

Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees
(Registered charity, number 1156709)
Financial statements
for the year ended 31 December 2020

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**Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 December 2020**

Full name Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees

Other names by which the charity is known AVID

Registered charity number 1156709

Organisation type Charitable incorporated organisation

Principal address

115 Mare Street
London
E8 4RU

Trustees

Elizabeth Flint, Chair
Ciaran Price, Treasurer
Carolina Albuerne Rodriguez

Michael Darko
Thomas Nunn, from 23/05/20

Independent examiner

John O'Brien, employee of Community Accounting Plus, Units 1 & 2, North West,
41 Talbot Street, Nottingham, NG1 5GL

Structure, governance and management

Established in 1994, the Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees (AVID) became a registered charity in 1997 and a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) in 2014. AVID is registered in England, number 1156709, and is governed by a written constitution. It has a board of between three and twelve trustees, elected by the membership. From the trustees, the membership elects a Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary at the AGM. Trustees are appointed for a three-year period; after which time they can be re-appointed for two further terms. Trustees cannot be re-appointed for a further term until a 12-month period has elapsed. Vacancies among the trustees may be filled by co-option. Those co-opted must retire at the next AGM, but are eligible for election as trustees.

Trustee recruitment and induction

Prospective board members are invited to submit a CV and a letter describing why they wish to serve as trustees. They are interviewed by the Director and one or two trustees, usually including the Chair. If appointed or co-opted, they will receive induction and training from the Director and Chair. The board recognises the value of trustee training, and organises periodic events covering governance issues.

AVID's Board of Trustees is responsible for the governance of the charity. The Board meets quarterly at the organisation's office in London. In 2020, there was one sub-committee, covering Finance and Fundraising. A second sub-committee covering human resources was set up in the latter part of the year. Management is delegated to the organisation's Director, Ali McGinley.

Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees

This year, Elizabeth Flint was elected as Chair, and Ciaran Price as Treasurer, at the AGM. Tom Nunn joined the Board in May 2020.

Membership

AVID is a membership organisation, with both organisational and individual members from around the UK, each of whom has voting rights. In 2020, AVID had 13 individual members and 15 organisational members. Organisational members were:

- Asylum Welcome (HMP Huntercombe);
- Befriending and Support Team for Foreign Nationals in HMP Wandsworth (BEST);
- Detention Action (Colnbrook, Harmondsworth IRCs, Morton Hall IRC, and London prisons);
- Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group (Brook House IRC, Tinsley House IRC);
- Jesuit Refugee Service UK (Colnbrook and Harmondsworth IRCs);
- Larne House Visitors Group (Larne House STHF);
- Lewes Organisation in Support of Refugees & Asylum Seekers (LOSRAS) (HMP Lewes);
- Manchester Immigration Detainee Support Team (Manchester Airport STHF and HMP Manchester);
- Morton Hall Detainee Visitors Group (Morton Hall IRC);
- Scottish Detainee Visitors (Dungavel IRC);
- SOAS Detainee Support (Colnbrook IRC, Harmondsworth IRC, Yarl's Wood IRC, and London prisons);
- Waging Peace (Sudanese Visitors Group);
- Yarl's Wood Befrienders (Yarl's Wood IRC).

Partnerships

AVID works in partnership in furtherance of its charitable objects. AVID is a founding member of the Detention Forum. AVID chairs the Detention Monitoring Group, a monthly meeting of visitors groups and other organisations working in detention and on issues relating to detention. The group meets in East London.

In addition, AVID is a member of the Immigration Law Practitioners Association (ILPA), Refugee Children's Consortium, the Small Charities Coalition, CLINKS, the International Detention Coalition, and the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).

Objectives and activities

The Charity's objectives are the charitable relief of immigrants and refugees who are suffering hardship, distress or who are in need, with particular reference, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, to those who are imprisoned or detained under immigration legislation in the UK, whether in detention centres, holding centres, prisons or police stations.

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AVID's strategic aims for the period 2019 to 2021 reflect our commitment to our membership. Our work is directly influenced by the support requirements of our members and the people they support in detention. As such, a large proportion of our work is reactive and based on changing needs and priorities, as we adapt to an ever-changing policy context. We balance this reactive work with proactive work in pursuit of our strategic aims.

Mission statement

AVID builds communities that support, inform and challenge, working to reduce the human and social cost of detention.

Strategic Directions 2019 – 2021

- To increase understanding of the harm caused by detention on individuals, families and communities;
- To strengthen and grow our community of solidarity and friendship with people affected by detention;
- To influence reform of detention policy and practice.

Activities and main achievements during the period

In immigration detention, 2020 was characterised by increased isolation for people detained during the COVID 19 pandemic, reduced in-person access for volunteer groups providing support inside detention centres and a shocking increase in the proportion of people detained in prisons.

As public health guidance and lockdown measures began to be rolled out nationally, it was clear that practices such as social distancing would be almost impossible to implement safely in custodial settings. Detention centres and prisons discontinued in-person visiting at the start of lockdown, but the distress of those detained was only growing. AVID adapted quickly in order to support organisations in our network to continue visiting people remotely. The resulting work by volunteers across the country meant hundreds of people in detention were supported remotely throughout 2020.

Meanwhile, following legal action, the government began releasing people from detention at an unprecedented rate without adequate support post-release. Organisations in our network began expanding post-detention support services and AVID designed new signposting resources and introduced peer support sessions to help the network meet these new challenges.

Overall in 2020, 14,773 people entered detention, representing a 40% decrease since 2019. In June, the number of people held in detention centres fell to just 330, the lowest point in the last decade. By late summer, however, the number of people entering detention began to rise again steadily. Moreover, new forms of quasi-detention also emerged as the government began warehousing people seeking asylum in ex-military sites and other forms of institutional accommodation as opposed to asylum housing. Together with new partners we worked in coalition to raise awareness of these new forms of injustice and their repetition of the worst harms of detention.

In another worrying shift, by the end of 2020, the proportion of people detained in prison represented 57% of the people detained under immigration powers in the UK overall. This shocking figure shows just how far the balance has tipped in the UK towards detention in prison becoming the norm, rather than an exception, reaffirming prison detention as a central issue of concern for our network.

Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees

Against this backdrop, our work continued in pursuit of our strategic objectives as follows:

Strategic Area one: increasing understanding of the harm caused by detention on individuals, families and communities

- This year, in response to the amplified risk posed by Covid-19 to people in detention settings, we partnered with our sister organisation in the USA, *Freedom for Immigrants* to **publish an open letter** calling for both UK and US governments to release everyone held in detention into community-based accommodation immediately. It was signed by over 47 visitor groups representing over 1,778 volunteers, and emphasised the similarities in the use of detention in both countries as well as both governments' woefully inadequate response to the risks posed by the pandemic in custodial settings;
- In November we held our key awareness-raising event of the year on the subject **'Double Punishment: immigration detention in prisons.'** More than sixty people attended, including campaigners, people with experience of detention and dozens of volunteers from 10 visitor groups across the UK. The aim was to share lessons learned from our members nationally, of whom an increasing number regularly visit people detained indefinitely in prisons post-sentence. We wanted to start a larger conversation about the increased barriers faced by people detained in prisons when trying to access formal and information support;
- We ran two highly successful digital awareness-raising campaigns to engage new supporters and increase understanding of the human cost of detention. Our first **Covid-19 lockdown appeal** helped us highlight the isolation of people detained in lockdown and raise vital funds in a time of crisis. Then in December our second campaign focussed on sharing stories of solidarity and the power of building human connections across the walls of detention. During this **'Human to Human Campaign'** we saw a huge uptick in engagement as our social media posts and long form blogs, together telling a story of the need for visiting as well as detention reform, were shared extensively by partners and new supporters;
- We won **national newspaper coverage** of our joint letter signed by more than 60 community organisations to the Immigration Minister about the inhumane use of ex-military barracks to 'house' people seeking asylum;
- We redoubled our efforts to **ensure our website is a hub of relevant information** for people in detention, or supporting someone detained. We also published several thought-leading blog pieces exploring the human impact of detention, visiting and other varied policy topics. On our blog, guest contributors from across our network wrote from experience about everything from the extreme isolation faced by people 'locked up' during lockdown to the challenges of setting up a new visitor group. Meanwhile, AVID staff provided statistical digests and simple summaries of key policy publications. As a result, our website is being used more often, and we saw a 23% increase in visits compared to 2019;
- Throughout the year, we also trained and supported a team of talented social media volunteers who helped to shape our social media voice and **establish AVID as a regular, reliable online presence** commenting on major issues. Our total number of social media followers surpassed 6,500 by the end of 2020;
- Finally, we **refreshed our quarterly newsletter format**, with dedicated space for 'volunteer voices' from across the network alongside key updates about conditions in detention, statistics and policy changes. These bulletins now reach an audience of more than 450 partners, volunteers and members of the public.

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Strategic Area two: strengthening and growing our community of solidarity and friendship with people affected by detention

- Since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic we've been developing different support methodologies to ensure our members have access to information, training and support. A key feature of our response was to set up **regular peer support video calls for volunteer coordinators** to share best practice and pool information as the pandemic unfolded. The sessions acted as a support system for coordinators while providing opportunities to find out more from each other about the current situation in each centre and share ideas about alternative ways to support people held throughout the pandemic. We split the calls into both covering members' local updates on visiting access and thematic questions such as 'setting up Skype drop-ins' or 'what to do when numbers or referrals are low due to lockdown';
- In 2020 we made the transition to offering a **digital training programme** including a range of topical external trainings, developed and delivered in partnership with thematic experts, as well as new and established in-house training modules. The transition to online delivery facilitated new training partnerships and regular attendance from our geographically dispersed network meaning we were able to deliver more bespoke trainings to our members than ever before. In total, we trained 161 people including coordinators of 13 organisations who between them oversee some 550 volunteers;
- **Seven training sessions** were delivered in 2020 including 'Supporting LGBTQI+ people in detention' with UKLGIG (UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group); 'Talking to people with suicidal thoughts' with Samaritans; and 'Immigration Detention and the impact of EU transfer' with TACTIC. These specialist trainings were open to all visitors from our membership. We also developed and delivered new bespoke training modules for visitors in response to needs in our network, including 'Wellbeing and self-care for volunteer coordinators' and 'How to access DDA (Detention Duty Advice) lawyers in detention';
- We developed **several new training resources** to support our members in key emerging areas. In mid-2020 the Government briefly acknowledged the elevated risk of Covid-19 transmission in detention centres and released hundreds of people into the community without adequate support. Our member organisations were thrown into the deep end, due to people's need for continued support after their release. In response, we developed a new digital signposting and information toolkit mapping post-detention services across the UK. We also developed bespoke *Train the Trainer* resources to aid volunteer coordinators training their volunteers to transition visiting people on video calls or over the phone;
- Work was ongoing throughout the year to **maintain independent access** for local visitor groups to places of detention, enabling more people in detention to receive regular support. Alongside this we continued to work across a number of detention centres and short-term holding facilities to build and facilitate working relationships between our members and management teams at these facilities. This work is vital to ensure people detained are aware of volunteer support and that this support is delivered smoothly;
- In 2020 we continued our **programme of mentoring and coaching support** for group coordinators, working collaboratively on development plans to ensure our tailored support, advice and guidance remains relevant to each member group's goals. In the last year, this included countless group meetings and weekly one-to-one phone calls throughout lockdown to share expertise in remote visiting; volunteer recruitment; staffing recruitment; working with detention centre staff; casework input; and safeguarding;
- **Best practice resources, guidance and information sharing** continued to be a priority this year, working to consolidate the systems in place to ensure best practice is captured and learning is iterative. This included working to upskill coordinators and to strengthen

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the sustainability of members through capacity building. This year, this included working with members to gather evidence and monitor conditions in detention in the context of the government's response to Covid-19;

- During the pandemic our **online discussion forum** for visitors came into its own with regular posts and information being shared from across the network. We estimated a 200% increase in traffic following the start of the pandemic and the increased need for accurate real-time information about what was happening to people in detention in this context. Members reported forming deeper horizontal relationships stemming from use of the forum combined with the newly introduced peer-support calls, increasing collaboration and signposting across the network.

Strategic Area three: influencing reform of detention policy and practice

- We have continued to address **national trends in immigration detention policy** by facilitating and nurturing coalitions and building effective partnerships within the AVID membership and beyond. This includes chairing regular forums such as the Detention Monitoring Group (below) alongside establishing ad hoc coalitions to encourage joint working and collaboration on key emerging trends. At the start of lockdown, for example, we consulted with members in our network in every detention centre in the UK to monitor health protection measures in different places of detention and highlight discrepancies. This led to us advocating, successfully, for the Home Office to publish its guidance on Covid-19 prevention in detention;
- The **Detention Monitoring Group's** regular meetings provide a safe and collaborative space for AVID members and other NGOs working inside detention centres and prisons. The group met five times this year, sharing information and working collaboratively on a range of issues including quality of legal aid provision particularly in prison detention; healthcare, case management and alternatives to detention. 15 organisations regularly attend these meetings, and work together on joint advocacy and sharing best practice;
- Having been a founding member of the **Detention Forum**, a broad membership network of civil society organisations and individuals campaigning to reform detention, we continued to contribute regularly to the development of the Forum's policy positions. We are also members of the Communications Strategic Working Group which aims to develop effective messaging on the need for detention reform for a range of parliamentary, civil society and public audiences;
- Policy engagement with the Home Office remained challenging throughout 2020. In addition to our bilateral advocacy meetings on behalf of our members, we continued to lobby collectively with partner NGOs at various **Government stakeholder forums**, including the detention sub group of the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum (NASF) which meets quarterly. In addition, this year our Director was invited to be part of the Strategic Engagement Group of the Community Engagement Pilots; the Home Office's community-based alternatives to detention pilots. We continued to push for transparency about how the pilots will be evaluated and how this evidence will be taken into consideration in future. We also consulted with the Home Office's Director of Detention and Escorting Services to discuss managed and safe returns for volunteers in detention following the easing of lockdown restrictions;
- AVID also pushed for greater transparency on the Home Office's work to address the disparities in treatment between prison and detention centres. As a result, regular meetings of the Home Office's **'Prison Parity' project** were set up, where the barriers accessing legal advice and support for people detained in prisons relative to detention centres was investigated. The Home Office met with AVID along with Medical Justice, BID and Detention Action. Alongside this work, we continued to monitor the detention of

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people in prisons post sentence, regularly submitting requests via the Freedom of Information Act to establish where people are being held post sentence under immigration act powers. This information is not provided within official statistics, making it harder for support to be provided in specific prisons. We ensure this information is shared on our website;

- We continued to develop a relationship with the **UK's statutory monitoring bodies**, both HMIP (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons) and IMB (Independent Monitoring Boards). This year, we provided a briefing paper to HMIP with evidence on each detention centre in the UK ahead of their adapted 'scrutiny visits' which have replaced inspections during the pandemic. Following AVID's briefing, and further information we shared on behalf of members, HMIP confirmed that immigration detention was a priority for their inspection team during the Covid-19 crisis. Alongside this we continued to facilitate the input of our membership to scrutiny processes and designed an awareness raising session for an IMB training day focussed on strengthening relationships between the IMB and visitor groups to improve outcomes for people in detention;
- As in previous years, we were heavily involved in advocacy and negotiations on a national level to **maintain access and transparency for civil society groups** to places of detention. The Home Office made several ad hoc changes to the status of detention centres during the pandemic, and access for visitors both in-person and remotely was varied across the year and in different centres. Our work in this area has included monitoring changes in access provision, challenging attempts to dilute the independence of our membership groups working inside detention and pushing for transparency on decision making affecting the use or status of detention facilities across the UK.
- We continued to **work in partnership internationally**. Together with campaigner Mishka Pillay, who has lived experience of detention, our Director co-wrote an article entitled *No return to normal* for the International Detention Coalition highlighting the dangers and reduced use of detention in the UK during the pandemic and calling for the expansion of community-based alternatives going forward. AVID was also invited to present at an international symposium organised by Open Society Foundations about the approach of the UK government to Covid-19 from a detention perspective and outlining civil society responses.

Staffing updates

In 2020 we were delighted to receive funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to enable us to recruit two new members of staff, doubling our team from two to four. Fiona Ranford joined Gee Manoharan as Training and Membership Coordinator (job share) in September, and we welcomed Orla Gill as AVID's first Communications Officer in October. This year we were also ably assisted in our social media work by two volunteers, Thea Slotover and Rosie Burrell.

Finances and Reserves Policy

The board considers it prudent to maintain three month's running costs as reserves, where possible.

Funding

This was an exceptionally challenging year for AVID. Along with the rest of the voluntary sector we had to react quickly and work hard to meet our beneficiaries' needs in the context of the Covid pandemic. We are extremely grateful to our members, individual donors, and funders who continue to support us during this global crisis. Their generosity in a time of unprecedented uncertainty means that AVID is going into the next year in a strong position.

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AVID continues to implement the findings of the Income Opportunity Review we undertook in 2019. In the summer of this year we were pleased to be able to expand our team despite the ongoing uncertainty around the pandemic, creating a new Communications Officer role. This is a core part of our strategy to strengthen our network, diversify our income streams, and build upon our individual supporter base.

We are extremely grateful for the generosity of the National Lottery Community Fund, the Tudor Trust, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Charities Aid Foundation, and the Chillag Family Charitable Trust for their support this year. Without their support, and that of our individual donors and supporters, AVID could not have carried out its important role of supporting our members and helping those in immigration detention at this crucial time.

Public benefit statement

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed Elizabeth Flint Date 24.07.21
Elizabeth Flint, Chair

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of
Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees
for the year ended 31 December 2020**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

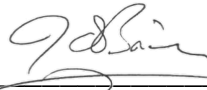
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed  Date 26/07/2021
John O'Brien MSc, FCCA, FCIE
Employee of Community Accounting Plus

Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees
Receipts & payments account
for the year ended 31 December 2020

2019				2020	
Total		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	
Funds		Funds	Funds	Funds	
£	Note	£	£	£	
Receipts					
110943	Grants & donations	2	7312	132500	139812
1725	Membership		1359	-	1359
2037	Handbook sales		-	-	-
23	Bank interest		4	-	4
145	Other receipts		-	-	-
<u>114873</u>	Total receipts		<u>8675</u>	<u>132500</u>	<u>141175</u>
Payments					
77061	Staff costs	3	479	77675	78154
20036	Premises & running costs	4	74	10295	10369
2599	Governance costs	5	157	2077	2234
10652	Direct charitable expenditure	6	-	907	907
<u>110348</u>	Total payments		<u>710</u>	<u>90954</u>	<u>91664</u>
4525	Net receipts/(payments)		7965	41546	49511
<u>49388</u>	Cash funds at start of this period		<u>5707</u>	<u>48206</u>	<u>53913</u>
53913	Cash funds at end of this period		13672	89752	103424

Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees
Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 December 2020

2019		Note	2020
£			£
<u>53913</u>	Cash assets		
<u>53913</u>	Bank accounts		<u>103424</u>
			<u>103424</u>
	Other monetary assets		
<u>435</u>	Debtors	7	<u>2821</u>
<u>435</u>			<u>2821</u>
	Assets retained for the charity's own use		
	General equipment.		
	Liabilities		
<u>(2403)</u>	Creditors	8	<u>(1387)</u>
<u>(2403)</u>			<u>(1387)</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed Ciaran Price Dated 25 JULY 2021
Ciaran Price, Treasurer

Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees
Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2020

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Grants & donations

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
National Lottery Community Fund	-	50000	50000
Tudor Trust	-	45000	45000
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	27500	27500
Charities Aid Foundation	-	10000	10000
Chillag Family Charitable Trust	2000	-	2000
Donations	5312	-	5312
	7312	132500	139812

3. Staff costs

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Salaries, NI & pension	-	76450	76450
Staff costs	23	-	23
Staff training	-	119	119
Recruitment	456	1106	1562
	479	77675	78154

4. Premises and running costs

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Bank charges	35	85	120
Office equipment	-	170	170
Office running costs	768	2661	3429
Rent & rates	(729)	7379	6650
	74	10295	10369

5. Governance costs

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Accountancy & payroll	157	1182	1339
Trustees expenses & insurance	-	895	895
	157	2077	2234

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6. Direct Charitable Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Group outreach	-	80	80
Information & awareness raising	-	300	300
Policy & advocacy	-	184	184
Training delivery	-	343	343
	<u>-</u>	<u>907</u>	<u>907</u>

7. Debtors

	£
HMRC (NI)	2001
Prepayment: Insurance	470
Prepayment: Office running costs	288
Prepayment: Recruitment	62
	<u>2821</u>

8. Creditors

	£
Independent examination fee	864
Wages, NI & Pension	487
Payroll fees	36
	<u>1387</u>

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9. Funds analysis

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	(Payments) £	Closing balance £
Restricted funds				
Training and Membership Coordinator (The Tudor Trust)	20000	-	(20000)	-
Core costs & extra support (Esmée Fairbairn Foundation)	25000	27500	(29784)	22716
Organisational development and strategy support (Esmée Fairbairn Foundation)	365	-	-	365
AVID training (Evan Cornish Foundation)	1109	-	(1109)	-
Group support / Outreach (Swan Mountain Trust)	1732	-	(1732)	-
Directors salary & core costs (The Tudor Trust)	-	45000	(8114)	36886
Coronavirus reponse (National Lottery Community Fund & Charities Aid Foundation)	-	60000	(30215)	29785
	48206	132500	(90954)	89752
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	5707	8675	(710)	13672
	5707	8675	(710)	13672

10. Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no expenses, remuneration or benefits in this period.

11. Glossary of terms

Debtors: These are amounts owed to the charity, but not received in the accounting period.

Prepayments: These are services that the charity has paid for in advance, but not used during the accounting period.

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.