beginnings” project focused on obstetric violence, domestic violence and FGM. We trained their 18 delivery partners and are currently co-producing other resources;
- Contributing to the Nuffield Family Justice Born into Care project, which has led to piloting of best practice guidance for supporting women whose babies may be taken into care at birth;
- Being a co-investigator on the DISCERN project on best practice in open disclosure after a serious adverse incident in maternity care;
- Continuing to be a key player on the IDECIDE Steering Group and seeing the tool being formally piloted in three Trusts;
- Achieving a win (with BPAS and others) in the shape of changes to the NICE quality standard on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) where NICE dropped the proposal to record any amount of alcohol drunk in pregnancy and transfer this information directly from maternity notes to a child's health record;
- Co-signing a letter to the Scottish Government, alongside BPAS, ARC and others asking to be involved in the impending review of their guideline on exposure to alcohol in pregnancy; and
- Seeing the proposals to ban at home early abortion from August overturned following a successful campaign by BPAS, and supported by Birthrights and others.

4.4 Campaigns and communications:

Our profile as the go-to on human rights in childbirth continued to grow exponentially during the financial year, with several appearances (in addition to the race inquiry coverage) on BBC TV and across BBC Radio Stations (both local and national), ITV News, LBC, the Guardian newspaper, Independent, Grazia, Daily Mail on a range of subjects including the right to caesarean birth, COVID restrictions, the COVID vaccine, the staffing crisis in maternity care and the Ockenden review.

This year we saw our social media profile grow to almost 19,000 followers on Twitter, 16,200 followers on Facebook, 11,100 on Instagram and almost 500 on LinkedIn. In the new financial year, we will begin work on a new brand awareness campaign called 'My Birthrights' to bring the story of Birthrights and the impactful way we help women, birthing people and healthcare professionals to life.

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For the year ended 31 March 2022

In the summer of 2021, we faced several weeks of negative press coverage and hostile social media activity in response to our trans inclusive position and previous engagement with a high-profile influencer in the birth world. We also received a data subject access request in relation to the same individual, which we fully complied with. In response, we restated our commitment to inclusion, took steps to protect the wellbeing of our staff and online community, and made a Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission (which they investigated and took no further action). We were grateful to Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for funding us to bring in external crisis comms expertise from Zoe Amar Digital, to facilitate an internal review of the incident, strengthen our crisis comms processes and increase digital and crisis response skills across the whole team.

We are grateful to Thirty Percy Foundation for continuing to support investment in our in-house communications capacity, to build our profile and reach with more women and birthing people.

4.5 Strengthening our organisation

In 2021-22 we have significantly grown our staff team, from six to twelve part-time staff (FTE headcount of five). In quarter one, new posts included an Engagement Director, Training Officer and Kickstart-funded Communications Coordinator. We were pleased to identify funding from a major donor to retain this person in a Team Coordinator role after Kickstart funding ended. With confirmation of increased continuation funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation over four years, we were able to recruit four additional posts in quarter four: two Advice Coordinators, a Policy Officer and a Supporter Engagement Officer – our first dedicated fundraising role. We continued to use inclusive recruitment practices and positive action to improve diversity of our staff. While we remain a fully remote team, in the second half of the year, we were pleased to resume in-person team meetings, to build relationships and cohesion after protracted lockdowns and restrictions. Our CEO, Amy Gibbs, announced she would step down in summer 2022, after a strong period of growth. The Board appointed Tracey Fletcher, a charity leader with 30+ years' experience, as interim CEO from July 2022, while the recruitment for permanent CEO was underway.

The Esmée-funded Impact Study delivered by NCVO reported its findings, stress-testing our theory of change and demonstrating the significant and nuanced impact of our core advice and training programmes. Esmée also awarded us Funding Plus support so to commission an in-depth strategy review, led by Lucent Consultancy, including a 360 survey of staff and trustees, interviews with key stakeholders, and workshops to test strategy scenarios. Both these pieces of work informed our new strategic goals for 2022-24, giving the board and senior team greater confidence in our core purpose, existing impact, and opportunities for growth. A key area of development highlighted by the team was operational infrastructure, which will be a priority for the new CEO. The new strategic goals focus on consolidating the growth of our programmes and profile during the pandemic, and centring inclusion and racial justice more explicitly across all of Birthrights' work.

Fundraising and income generation continued to be a major priority for the CEO in 2021-22. We commissioned a grant fundraising consultant to conduct prospect research, review our case for support, create a template bid and progress some applications with new funders.

Work during 2021-22 that has led to funding for future years includes securing:

- Unrestricted continuation funding of £300,000 over four years from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation towards our core advice, training and influencing work;
- Continuation funding of £100,000 over two years from Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust to deliver phase two of the inquiry on racial injustice in maternity care;

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For the year ended 31 March 2022

- An uplift of £8,000 to the existing Joseph Rowntree grant for our internal anti-racism work;
- New funding from the Tampon Tax, via White Ribbon Alliance and Best Beginnings, to be a delivery partner for their 'Safer Beginnings' programme;
- Uplifts agreed with law firms Irwin Mitchell and Leigh Day for renewed three-year corporate partnerships;
- A one-off grant of £2,000 from the Hospital Saturday Fund towards advice and training; and
- Positive indications from John Ellerman Foundation of unrestricted continuation funding of £150,000 over three years for our social action work, once our grant for the inquiry ends.

5. Financial review

5.1 Summary of income and expenditure

We sustained overall income in 2021-22 of £350,613. Restricted income fell from £215,992 in 2020-21 to £106,115 in 2021-22 but unrestricted income grew from £145,711 in 2020-21 to £244,498 in 2021-22. Unrestricted income significantly outperformed budget expectations, particularly from major donors and training. The CEO and Treasurer agreed to designate £150,898 of unrestricted funds for specific purposes, such as staff posts and projects. Total expenditure was £342,450, which was in line with budget expectations.

At the end of 2020-21, £261,315 of funds were brought forward, of which £107,427 were restricted funds from grants for planned activity in 2021-22 (due to projects being phased across multiple financial years). At the end of 2021-22, £269,478 was carried forward into 2022-23, including £47,300 of restricted funds and £150,898 of designated funds.

Highlights from the 2021-22 accounts include:

- Maintained a positive rate of over 88% of our expenditure on delivering charitable activities as opposed to raising funds, while increasing investment in support and governance costs to strengthen our organisation;
- Delivered a 12-month Baring Foundation grant to use legal action to challenge human rights violations due to COVID restrictions in maternity care;
- Delivered the final year of our Esmée Fairbairn Foundation grant to progress our 2018-21 strategic goals and secured £300,000 unrestricted continuation funding for 2021-25;
- Delivered the second year of our £100,000 grant over two years from John Ellerman Foundation, for staff costs and delivery of our race inquiry;
- Delivered the second year of our grant of £60,000 over two years from Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, for staff costs and delivery of our race inquiry, and applied for continuation funding for two further years (awarded £100,000 over two years in June 2022);
- Delivered the second year of our unrestricted grant of £150,000 over three years from Thirty Percy Foundation, designated for in-house communications capacity and staff costs;
- Secured £6,500 Kickstart funding to recruit a Communications Coordinator post for a person aged 16-25 on Universal Credit – and identified major donor funding to retain the post as a Team Coordinator;
- Secured two Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Funding Plus grants towards our strategy review (£7,500), crisis communications and LGBTQ+ competency training (£9,800);
- Received £9,000 Tampon Tax funding as a sub-grantee of the Safer Beginnings programme;
- Grew income from Birthrights' training programmes to £24,000, and secured a major contract with a local maternity system for £25,000, to be delivered across 2022-23;
- Continued our three corporate partnerships with law firms Bolt Burdon Kemp, Irwin Mitchell and Leigh Day;

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

- Achieved £219,943 in unrestricted donations and grants from corporate partners, trusts, major donors, regular givers and fundraising events;
- Increased FTE headcount to 5 (twelve part-time staff) over 2021-22, working with consultants and freelancers to cover critical vacancies; provide expertise in website, brand, strategy, crisis comms, and anti-racism; provide therapeutic input and wellbeing support for the racial injustice inquiry; and boost advice line capacity;
- Invested £30,000 in participation payments for the racial injustice inquiry, to ensure it was led and shaped by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people; and
- Enjoyed pro bono or discounted legal advice and in-kind support from 39 Essex and Doughty Street Chambers, Irwin Mitchell, Leigh Day, and our healthcare/legal Trustees.

5.2 Reserves

At the end of 2021-22, we hold £269,478 in reserves that includes £71,280 in unrestricted general reserves in addition to £150,898 of core funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Thirty Percy Foundation and donors which has been designated by the trustees, but could be reallocated if required.

Our reserves policy states that Birthrights will hold reserves to cover 3 months of operating costs. A 3-month reserve would allow Birthrights the opportunity, if necessary, to wind down its programme of support in an orderly and managed fashion, including paying our staff reasonable notice. The trustees believe this is the appropriate level of reserves to balance prudence and risk management against maximising the benefits the charity can deliver by not tying up too much of our funds in our reserves.

For 2022-23, three months of operating costs would be £85,000, based on our planned income and expenditure budget.

5.3 Going concern

Birthrights has successfully fundraised throughout 2021-22 and continues to be in a strong financial position, despite the ongoing challenges to income generation posed by the pandemic and cost of living crisis. The trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved for the following reasons:

- The charity holds reserves of £71,280;
- The charity is carrying forward a significant unrestricted surplus into 2021-22 which has been designated for core staff costs; and
- The charity has grants in place which span 2022-23 and beyond (Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Thirty Percy) and John Ellerman has indicated high likelihood of unrestricted continuation funding beyond autumn 2022.

The trustees therefore consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis for the preparation of the accounts, as detailed in note 1(b) to the financial statements.

Fundraising will continue to be a major priority for the CEO and senior team, to ensure sustainability and growth into the future.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

6. Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the year. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charity during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 8 November 2022 and signed on their behalf by

elizabeth prochaska

J A Davis

Elizabeth Prochaska - Chair

John Davis - Treasurer

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Birthrights

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Birthrights (the CIO) for the year ended 31 March 2022, which are set out on pages 15 to 29.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the CIO you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

Godfrey Wilson Limited also provides payroll and bookkeeping services to the CIO. I confirm that as a member of the ICAEW I am subject to the FRC's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, which I have applied with respect to this engagement.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material 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 CIO as required by section 130 of the Act; or the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.

Laura May Richards

Date: 8 November 2022

Laura Richards ACA

Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Birthrights

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	103,865	219,943	323,808	347,327
Charitable activities	4	2,250	24,515	26,765	14,112
Investments		-	40	40	264
Total income		<u>106,115</u>	<u>244,498</u>	<u>350,613</u>	<u>361,703</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	40,525	40,525	18,116
Charitable activities		<u>166,242</u>	<u>135,683</u>	<u>301,925</u>	<u>175,835</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>166,242</u>	<u>176,208</u>	<u>342,450</u>	<u>193,951</u>
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds	6	(60,127)	68,290	8,163	167,752
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>107,427</u>	<u>153,888</u>	<u>261,315</u>	<u>93,563</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>47,300</u></u>	<u><u>222,178</u></u>	<u><u>269,478</u></u>	<u><u>261,315</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 13 to the accounts.

Birthrights

Balance sheet

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	2021 £
Current assets				
Debtors	9	34,631		10,306
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>262,892</u>		<u>261,015</u>
		297,523		271,321
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	10	<u>(28,045)</u>		<u>(10,006)</u>
Net current assets			<u>269,478</u>	<u>261,315</u>
Net assets	12		<u>269,478</u>	<u>261,315</u>
Funds	13			
Restricted funds			47,300	107,427
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			150,898	95,000
General funds			<u>71,280</u>	<u>58,888</u>
Total charity funds			<u>269,478</u>	<u>261,315</u>

Approved by the trustees on 8 November 2022 and signed on their behalf by

J A Davis

John Davis - Treasurer

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

Birthrights 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).

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider to be appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves and future confirmed funding. Whilst the trustees acknowledge the impact of the Covid pandemic, there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received under contracts, sponsorship agreements or in advance of provision of training is deferred and recognised when services are delivered.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the basis of staff time:

	2022	2021
Raising funds	15%	12%
Charitable activities	85%	88%

i) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

j) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

k) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

l) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

m) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

n) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

There are no sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

2. Prior period comparatives

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £
Income from:			
Donations	214,492	132,835	347,327
Charitable activities	1,500	12,612	14,112
Investments	-	264	264
Total income	215,992	145,711	361,703
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	6,122	11,994	18,116
Charitable activities	151,729	24,106	175,835
Total expenditure	157,851	36,100	193,951
Net income	58,141	109,611	167,752
Transfers between funds	218	(218)	-
Net movement in funds	58,359	109,393	167,752

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Donations	-	81,971	81,971
Grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	17,300	75,000	92,300
John Ellerman Foundation	50,000	-	50,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	-	50,000	50,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	30,000	-	30,000
Best Beginnings	-	9,000	9,000
Kickstart Scheme	6,565	-	6,565
Gifts in kind*	-	3,972	3,972
Total income from donations	103,865	219,943	323,808
 Prior year comparative			2021 Total £
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	
Donations	-	45,960	45,960
Grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	50,000	25,000	75,000
The Baring Foundation	75,000	-	75,000
John Ellerman Foundation	50,000	-	50,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	-	50,000	50,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	29,500	-	29,500
National Lottery Community Fund	9,992	-	9,992
Gifts in kind*	-	11,875	11,875
Total income from donations	214,492	132,835	347,327

*Gifts in kind relate to pro bono legal advice, training, stationery, printed materials and room hire.

The charity receives government grants, defined as funding from the Kickstart Scheme (and in 2021 from National Lottery Community Fund) to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the year ending 31 March 2022 was £6,565 (2021: £9,992). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Training, conferences and events	-	23,585	23,585
Other	<u>2,250</u>	<u>930</u>	<u>3,180</u>
	<u>2,250</u>	<u>24,515</u>	<u>26,765</u>

Prior year comparative

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £
Training, conferences and events	-	12,312	12,312
Other	<u>1,500</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>1,800</u>
	<u>1,500</u>	<u>12,612</u>	<u>14,112</u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2022 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	25,177	138,474	50,860	214,511
Research participation	-	32,436	-	32,436
Legal and professional fees	1,920	22,724	18,564	43,208
Marketing and communications	-	21,358	-	21,358
Room hire	-	9,928	-	9,928
Accountancy	-	-	7,433	7,433
Staff recruitment and training	-	3,323	1,232	4,555
IT equipment and software	168	905	3,145	4,218
Travel and subsistence	-	1,972	-	1,972
Office costs	-	782	1,042	1,824
Fundraising	528	-	-	528
Insurance	-	-	479	479
Sub-total	27,793	231,902	82,755	342,450
Allocation of support and governance costs	12,732	70,023	(82,755)	-
Total expenditure	40,525	301,925	-	342,450

Total governance costs were £7,608 (2021: £5,102).

Prior year comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2021 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	11,078	80,530	32,371	123,979
Legal and professional fees	-	26,594	7,897	34,491
Marketing and communications	-	8,740	2,947	11,687
Accountancy	-	-	7,252	7,252
Research participation	-	6,861	-	6,861
Staff recruitment and training	-	197	5,315	5,512
IT equipment and software	-	1,749	379	2,128
Travel and subsistence	-	-	1,227	1,227
Office costs	-	-	654	654
Insurance	-	-	160	160
Sub-total	11,078	124,671	58,202	193,951
Allocation of support and governance costs	7,038	51,164	(58,202)	-
Total expenditure	18,116	175,835	-	193,951

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2022 £	2021 £
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (including VAT)	1,740	1,680
▪ Other services	<u>5,693</u>	<u>4,665</u>

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Salaries and wages	192,655	104,654
Social security costs	12,720	4,651
Pension costs	4,339	2,277
Freelancers	<u>4,797</u>	<u>12,397</u>
	<u>214,511</u>	<u>123,979</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, Programmes Director and Engagement Director (2021: the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, Programmes Director). The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £121,145 (2021: £77,532).

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Average head count	<u>8.0</u>	<u>6.0</u>
Average full time equivalent	<u>5.0</u>	<u>3.5</u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

8. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

9. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	30,995	5,485
Prepayments	2,495	3,321
Accrued income	765	1,500
Other debtors	376	-
	<u>34,631</u>	<u>10,306</u>

10. Creditors: amounts due within 1 year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	824	1,688
Accruals	2,221	2,530
Deferred income (note 11)	25,000	5,000
Other creditors	-	788
	<u>28,045</u>	<u>10,006</u>

11. Deferred income

	2022 £	2021 £
At 1 April 2021	5,000	10,000
Deferred during the year	25,000	-
Released during the year	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>(5,000)</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>25,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>

Deferred income relates to training invoiced in advance to be delivered during 2022/23.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

12. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	47,300	150,898	99,325	297,523
Current liabilities	-	-	(28,045)	(28,045)
Net assets at 31 March 2022	47,300	150,898	71,280	269,478
Prior year comparative	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	107,427	95,000	68,894	271,321
Current liabilities	-	-	(10,006)	(10,006)
Net assets at 31 March 2021	107,427	95,000	58,888	261,315

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

13. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds					
Baring Foundation, Legal Action	23,468	-	(21,773)	-	1,695
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	31,139	-	(31,139)	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Crisis Comms	-	9,800	(9,800)	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Strategy	-	7,500	(7,500)	-	-
John Ellerman Foundation	32,887	50,000	(49,661)	-	33,226
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	19,933	30,000	(38,345)	-	11,588
Kickstart	-	6,565	(6,565)	-	-
King's College London	-	2,250	(1,459)	-	791
Total restricted funds	107,427	106,115	(166,242)	-	47,300
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
C and P	-	25,000	(10,084)	-	14,916
Esmée Fairbairn, 2021 - 2025	-	75,000	(6,365)	-	68,635
Esmée Fairbairn, COVID	25,000	-	(14,114)	-	10,886
Leigh Day Inquiry	-	20,000	(12,806)	-	7,194
Peabody	20,000	-	(15,687)	-	4,313
Safer Beginnings	-	9,000	(1,521)	-	7,479
Thirty Percy Foundation	50,000	50,000	(62,525)	-	37,475
<i>Total designated funds</i>	95,000	179,000	(123,102)	-	150,898
General funds	58,888	65,498	(53,106)	-	71,280
Total unrestricted funds	153,888	244,498	(176,208)	-	222,178
Total funds	261,315	350,613	(342,450)	-	269,478

Purposes of restricted funds

Baring Foundation, Legal Action

Grant for legal costs and increased staff capacity to challenge human rights violations in maternity care due to COVID-19, through strategic litigation and other legal campaigning tactics.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Funding for two staff posts and other operational costs to support Birthrights to achieve better care for women and birthing people by promoting safe, respectful maternity care, through our core activities of advice, training, research and influencing systems change.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

13. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Funding Plus - Crisis Comms

Funding to commission Zoe Amar Digital to strengthen our crisis communications skills, processes and practice, including a review of recent media and social media incidents and all-staff training.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Funding Plus - Strategy

Funding to commission Lucent Consultancy to deliver an in-depth strategy review, facilitating input from staff, trustees and external partners.

John Ellerman Foundation

Two-year grant for Birthrights to convene a national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, towards delivery and staff costs, including a new post to ensure the inquiry is co-produced by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Two-year grant for Birthrights to convene a national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, towards delivery and staff costs, including a new post to ensure the inquiry is co-produced by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

Kickstart

Funding for a Communications and Fundraising Coordinator on a 6-month placement, as part of the Government's Kickstart scheme for 16-24 year olds on Universal Credit.

King's College London

Funding for Birthrights' contribution to a research study, looking at strengthening the disclosure of harm with women and families under NHS maternity care.

Purposes of designated funds

C and P

Major donation designated for operational costs, specifically upgrading the Operations Coordinator post to Manager and creating a new Team Coordinator post to boost capacity.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation 2021 - 2025

Funding over four years towards unrestricted core costs to protect human rights in maternity care through advice, training and influencing.

Esmée Fairbairn, COVID

Additional unrestricted funding to support staff and operational costs during the pandemic, designated for a new post to boost capacity to deliver our training programme for healthcare professionals and birth workers, including reviewing future delivery models.

Leigh Day Inquiry

Corporate donation designated for delivery of the racial injustice inquiry, specifically expert panel payments, anti-racism expertise, focus groups, transcription, report design and polling.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

13. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of designated funds

Peabody

Major donation designated for campaigning on COVID restrictions and to create a new video on making complaints in maternity care, co-produced by people with lived experience.

Safer Beginnings

Funding from the Tampon Tax to be a delivery partner (sub-grantee) for the White Ribbon Alliance and Best Beginnings programme to improve maternity outcomes and postpartum safety of 70,000 women by developing specialist information, services and interventions that enable self-advocacy in the context of obstetric and domestic violence, and female genital mutilation.

Thirty Percy Foundation

Three-year unrestricted grant designated for staff and operational costs, including a new senior post to lead and develop our communications and engagement work, to reach and support more women and birthing people with a diverse range of needs and experiences.

Prior year comparative

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds					
Baring Foundation, Peer Partners	19,765	30,000	(49,765)	-	-
Baring Foundation, COVID	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Baring Foundation, Legal Action	-	40,000	(16,532)	-	23,468
John Ellerman Foundation	-	50,000	(17,113)	-	32,887
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	29,303	50,000	(48,164)	-	31,139
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	29,500	(9,567)	-	19,933
National Lottery Community Fund	-	9,992	(9,992)	-	-
King's College London	-	1,500	(1,718)	218	-
Total restricted funds	49,068	215,992	(157,851)	218	107,427
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
Hollick Family Foundation	10,000	-	(10,000)	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn, COVID	-	25,000	-	-	25,000
Peabody	-	20,000	-	-	20,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
Total designated funds	10,000	95,000	(10,000)	-	95,000
General funds	34,495	50,711	(26,100)	(218)	58,888
Total unrestricted funds	44,495	145,711	(36,100)	(218)	153,888
Total funds	93,563	361,703	(193,951)	-	261,315

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

14. Related party transactions

Trustee donations made to the charity during the year were £25,000 (2021: £0). The donation was made at arms length and there were no conditions attached to the donation.

2 trustees received payment for their participation in an advisory panel, along with external contributors. During the year they received £2,800 (2021: £700), in compensation, at the same rate as any other contributor.

Pro bono services were provided by the trustees during the year of £0 (2021: £5,125) in relation to waived fees for training sessions and legal advice.

BIRTHRIGHTS

England & Wales - Charity number 1151152

Accounts

Birthrights

**Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements**

31 March 2021

Birthrights

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Charity number	1151152																														
Registered office	Birthrights Union House 111 New Union Street Coventry CV1 2NT																														
Trustees	The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows: <table><tr><td>Alix-Louise Anderson</td><td>Appointed 28 January 2021</td></tr><tr><td>Tara Arnold</td><td>Appointed 26 July 2021</td></tr><tr><td>Sarah Cooke</td><td>Resigned 28 January 2021</td></tr><tr><td>Rachel Crasnow QC</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Deborah Crewe</td><td>Resigned 22 October 2020</td></tr><tr><td>Inderjit Cross</td><td>Appointed 28 January 2021</td></tr><tr><td>John Davis</td><td>(Treasurer)</td></tr><tr><td>Julie Frohlich</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Carolyn Johnston</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Marcia Lord</td><td>Appointed 28 January 2021</td></tr><tr><td>Simon Mehigan</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Sandra Nneoma Igwe</td><td>Appointed 28 January 2021</td></tr><tr><td>Elizabeth Prochaska</td><td>(Chair)</td></tr><tr><td>Catharina Schram</td><td>Resigned 3 November 2020</td></tr><tr><td>Rebecca Schiller</td><td></td></tr></table>	Alix-Louise Anderson	Appointed 28 January 2021	Tara Arnold	Appointed 26 July 2021	Sarah Cooke	Resigned 28 January 2021	Rachel Crasnow QC		Deborah Crewe	Resigned 22 October 2020	Inderjit Cross	Appointed 28 January 2021	John Davis	(Treasurer)	Julie Frohlich		Carolyn Johnston		Marcia Lord	Appointed 28 January 2021	Simon Mehigan		Sandra Nneoma Igwe	Appointed 28 January 2021	Elizabeth Prochaska	(Chair)	Catharina Schram	Resigned 3 November 2020	Rebecca Schiller	
Alix-Louise Anderson	Appointed 28 January 2021																														
Tara Arnold	Appointed 26 July 2021																														
Sarah Cooke	Resigned 28 January 2021																														
Rachel Crasnow QC																															
Deborah Crewe	Resigned 22 October 2020																														
Inderjit Cross	Appointed 28 January 2021																														
John Davis	(Treasurer)																														
Julie Frohlich																															
Carolyn Johnston																															
Marcia Lord	Appointed 28 January 2021																														
Simon Mehigan																															
Sandra Nneoma Igwe	Appointed 28 January 2021																														
Elizabeth Prochaska	(Chair)																														
Catharina Schram	Resigned 3 November 2020																														
Rebecca Schiller																															
Chief executive officer	Amy Gibbs Angela Style (interim CEO - until October 2020)																														
Patron	Nadine Montgomery																														
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank Olympic House 6 Olympic Court Montford Street Salford M5 2QP																														
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD																														

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Introduction

COVID-19 brought human rights in childbirth to the fore, with restrictions in maternity services leading to women hearing devastating news or even giving birth alone, parents being separated from babies, and severe limitations on birth choices. We saw demand for advice shoot up, moved our whole training programme online, and campaigned nationally and locally to safeguard basic rights in maternity care. We are incredibly proud of how our small staff team stepped up to respond to multiple challenges and work with the NHS nationally and locally to reverse damaging decisions.

Our ongoing dialogue with government, NHS England and the Royal Colleges influenced national guidance for Trusts making clear that partners are not visitors and clarification that women and birthing people should not wear face masks during labour. We launched legal action in partnership with Leigh Day to achieve exemptions to self-isolation rules for birth partners and with Irwin Mitchell to challenge blanket policies banning partners from attending scans remotely.

Beyond COVID-19, we launched our new national inquiry to investigate racial injustice in maternity care, spearheaded by a formidable expert panel of people with lived experience, doctors and midwives, lawyers and activists. We continued our policy and research work on consent, mental capacity and multiple disadvantage, and finally secured a reversal of Oxford's ban on maternal request caesareans, following years of our campaigning and legal action.

We prioritised internal and external work on inclusion – training staff, trustees and trainers on LGBTQ+ competency and adopting inclusive language across our work. Our public inclusion statement made clear our commitment to anti-racism and to our services being an accessible, safe space for everyone who needs us – women, trans men and non-binary people. Working with people with a range of needs and lived experiences, we fully reviewed and refreshed our suite of factsheets. Changing our recruitment approach helped us to appoint exceptional new trustees and staff with a diverse range of lived and professional experiences.

Despite the challenges of lockdown and home-schooling, Birthrights has helped more women and birthing people than ever before, educated thousands of healthcare professionals and birth workers, achieved numerous policy changes, and vastly increased our media and digital reach. We look forward to building on this strong platform in 2021-22, as we develop our future strategy.

None of these achievements would have been possible without our dedicated team and trustees, campaign partners, supporters and volunteers, donors and funders. We are deeply grateful to the Baring and Esmée Fairbairn Foundations for their extra flexibility and COVID funding. We were also thrilled to secure new funding from Thirty Percy Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. We welcomed Bolt Burdon Kemp as a new corporate partner alongside Leigh Day and Irwin Mitchell. Big thanks to Angela Style, interim CEO, who steered the ship through such challenging times until Amy returned from maternity leave in October 2020.

Birthrights is at an exciting point, as we set our new strategy for 2022 onwards and determine how best to scale our programmes and impact. We look forward to continuing our vital work and strengthening our internal and external focus on anti-racist, inclusive, rights-respecting practice.

Elizabeth Prochaska



Elizabeth Prochaska (Chair) and Amy Gibbs (Chief Executive)

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (effective from January 2019).

Structure, governance and management

Birthrights is a charitable incorporated organisation and is registered with the Charity Commission with charity number 1151152.

The method of recruitment and appointment of trustees is set out in its governing document: the constitution. Three trustees resigned between 1 April 2020 and the date this report was approved – Deborah Crewe, Rineke Schram and Sarah Cooke. Four new trustees were appointed in January 2021, with a fifth joining us in July 2021, taking the Board up to its maximum of 12 members.

The current trustees comprise two senior lawyers, a consultant midwife, a Director of Midwifery, a consultant anaesthetist / Deputy Medical Director, a finance and business expert, experienced charity leaders, communications and fundraising specialists, doulas and anti-racism campaigners. Most new trustees have recent lived experience and four are Black and Brown women.

The trustees are responsible for making decisions on the management of all the affairs of Birthrights including deciding on how the funds of the charity are to be spent. The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The full Board of trustees met four times during 2020-21, with an average level of attendance via Zoom of 73%. This reflects resignations and new appointments between October and January.

Objectives and activities

About

Birthrights launched in January 2013. We are the UK charity that champions respectful care during pregnancy and childbirth by protecting human rights. We believe that everyone is entitled to respectful maternity care that protects their fundamental rights to dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality. We provide free advice and legal information to women and birthing people, train healthcare professionals and birth workers to deliver rights-respecting care and campaign to change maternity policy and systems. Our research shines a spotlight on those most at risk of human rights violations in pregnancy and birth due to structural disadvantage and discrimination.

Our vision is to ensure everyone receives the respect and dignity they deserve in pregnancy and childbirth. Our mission is to become the authority on human rights in pregnancy and childbirth in the UK and use that influence to improve services and practice throughout the maternity system.

Birthrights promotes legal rights to receive evidence-based care that conforms to the best medical and midwifery standards. We do not promote any particular clinical perspectives in maternity care.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Aims

The aim of Birthrights is to promote the human rights of child-bearing people in England and Wales. These rights are set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Activities

Birthrights is committed to:

- promoting awareness of the legal rights of child-bearing people during and connected to pregnancy, childbirth and the post-natal period (the 6 weeks subsequent to birth);
- promoting respect for the legal rights of child-bearing people among healthcare organisations, medical and other professions and in society at large;
- protecting the human rights of child-bearing people through the provision of legal information and advice and obtaining redress for victims of human rights abuse;
- campaigning in relation to human rights and related legal issues relating to child-bearing people;
- responding with technical advice to proposed legislation and policy affecting child-bearing people;
- providing technical advice to government and others on human rights and other legal and regulatory matters as they affect child-bearing people;
- contributing to the understanding and sound administration of human rights law as it affects childbearing people, in particular, but not exclusively, through third-party interventions in legal cases;
- promoting the human rights and lawful treatment of child-bearing people by commissioning and conducting research;
- providing education and training to, among others, parents and parents-to-be, healthcare professionals and the public on human rights and the law as it affects child-bearing people; eliminating infringements of human rights of child-bearing people; and
- undertaking other charitable activities that the trustees may from time to time determine to promote the human rights and legal status of child-bearing people.

When planning our activities for the year, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the promotion of human rights.

As set out in the financial statements, our major activities in 2020-21 have been:

- Re-orientating our work to respond to COVID-19, responding to significantly higher demand for advice, moving our training programme online, and focusing the majority of our influencing work on safeguarding basic rights that were under threat due to restrictions;
- Continuing to deliver our core advice, training, research and policy work, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation;
- Establishing and launching a new national inquiry on racial injustice in maternity care, funded by John Ellerman Foundation and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust;
- Improving the accessibility and inclusivity of our advice, factsheets and communications, funded by the Hollick Family Foundation and National Lottery Community Fund;
- Prioritising our internal inclusion journey, and recruiting new trustees and staff; and
- Fundraising to ensure Birthrights' future sustainability throughout and beyond COVID.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Achievements and performance

Advice and resources

Our first strategic goal is to **empower and support women to know and advocate for their rights** through free advice and resources, reaching those most at risk through our partnerships.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on human rights in maternity care has been profound, reflected in a sharp increase in the number of women reached through our direct advice and online resources.

This year, we gave advice to 1,080 people on their rights, nearly three times as many as the year before. We saw the depth of our interventions grow alongside the breadth of our reach, with more complex cases requiring multiple emails from our small team. The most common concerns were the distressing impact of COVID restrictions on partners, limitations on choice – home birth services or birth centres closing, water births or caesareans being denied – and complaints about poor care. Some concrete outcomes we secured for individuals were:

- exceptions to general partner restrictions for people with additional needs e.g. disability, mental health issues, multiple births or previous birth trauma;
- upholding the legal right to choose place of birth by advocating for constructive solutions – e.g. outpatient antibiotics for home birth, birth pools on the ward;
- protecting people's right to informed choice and consent by securing a change in caregiver where healthcare professionals were not upholding respectful care; and
- overturning a Trust's blanket discriminatory policy that anyone autistic would be automatically referred to child safeguarding.

In addition to direct support, our online Q&A "Coronavirus – how will it affect my rights to maternity care?" was viewed over 20,000 times and kept regularly updated throughout the pandemic. Our factsheet on right to a c-section was the second most frequently viewed page this year. We worked with a diverse group of people with lived experience and an external copy-writer to fully review and refresh our suite of factsheets – the new simplified set will be published in summer 2021, including a basic birth rights factsheet translated into Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Kurdish Sorani, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya and Urdu.

We escalated numerous advice cases to Trusts to change local policies that contravene basic rights, writing formally to 31 Trusts and emailing many more. This led to positive policy change or exceptions being made in at least 15 cases. Some examples include:

- Borders (Scotland) and Guys and St Thomas changed their policies on partners being present in theatres due to our intervention;
- Milton Keynes reversed their policy not to carry out maternal request caesareans during the pandemic and Frimley Park reintroduced their home birth service; and
- Leeds apologised and reviewed their policy on making exceptions for women and birthing people with physical disabilities.

We are grateful to the Baring Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Hollick Family Foundation, The National Lottery Community Fund and major donors for supporting the development of our advice service and resources in the face of significantly increased demand.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Training and education

Our second strategic goal is to **change culture and practice in maternity care** through training for healthcare professionals and other caregivers.

Pre-pandemic, our core training model was based on in-person, interactive workshops to explore human rights legal principles and practical scenarios applying this learning to common issues in maternity care – provided in-house for NHS Trusts and local maternity systems, and as standalone ticketed events. Birthrights training has looked very different because of COVID-19.

After initially pausing our training in light of limited capacity and appetite within the NHS, we successfully moved the whole programme online, supporting our associate trainers to swiftly adapt delivery of the material and facilitate discussion effectively. Despite concerns that this would mean a fall in demand and a potential drop in quality, feedback from these training sessions has been overwhelmingly positive.

This year, our speaking engagements reached around 4,000 people at 14 events. These included webinars on Conversations on Consent (MediLaw), with Irwin Mitchell, the British Intrapartum Care Society and the Midwifery Unit Network, as well as keynote talks to the National Childbirth Trust (NCT) AGM and the Northern Ireland All Party Group on Women's Health.

We ran 12 in-depth training events with 366 participants, above our revised pandemic target of 6 in person or online training sessions with 300 participants. This included two NHS Trusts (Barnsley and Royal Berkshire) and training 48 specialty trainee doctors at NHS North West. While this is a drop in the number of Trusts we have trained compared to past years, we understand most training in NHS Trusts was paused during the pandemic.

Overall, despite the pandemic, we have reached significantly more people through our training and speaking events - a total of 4,366 compared to 1,623 in 2019-20. The audiences for our training have been more diverse compared to previous years.

One of the training sessions with the largest reach was delivered to the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch with 100 attendees. This captures a key audience of system-changers, with significant influence on the work to improve safety in maternity care. Feedback from attendees highlighted that prior to the training, they had little to no knowledge around human rights and consent and would now be using this knowledge to inform their investigations.

Another big audience this year was birth workers – we trained with Yogabirth Study Weekend, Amma Birth Companions, Bradford Doulas and the Doula Association. We also ran two ticketed short courses online and continued to reach midwives and doctors through Trust training. We are reviewing our training model post-COVID, especially how we build demand for multi-disciplinary training within Trusts, to drive much-needed culture change.

According to our evaluation in 2020-21, 89% of participants surveyed said our training impacted the way they planned to practise. The average quality rating was 4.8 (scale of 1-5, where 5 is excellent). Both legal and healthcare professional trainers achieved consistently excellent scores – an average of 4.7. 98% of participants said they would recommend Birthrights' training to others.

Training continued to be an important source of unrestricted income this year, bringing in over £10,000 despite reduced demand from NHS Trusts due to COVID pressures.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Campaigns and influencing

Our third strategic goal is to **change policy and systems** through research, influencing, campaigns and legal interventions – with a focus on women and birthing people most at risk of poor, disrespectful, or unsafe care. We are grateful to the Baring Foundation and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for making our influencing work possible, and to John Ellerman Foundation and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust for investing in our new focus on racial injustice.

COVID campaigning: Much of our work this year focused on influencing national guidance related to COVID-19 restrictions in maternity care, drawing on the intelligence from our advice service and our human rights legal knowledge. We maintained a constructive, robust dialogue with Government, NHS England (NHSE), the Royal Colleges of Midwives (RCM) and of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) throughout the pandemic. This led to positive outcomes including:

- improved national guidance reflecting the fundamental right to have a partner throughout maternity care and calling for Trusts to relax restrictions – following numerous private and public interventions by Birthrights and our But Not Maternity alliance partners, including an open letter signed by 100+ charities, health professionals, academics and cross-party MPs;
- an exemption from the self-isolation regulations for birth partners who were a close contact of someone with COVID but didn't have COVID themselves from March 2021 – supported by legal advice we commissioned from Leigh Day;
- our "How to run a safe and rights respecting maternity service during a pandemic" tool was circulated to all maternity service leaders in June by NHS England; and
- clarification in national guidance and briefings on concerns we raised about face masks for women in labour, triaging of women who decline COVID tests and freebirth.

Thanks to specific funding from the Baring Foundation, we also took forward legal action which led to national media coverage and supported our lobbying work. This included:

- pre-action judicial review for a family separated from their baby in neonatal ward;
- our high-profile legal opinion on remote access to scans, with Irwin Mitchell and Doughty Street, which led to problematic national guidance being archived and us directly challenging blanket decisions by Public Health Wales and 36 Trusts; and
- our published advice on "legally wrong" self-isolation guidance, by Leigh Day and Doughty Street, underpinned successful direct lobbying of Government and NHSE.

Research and policy interventions: we maintained our high-profile engagement on a range of core human rights in childbirth topics, including:

- Submission to Health and Social Care Committee on maternity safety;
- Response to proposed NICE Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Quality Standards in partnership with reproductive rights charity BPAS;
- New General Medical Council guidance on consent took on our points about doctors being aware of the potential for the language they use to coerce;
- Invited to provide peer review of RCOG's Scientific Impact Paper on the relationship between social determinants and maternal outcomes, where we cited our Holding it all together report on multiple disadvantage and our evidence of COVID-19 impacts;
- RCM published a new position statement on addressing the needs of women facing multiple disadvantage – a major outcome of our joint work with Birth Companions;
- Chapter on non-consented vaginal exams, featuring case studies from our advice service, published in Women's Birthing Bodies and the Law book;
- Response to government consultation on continuing telemedicine for abortion; and
- Responses to caesarean guideline consultation, RCOG consultation on caesarean leaflet, and shared decision making consultation.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Campaigns and communications: thanks to new funding from John Ellerman and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, we established our new national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care. This was launched with an exclusive in The Observer, which then achieved blanket media coverage including on ITV and Channel 4 News and BBC Radio 4. We are proud to have set up a formidable inquiry panel chaired by Shaheen Rahman QC, with two co-chairs – Sandra Igwe, founder of The Motherhood Group, and Benash Nazmeen, specialist cultural liaison midwife and Director of the Association of South Asian Midwives – and other experts spanning lived experience, midwifery and obstetrics, equalities and healthcare law, qualitative research, and anti-racism. The panel held its first meeting in February and launched the call for evidence in March.

After nearly four years of campaigning, including legal action and numerous meetings, Oxford University Hospitals Trust finally reversed their ban on maternal request caesareans. We were interviewed on BBC Radio Oxford and for regional TV news on this topic.

Our joint survey with Mumsnet on consent and informed decision-making (conducted before the pandemic) was published in September and covered widely, including by BBC News, The Independent and Standard Issue podcast. Our concerns about the foetal alcohol spectrum disorder quality standards also achieved national coverage, including the Guardian and the Times.

Our COVID campaigning was featured in national press over 40 times, including on ITV and Channel 4 news, BBC Radio 4 and across national outlets including the Guardian, Independent, Telegraph and Marie Claire. We firmly established our position as the “go to” organisation on rights in childbirth during the pandemic, with numerous requests for reactive comment. We also built important new partnerships, with the But Not Maternity alliance, with MPs and particularly with Pregnant then Screwed, securing joint coverage in the Mail on Sunday on partner restrictions.

This year we saw our social media profile grow to over 16,400 followers on Twitter and 14,200 on Facebook. We launched our brand new Instagram account in April 2020, building up to 7,000 followers, and ran a digital awareness campaign on Basic Birth Rights in February 2021 to counter misleading messaging from some Trusts about the impact of restrictions on birth choices.

We also commissioned brand work to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of our public communications and materials, including our factsheets, colours and illustrations.

We are grateful to Thirty Percy Foundation for enabling us to invest in communications capacity in-house for the first time, to build our profile and reach with more women and birthing people.

Strengthening our organisation

The Board and CEO have continued to prioritise organisational development and sustainability, with fundraising a particular focus throughout the year. New funding from John Ellerman and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust enabled us to create a Participation Officer post, taking our part-time team up to six. We used other income to invest in existing staff posts (salaries and support) and recruit three additional posts in Q4, with an Engagement Director, Training Officer and Kickstart Communications Coordinator joining the team from April 2021. Our CEO, Amy Gibbs, returned from maternity leave in October 2020 and we are grateful to Angela Style, interim CEO, for all her hard work to secure short and long-term funding.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

While the team already worked remotely pre-pandemic, given the challenges of increased advice volumes and home-schooling during repeated lockdowns, we introduced new ways to strengthen relationships and embed daily communications channels for task management and wellbeing support. We continued to prioritise management support and invest in staff development, including training on LGBTQ+ competency. We adopted best practice in inclusive recruitment which led to the appointment of new staff and trustees with more diverse lived and professional experiences.

We adopted a more agile planning approach given the uncertainties of the pandemic, while maintaining a focus on strategic priorities such as the racial injustice inquiry. The Board continued to monitor performance through our quarterly KPI dashboard and the team surpassed their targets across all metrics. We commissioned NCVO to deliver an Impact Study across our core work, involving all staff and trustees in a workshop to revise our Theory of Change and devising tools to measure the impact of our advice service and training programme. This continues in 2021-22.

Fundraising and income generation was a major priority, particularly in Q1-2. We focused on applying for new core funding to replace the Baring Foundation grant, which was due to end in August 2020, though Baring awarded us 6 months' continuation funding plus a COVID grant.

Given the uncertainties of the pandemic and prospects for funding at the start of the year, the Board and interim CEO were cautious about expenditure throughout Q1-3. In Q4, we worked with our accountants to strengthen our annual budgeting and monthly management accounts, to improve oversight and ensure timely expenditure of charitable funds. We also decided to invest in staff salaries and support given the significant pressures the team faced during the pandemic.

Work during 2020-21 that has led to funding for future years includes securing:

- A new unrestricted three-year grant of £150,000 from Thirty Percy Foundation;
- An extra £12,000 COVID adaptation grant from Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust to support online delivery of participation work for the race inquiry (delivery from April 2021);
- One-off major donor income of £20,000 from a couple we helped on the advice line, for COVID campaigning and a new resource on making complaints (delivery in 2021-22);
- A recurring annual donation of £25,000 to boost operations capacity (anonymous donor);
- Additional funding from Leigh Day of £20,000 towards our race inquiry (delivery in 2021-22); and
- Positive indications from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation of unrestricted continuation funding for five years when our current restricted grant ends (EOI submitted, full proposal in train).

Safeguarding

Birthrights has a safeguarding policy and procedure in place which was reviewed within the year by staff and strengthened operationally to ensure it was fit for purpose for the race inquiry participation work. We also invested in training for key staff – the CEO as designated safeguarding lead (took place in August 2021), and the Participation Officer who is undertaking most work with potentially vulnerable adults (May 2021). To build a safer culture, we commissioned training on trauma-informed practice for the whole team (July 2021) and continued to invest in the offer of ongoing debriefing support for staff by a trained counsellor and birth debriefs for all new employees.

The inquiry was supported by a psychotherapist who co-designed and co-facilitated focus groups to ensure we kept participants and staff safe. There were no safeguarding incidents but any potential concerns were escalated to the CEO and Chair e.g. a complaint about us not monitoring Facebook over a weekend when transphobic content was posted, causing distress and harm (we blocked/deleted material immediately when we became aware, apologised and offered support).

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

We had regard to potentially vulnerable donors, signposting to support as appropriate. The trustees discussed safeguarding at Board meetings in response to specific activities – such as the impact of the inquiry findings on staff who may have experienced birth and/or racial trauma themselves, and team wellbeing in response to social media trolling. In 2021-22, the safeguarding policy and procedure will be formally reviewed by the Board of Trustees. Given the increase in our direct work with women and birthing people with lived experience, we will review the need for DBS checks for relevant staff and build safeguarding into all inductions.

Financial review

Summary of income and expenditure

This year has seen significant growth in our overall income from £158,080 in 2019-20 to £361,703 in 2020-21 – more than double the previous financial year. However, this includes £90,000 of one-off funding related to COVID, so this level of growth will not necessarily be sustained year on year.

Restricted income grew from £107,730 in 2019-20 to £215,992 in 2020-21 and unrestricted income from £50,350 in 2019-20 to £145,711 in 2020-21. Both unrestricted and restricted income outperformed expectations at the start of the pandemic, thanks to the hard work of staff and tremendous support from both existing and new funders. The CEO and Treasurer agreed to designate £95,000 of unrestricted funds for specific purposes, such as staff posts and projects.

Total expenditure was £193,951. This was lower than originally budgeted due to very little travel, no in-person training or team meetings, staff turnover, and delayed activity due to the pandemic.

At the end of 2019-20, £93,563 of funds were brought forward, of which £49,068 was restricted funds from the Baring and Esmée Fairbairn Foundations, for planned activity in 2020-21 (due to projects being phased across multiple financial years).

Taking this into account, of the £261,315 carried forward at 1 April 2021, £107,427 relates to restricted funds from the Baring Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, for planned activity in 2021-22. £95,000 relates to funds from Esmée, Thirty Percy Foundation and a major donor (Peabody) which have been designated for specific staff posts or activities in 2021-22.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Highlights from the 2020-21 accounts include:

- maintained a positive rate of over 87% of our expenditure on delivering charitable activities as opposed to raising funds, while increasing investment in support and governance costs to strengthen our organisation;
- delivered the final year of the Baring Foundation grant for our Peer Partners project and secured £30,000 continuation funding following our progress report plus £5,000 restricted COVID grant to support our advice and communications work;
- delivered the second year of our Esmée Fairbairn Foundation grant to progress our 2018-21 strategic goals, released £50,000 funding for year three following our progress report and secured £25,000 unrestricted COVID funding;
- secured a new grant of £100,000 over two years from John Ellerman Foundation, for staff costs and delivery of our race inquiry;
- secured a new grant of £60,000 over two years from Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, for staff costs and delivery of our race inquiry, plus an extra £12,000 COVID adaptation grant;
- secured a new unrestricted grant of £150,000 over three years from Thirty Percy Foundation, designated for in-house communications capacity, co-work office space and to boost participation work for the race inquiry;
- secured a new £40,000 grant from Baring Foundation for legal action and staff costs to challenge COVID restrictions in maternity care;
- completed the £10,000 Hollick Family Foundation grant for our project to review and refresh our suite of factsheets to improve accessibility, co-produced with people with a diverse range of need and lived experiences, with all funds fully spent;
- secured a new £9,992 grant from The National Lottery Community Fund to supplement the Hollick funding, enabling us to translate our resources into multiple languages and strengthen our co-production work with Black and Brown women with lived experience;
- maintained income from Birthrights' training programmes at £12,312, in spite of reduced demand especially in Q1-2 due to COVID pressures in the NHS (£10,583 in 2019-20);
- launched a new corporate partnership with Bolt Burdon Kemp for £15,000 over three years plus pro bono support, to match our existing partnerships with Irwin Mitchell and Leigh Day;
- increased unrestricted donations to £132,835 compared to £41,267 in 2019-20, from corporate partners, trusts, major donors, regular givers and fundraising events;
- increased FTE headcount to 3.5 (six part-time staff) over 2020-21, working with consultants and freelancers to cover critical vacancies and to bring in website and brand expertise, and boost advice line capacity – secured funding to grow this to 5 FTE (eight posts) in 2021-22;
- enjoyed pro bono or discounted legal advice and in-kind support from Doughty Street Chambers, Irwin Mitchell, Leigh Day, and our healthcare/legal trustees; and
- submitted 14 applications to charitable trusts and foundations over the course of the year.

Reserves policy

At the end of 2020-21, we hold £58,888 in unrestricted general reserves, up from £34,495 in 2019-20. In addition, £95,000 of core funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Thirty Percy Foundation has been designated by the trustees, but could be reallocated if required.

Our reserves policy states that Birthrights will hold reserves to cover 3 months of operating costs. A 3-month reserve would allow Birthrights the opportunity, if necessary, to wind down its programme of support in an orderly and managed fashion, including paying our staff reasonable notice. The trustees believe this is the appropriate level of reserves to balance prudence and risk management against maximising the benefits the charity can deliver by not tying up too much of our funds in our reserves.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

For 2020-21, three months of operating costs equates to a sum of £46,000. For 2021-22, this rises to £87,500, based on our planned income and expenditure budget. Given at least £75,000 of designated funds are for staff posts, operations and other core costs, the trustees are confident Birthrights meets the three month target for available reserves.

Covid-19

Birthrights has successfully fundraised throughout 2020-21 and is in a stronger position than ever, despite the challenges to income generation posed by the pandemic. The trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved for the following reasons:

- the charity holds reserves of £153,888;
- the charity is carrying forward a significant unrestricted surplus into 2021-22 which has been designated for core staff costs; and
- the charity has grants in place which span 2021-22 and 2022-23 (John Ellerman, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Thirty Percy) and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation has indicated high likelihood of unrestricted continuation funding beyond autumn 2022.

The trustees therefore consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis for the preparation of the accounts, as detailed in note 1(b) to the financial statements.

Fundraising will continue to be a major priority for the CEO and senior team, to ensure sustainability and growth from autumn 2022 into the future.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the year. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Birthrights

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2021

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charity during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 2 November 2021 and signed on their behalf by

J A Davis

John Davis - Treasurer

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Birthrights

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Birthrights (the CIO) for the year ended 31 March 2021, which are set out on pages 15 to 28.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the CIO you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

Godfrey Wilson Limited also provides payroll and bookkeeping services to the CIO. I confirm that as a member of the ICAEW I am subject to the FRC's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, which I have applied with respect to this engagement.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material 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 CIO as required by section 130 of the Act; or the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.

Alison Godfrey

Date: 4 November 2021

Alison Godfrey FCA

Member of the ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Birthrights

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	214,492	132,835	347,327	147,497
Charitable activities	4	1,500	12,612	14,112	10,583
Investments		-	264	264	-
Total income		<u>215,992</u>	<u>145,711</u>	<u>361,703</u>	<u>158,080</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		6,122	11,994	18,116	18,424
Charitable activities		<u>151,729</u>	<u>24,106</u>	<u>175,835</u>	<u>127,126</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>157,851</u>	<u>36,100</u>	<u>193,951</u>	<u>145,550</u>
Net income and net movement in funds	6	58,141	109,611	167,752	12,530
Transfers between funds		<u>218</u>	<u>(218)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>49,068</u>	<u>44,495</u>	<u>93,563</u>	<u>81,033</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>107,427</u></u>	<u><u>153,888</u></u>	<u><u>261,315</u></u>	<u><u>93,563</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 14 to the accounts.

Birthrights

Balance sheet

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	£	2021 £	2020 £
Current assets				
Debtors	9	10,306		1,997
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>261,015</u>		<u>109,487</u>
		271,321		111,484
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	10	<u>(10,006)</u>		<u>(12,921)</u>
Net current assets			<u>261,315</u>	<u>98,563</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			261,315	98,563
Creditors: amounts falling due after 1 year	11		-	(5,000)
Net assets	13		<u>261,315</u>	<u>93,563</u>
Funds	14			
Restricted funds			107,427	49,068
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			95,000	10,000
General funds			<u>58,888</u>	<u>34,495</u>
Total charity funds			<u>261,315</u>	<u>93,563</u>

Approved by the trustees on 2 November 2021 and signed on their behalf by

J A Davis

John Davis - Treasurer

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

Birthrights 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).

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider to be appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves and future confirmed funding. Whilst the trustees acknowledge the impact of the Covid pandemic, there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received under contracts, sponsorship agreements or in advance of provision of training is deferred and recognised when services are delivered.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the basis of staff time:

	2021	2020
Raising funds	12%	13%
Charitable activities	88%	87%

i) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

j) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

k) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

l) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

m) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

n) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

There are no sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

2. Prior period comparatives

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2020 Total £
Income from:			
Donations	106,230	41,267	147,497
Charitable activities	<u>1,500</u>	<u>9,083</u>	<u>10,583</u>
Total income	<u>107,730</u>	<u>50,350</u>	<u>158,080</u>
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	5,334	13,090	18,424
Charitable activities	<u>100,092</u>	<u>27,034</u>	<u>127,126</u>
Total expenditure	<u>105,426</u>	<u>40,124</u>	<u>145,550</u>
Net income and net movement in funds	<u><u>2,304</u></u>	<u><u>10,226</u></u>	<u><u>12,530</u></u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £
Donations and grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	50,000	25,000	75,000
The Baring Foundation	75,000	-	75,000
John Ellerman Foundation	50,000	-	50,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	-	50,000	50,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	29,500	-	29,500
National Lottery Community Fund	9,992	-	9,992
Donations and grants < £5,000	-	45,960	45,960
Gifts in kind*	-	11,875	11,875
Total income from donations	214,492	132,835	347,327
Prior year comparative			2020 Total £
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	
Donations and grants > £5,000			
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	50,000	-	50,000
The Baring Foundation	49,750	-	49,750
Esmée Fairbairn Grants Plus	6,480	-	6,480
Hollick Foundation	-	10,000	10,000
Donations and grants < £5,000	-	24,251	24,251
Gifts in kind*	-	7,016	7,016
Total income from donations	106,230	41,267	147,497

*Gifts in kind relate to pro bono legal advice, training, stationery, printed materials and room hire.

The charity receives government grants, defined as funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the year ending 31 March 2021 was £9,992 (2020: £nil). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £
Training, conferences and events	-	12,312	12,312
Other	<u>1,500</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>1,800</u>
	<u>1,500</u>	<u>12,612</u>	<u>14,112</u>

Prior year comparative

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2020 Total £
Training, conferences and events	-	9,083	9,083
Other	<u>1,500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,500</u>
	<u>1,500</u>	<u>9,083</u>	<u>10,583</u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2021 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	11,078	80,530	32,371	123,979
Staff recruitment and training	-	197	5,315	5,512
Travel and subsistence	-	-	1,227	1,227
Office costs	-	-	654	654
IT equipment and software	-	1,749	379	2,128
Research participation	-	6,861	-	6,861
Marketing and communications	-	8,740	2,947	11,687
Insurance	-	-	160	160
Accountancy	-	-	7,252	7,252
Legal and professional fees	-	26,594	7,897	34,491
Sub-total	11,078	124,671	58,202	193,951
Allocation of support and governance costs	7,038	51,164	(58,202)	-
Total expenditure	18,116	175,835	-	193,951

Prior year comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2020 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	9,776	66,422	30,365	106,563
Staff recruitment and training	-	77	1,785	1,862
Travel and subsistence	-	3,887	1,719	5,606
Office costs	-	511	5,001	5,512
IT equipment and software	-	-	3,577	3,577
Marketing and communications	-	2,223	8,689	10,912
Insurance	-	-	454	454
Accountancy	-	-	2,337	2,337
Legal and professional fees	-	1,400	6,421	7,821
Fundraising costs	906	-	-	906
Sub-total	10,682	74,520	60,348	145,550
Allocation of support and governance costs	7,742	52,606	(60,348)	-
Total expenditure	18,424	127,126	-	145,550

Total governance costs were £5,102 (2020: £2,082).

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2021 £	2020 £
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	Nil
Independent examiners' remuneration:		
▪ Independent examination (including VAT)	<u>1,680</u>	<u>1,080</u>

2 trustees received payment for their participation in an advisory panel, along with 14 external contributors. They received £700 in compensation, at the same rate as any other contributor.

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Salaries and wages	104,654	99,287
Social security costs	4,651	5,109
Pension costs	2,277	2,167
Freelancers	<u>12,397</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>123,979</u>	<u>106,563</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Programmes Director. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £77,532 (2020: £63,708).

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Average head count	<u>6.00</u>	<u>5.00</u>
Average full time equivalent	<u>3.50</u>	<u>2.60</u>

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

8. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

9. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	5,485	-
Prepayments	3,321	-
Accrued income	1,500	900
Other debtors	-	1,097
	<u>10,306</u>	<u>1,997</u>

10. Creditors: amounts due within 1 year

	2021 £	2020 £
Accruals	2,530	1,080
Trade creditors	1,688	6,366
Deferred income (note 12)	5,000	5,000
Other creditors	788	475
	<u>10,006</u>	<u>12,921</u>

11. Creditors: amounts due after 1 year

	2021 £	2020 £
Deferred income (note 12)	<u>-</u>	<u>5,000</u>

12. Deferred income

	2021 £	2020 £
At 1 April 2020	10,000	15,000
Released during the year	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>(5,000)</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>5,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>

Deferred income relates to corporate partnership income from Leigh Day.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	107,427	95,000	68,894	271,321
Current liabilities	-	-	(10,006)	(10,006)
Net assets at 31 March 2021	107,427	95,000	58,888	261,315
	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Prior year comparative				
Current assets	49,068	10,000	52,416	111,484
Current liabilities	-	-	(12,921)	(12,921)
Non-current liabilities	-	-	(5,000)	(5,000)
Net assets at 31 March 2020	49,068	10,000	34,495	93,563

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

14. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds					
Baring Foundation, Peer Partners	19,765	30,000	(49,765)	-	-
Baring Foundation, COVID	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Baring Foundation, Legal Action	-	40,000	(16,532)	-	23,468
John Ellerman Foundation	-	50,000	(17,113)	-	32,887
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	29,303	50,000	(48,164)	-	31,139
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	29,500	(9,567)	-	19,933
National Lottery Community Fund	-	9,992	(9,992)	-	-
King's College London	-	1,500	(1,718)	218	-
Total restricted funds	49,068	215,992	(157,851)	218	107,427
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
Hollick Family Foundation	10,000	-	(10,000)	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn, COVID	-	25,000	-	-	25,000
Peabody	-	20,000	-	-	20,000
Thirty Percy Foundation	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
Total designated funds	10,000	95,000	(10,000)	-	95,000
General funds	34,495	50,711	(26,100)	(218)	58,888
Total unrestricted funds	44,495	145,711	(36,100)	(218)	153,888
Total funds	93,563	361,703	(193,951)	-	261,315

Purposes of restricted funds

Baring Foundation, Peer Partners

Continuation funding to build on our Peer Partners project focussed on those most at risk of discrimination in maternity care, to establish our new work on racial injustice and build partnerships with relevant organisations and individuals with lived experience.

Baring Foundation, COVID

Funding towards operational support and staff capacity to help us meet increased demand for up-to-date information about human rights in maternity care during COVID-19.

Baring Foundation, Legal Action

12-month grant for legal costs and increased staff capacity to challenge human rights violations in maternity care due to COVID-19, through strategic litigation and other legal campaigning tactics.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

14. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

John Ellerman Foundation

Two-year grant for Birthrights to convene a national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, towards delivery and staff costs, including a new post to ensure the inquiry is co-produced by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Funding for two staff posts and other operational costs to support Birthrights to achieve better care for women and birthing people by promoting safe, respectful maternity care, through our core activities of advice, training, research and influencing systems change.

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Two-year grant for Birthrights to convene a national inquiry into racial injustice in maternity care, towards delivery and staff costs, including a new post to ensure the inquiry is co-produced by Black, Brown and mixed ethnicity women and birthing people.

National Lottery Community Fund

Funding towards Birthrights' internal, participation and communications work on racial injustice in maternity care, including staff costs, participation payments for people with lived experience and anti-racism training for staff and trustees.

King's College London

Funding for Birthrights' contribution to a research study, looking at strengthening the disclosure of harm with women and families under NHS maternity care.

Purposes of designated funds

Hollick Family Foundation

Funding designated towards a full review of our online factsheets and information on rights in pregnancy and birth, including copywriting and design consultancy to improve accessibility and co-production payments for people with lived experience (including Black and Brown women, LGBTQ+, disabled and neurodiverse people) who shaped this work throughout.

Esmée Fairbairn, COVID

Additional unrestricted funding to support staff and operational costs during the pandemic, designated for a new post to boost capacity to deliver our training programme for healthcare professionals and birth workers, including reviewing future delivery models.

Peabody

Major donation designated for campaigning on COVID restrictions and to create a new video on making complaints in maternity care, co-produced by people with lived experience.

Thirty Percy Foundation

Three-year unrestricted grant designated for staff and operational costs, including a new senior post to lead and develop our communications and engagement work, to reach and support more women and birthing people with a diverse range of needs and experiences.

Transfers between funds

Transfers relate to the top up of restricted funds from unrestricted funds.

Birthrights

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

14. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior year comparative	At 6 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2020 £
Restricted funds					
The Baring Foundation	15,967	49,750	(45,952)	-	19,765
Trust for London	6,120	-	(6,120)	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	24,677	50,000	(45,374)	-	29,303
Esmée Fairbairn Grants Plus	-	6,480	(6,480)	-	-
Kings College London	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Total restricted funds	46,764	107,730	(105,426)	-	49,068
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
Hollick Family Foundation	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
General funds	34,269	40,350	(40,124)	-	34,495
Total unrestricted funds	34,269	50,350	(40,124)	-	44,495
Total funds	81,033	158,080	(145,550)	-	93,563

15. Related party transactions

Pro bono services were provided by the trustees during the year of £5,125 (2020: £3,220) in relation to waived fees for training sessions and legal advice.