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# Annual report and financial statements

For the year ended  
31 March 2024

The Think Ahead Organisation  
Company number: 10015893  
Charity number: 1166577



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## Reference and administrative information

### Registered name and charity number

The Think Ahead Organisation  
1166577 (registered in England & Wales)

### Company number

10015893 (country of incorporation United Kingdom)

### Registered office address

Unit 318, Record Hall,  
16-16A Baldwins Gardens,  
London, EC1N 7RJ

### Trustees

Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Professor Dame Carol Black GBE – Chair  
Aparajita Ajit (*appointed 3 July 2024*)  
Dr Ruth Allen (*resigned 3 November 2024*)  
Professor Kamaldeep Bhui  
Levi Chambers-Cook  
Professor David Croisdale-Appleby OBE  
James Darley (*resigned 3 November 2024*)  
Dr Navina Evans CBE (*resigned 20 March 2024*)  
Jayne King (*appointed 9 November 2023*)  
John Lawlor  
Professor Sir Julian Le Grand (*resigned 9 November 2023*)  
Peter Molyneux (*appointed 3 July 2024*)  
Stephen Oldfield (*appointed 3 November 2024*)  
Donald Peck (*resigned 9 November 2023*)  
Sharon Rice-Oxley  
Lyn Romeo (*appointed 3 November 2024*)  
Liam Sloan (*appointed 3 July 2024*)  
Nicholas Timmins (*resigned 3 November 2024*)

### Company Secretary

Elizabeth Ambekar (*resigned 6 July 2023*)  
Philippa Mariani (*appointed 6 July 2023; resigned 1 July 2024*)  
Douglas Ridley (*appointed 1 July 2024*)

### Key management

Philippa Mariani, Chief Executive  
Elizabeth Ambekar, Finance and Operations Director (*to 6 July 2023*)  
Douglas Ridley, Finance and Operations Director (*from 19 September 2023*)  
Penelope East, External Relations Director  
Rachel Slade, Programme Director  
Ivan Wise, Business Development Director (*resigned 31 March 2024*)

### Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc  
Villiers House,  
48-49 The Strand,  
London, WC2N 5LL

### Solicitors

Bates Wells Braithwaite  
10 Queen St Place,  
London, EC4R 1BE

Stone King LLP  
Boundary House,  
91-93 Charterhouse Street,  
London, EC1M 6HL

### Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP  
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor  
110 Golden Lane,  
London, EC1Y 0TG

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# Message from the Chair of the Board



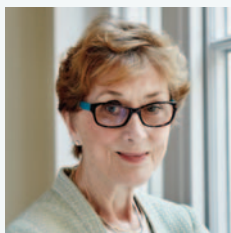
Ten years ago, I was invited to help set up a new charity by Sir Norman Lamb, the then Minister of State for Care and Support. Through his own professional and personal experiences, he had seen what could be done for people if mental health and social services were better linked.

Our mental health doesn't exist in isolation. It is part of our daily lives, impacting and affected by everything from our jobs and financial security to our physical health, relationships and homes. The role of a mental health social worker can be transformational, supporting people to navigate complex challenges in their lives and bridging the gaps between the support available through health, care and community services.

Quite simply: we need more of them, and more professionals across the workforce who can connect clinical care with social approaches. Think Ahead was founded in 2014, through the enabling incubator of the Institute of Public Policy and Research. Over the past ten years, we have attracted over 1,000 trainees to our flagship training programme, and I am proud that we continue to extend our support for a thriving workforce that is fit for the future.

What started off as a six-month project for me turned into a ten-year tenure as Chair of Think Ahead's Board of Trustees and what an honour that has been. I am indebted to the exceptional people that I have worked with on the board and across the charity in that time. Led by a dedicated and hardworking executive team, originally under the auspices of our founding CEOs and now under the leadership of Philippa Mariani, who is a great connector across the sector, we are all determined to help support better lives for the thousands of people that our mental health social workers engage with every year.

I will soon be stepping down as Chair but I am delighted to have been invited by the Board to become Think Ahead's first Patron. I look forward to advocating for mental health services and the workforce in this new role, and to remaining closely involved with the charity for many years to come.



**Professor Dame Carol Black GBE**  
Chair of Trustees

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# Message from the CEO



Reflecting on this past year at Think Ahead, I have a great sense of pride in what we do and what we have achieved. In launching our 2023 – 2028 strategy, we've committed to being stronger and even more effective in our support for the mental health workforce. Demand for mental health services is rising and the ongoing workforce crisis across the sector is seriously impacting support for people. Services are struggling to fill existing posts, with 1 in 10 (9.9%)<sup>1</sup> full time equivalent NHS mental health positions remaining unfilled - the result being 1.2 million people stuck on mental health waiting lists, often without support<sup>2</sup>.

Our charity is dedicated to ensuring that people living with mental health needs have access to the best possible support when they need it. We are continuously evolving and improving to help make this happen, working directly with NHS trust and local authority social care provider partners. We advocate for growth, investment and opportunities to connect the workforce across complex systems. We set out our ambition for the mental health workforce in detail in our manifesto: [Workforce Matters](#), published in November 2023. Developed with people with lived experience of services and practitioners across the NHS and social care services, our manifesto calls on the new government to urgently transform the mental health workforce with sustainable investment and new resources.

We have made great strides this year, making our accelerated route to registered qualification as a social worker more accessible; and ensuring that our trainees get the support needed to build their careers beyond the early years post-qualification so that their skills and knowledge remain invested in the mental health workforce, contributing to productivity and reducing system bottlenecks.

We have also developed and tested new opportunities for the mental health workforce – we launched a new training programme linking mental health services with substance use and addiction, recognising the impact that addiction specialists can make in social work; and we produced practical tools and resources to support the effective recruitment and training of a new wave of Individual Placement and Support employment advisers through the IPS Grow programme.

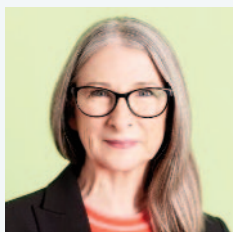
1. NHS England Digital: NHS Vacancy Statistics England, April 2015 – March 2024, Experimental Statistics – NHS England Digital, last accessed online August 2024.

2. National Audit Office: Progress in improving mental health services in England, Feb 2023. [Accessible online here.](#)

Welcoming our eighth cohort of trainees to our flagship mental health social work programme with our academic partner Middlesex University, I was once again inspired by their determination to do something that really matters in their careers and the difference that they make. Each and every one of them is focused on the positive change they bring to people's lives by going beyond a medical model of care and treatment and integrating a social approach in mental health services. They will become excellent social workers and the social work leaders of the future as mental health clinicians and practitioners focus more and more on the whole person, families and communities in their approach to prevention and a reduction in the need for costly crisis intervention.

Our professionals are undoubtedly the greatest asset of our mental health services. Without them there are no services and there is no support. We look forward to continuing to work with our NHS and local authority delivery partners, and our funders and partners at the Department for Health and Social Care to make a mentally healthier nation a reality.

Thank you to them and to my wonderful team here at Think Ahead who work tirelessly year in year out to achieve change and embed impact in a tough world. Together, we can change lives.



**Philippa Mariani**  
CEO



# Trustee's Annual Report

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

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## About us

Founded in 2014, Think Ahead launched its flagship mental health social work training programme to embed the social approach in mental health services and attract passionate professionals into the sector. Every year, we recruit up to 160 graduates and career-changers into mental health: providing a combination of academic learning and practice-based training through placements in NHS mental health trusts and local authorities across England.

We advocate for a social approach in mental health services, knowing what a profound effect complex life issues can have on people's mental health and wellbeing. We also advocate for the mental health workforce itself, knowing that effective support can only exist if there is a thriving workforce empowered to deliver it.

Our vision is a thriving mental health workforce able to support people to live the life they want and deserve.

Our mission is to recruit, train and promote a thriving mental health workforce. We advocate for professionals to have the resources needed to deliver the right support at the right time.

## Looking back

### **Our flagship mental health social work programme – investing in the workforce**

In July 2023, we welcomed 151 new trainees to our eighth cohort. Meanwhile, 142 Think Ahead trainees joined the workforce as newly qualified social workers specialising in mental health after completing their postgraduate diploma and a further 108 trainees graduated from the two-year programme.

Placed in NHS trusts and local authority mental health teams across England, our trainees contribute to a range of adult mental health services including community, peri-natal, forensic, older adults, learning disabilities, and early psychosis intervention. In 2023/24, we partnered with NHS trusts and local authorities in 27 of the 42 Integrated Care Systems in England.

With supervision from dedicated consultant social workers in each locality, our trainees support people living with severe and long-lasting mental health needs from the start of the programme. Trainees qualify with a postgraduate diploma in social work from our academic partner, Middlesex University, in their first year; and build expert knowledge and confidence by completing a master's degree in social work and an assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE) as newly qualified social workers in their second year.

Through ongoing dialogue with trainees, operational leads in our partner organisations and people with lived experience, we continued to learn and improve our offer and programme delivery. In addition to monitoring the trainee experience for quality and safety, we have focused on the impact that our training partnerships have within NHS trusts and local authorities.

We are proud to report that in 2023, 95% of our programme training partners told us they believed Think Ahead had a broader impact on their organisation – from raising awareness and the status of mental health social work in their organisations, to improving team performance and morale; and 92% of the consultant social workers involved with our programme recommended that other organisations partner with Think Ahead to strengthen their local workforce.

In October 2023, the Department of Health and Social Care extended Think Ahead's contract to recruit and train 320 more mental health social workers by 2027. The funding will be used to recruit 160 trainees in 2024 and a further 160 in 2025. Think Ahead's programme makes a significant contribution to national, regional and local workforce planning, supporting recruitment needs and management of demand and waiting lists.



## **The Alumni Community – building value and leadership**

Our Alumni Community provided past trainees and the senior social workers who train them with a space to connect, share experiences and develop their careers. Growing by another 160 social workers this year, the community now has over 750 members.

We launched a new peer mentoring project this year, facilitating support between the Alumni Community and second year trainees on our flagship programme. We know that the second year can be particularly challenging with first jobs as newly qualified social workers and increased caseloads. This initiative was developed to support trainee wellbeing and engagement and retention on the programme, whilst providing continuing professional development opportunities for our alumni peer mentors who are trained for the role and exercise leadership and mentoring skills.

In the mid-point evaluation, 100% of the mentees reported that the project had a positive impact on their motivation to complete year two and 90% reported that their mentor had supported them with their transition from year one to year two, motivating retention and adding value.

We also delivered a well-received series of talks on neurodiversity in social work, developed in collaboration with British Association of Social Workers (BASW) Neurodivergent Special Interest Group. This series covered topics ranging from life as a neurodivergent social worker to intersectionality and systemic change. The Leadership Series continued to run with quarterly training sessions from experts in the field including a session on “Transgender awareness for social workers: Gender identity, human rights & the law” with Leanne Taylor.

## **Continuing professional development with our consultant social workers**

Consultant and associate consultant social workers lead the placement learning in our programme. We worked with 63 consultant social workers in our partner organisations in 2023/24. Each consultant social worker received training on leadership themes, including anti-discriminatory practice, gender identity and mental health law, human rights and ethical practice, and self-compassion and resilience in social work practice.

We trained 18 community members to become practice educators through our accredited, postgraduate Practice Educator Professional Standards Level 1 and 2 programme. Each of these practitioners is now qualified to support and assess not only Think Ahead's trainees but social workers training with other higher education institutions, as well as newly qualified social workers in adult services completing their assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE), adding to the impact of our programme.

We also provided 44 consultant social workers and associates with relationship-based practice training. This five-day programme provides evidence-based social interventions and skills that can be used to support people seeking support from mental health services.

## Wider support for the mental health workforce

We work in partnership with a range of organisations to support the workforce and people living with mental health needs.

- **Individual Placement and Support** - our joint two-year project with Social Finance aims to increase specialist support to job seekers living with mental health needs. Commissioned by NHS England, the project expanded Individual Placement and Support (IPS) capacity across the country by helping NHS trusts, local authorities and voluntary sector providers to develop and improve their recruitment processes at scale and pace. We delivered a 12-month pilot scheme with seven IPS services across England, providing tailored recruitment support in each locality and identifying effective methods to overcome specific local workforce and recruitment challenges. Using key learning from this pilot we are now developing a recommended IPS recruitment approach, creating central assets and promotional materials and developing a bespoke training series for all IPS providers.
- **Place2Be** - in early 2024 we provided consultancy support to a children's counselling organisation successfully increasing awareness of counselling as a career, raising the profile of Place2Be and increasing the number and diversity of applications to the programme.
- **Substance use training** - we developed a new substance use training course for qualified social workers supporting people living with co-occurring mental health and substance use issues. The five-day course launched in May 2024 with an initial cohort 30 social workers from across the country.

## Policy, advocacy and knowledge sharing

Our close relationship with mental health social workers and their employers in NHS trusts and local authorities gives us valuable evidence and insights into the challenges facing the workforce and its impact on people with mental health needs. We work to influence national policy and share the knowledge and expertise of our trainees, alumni, and lived experience partners. We advocate for the mental health workforce, particularly mental health social workers, and the social approach.

This year we published [\*Workforce Matters: A Manifesto\*](#) setting out three key areas of focus and priority for the government to bring better results for people living with mental health needs and practitioners alike, and identifying what is needed to grow, invest in and better connect the workforce across integrated care systems.

We responded to key consultations, including the Department of Health and Social Care's call for evidence on the major conditions strategy. Offering our insights as a workforce charity, we emphasised that people with mental health problems will never be treated with the respect and support they deserve, unless long term investment is made to grow, develop and retain an effective mental health workforce.

We contributed expert insights to a wide range of sector working groups including: Social Work England's Recruitment Working Group; Social Work England's Education and Training

Advisory Forum; the British Association of Social Worker's Mental Health Group; the British Association of Social Worker's Practice Education Group; the Approved Mental Health Professional Network; and Social Work Teaching Partnership's Practice Education Development Group.

## **Governance**

In 2023/24, the Board implemented succession plans through external search and recruitment and appointed four new trustees, including Jayne King who succeeded Donald Peck as Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee in November 2023, and three other new trustees who joined the Board in July 2024. David Croisdale-Appleby, Vice Chair, led the selection strategy and appointment panel for a successor to our founding Chair, Professor Dame Carol Black GBE, who is due to step down in autumn 2024. The Board is confident that the new appointees will successfully lead our expansion and development plans as set out in our five-year strategy (2023-2028).

Financial risks relating to the extension of our contract with the Department of Health and Social Care were considered and a new Business Development strategy was agreed, focussing on three key areas of activity:

- Securing ongoing funding for the flagship mental health social work programme beyond 2027, expanding coverage and extending delivery to new markets.
- Developing new national training programmes to support the mental health workforce through accredited and non-accredited training pathways for regulated and non-regulated job roles, including addressing training needs in trauma-informed care and practice, and substance misuse and addiction.
- Developing new and existing partnerships to meet gaps in mental health workforce – including national and regional initiatives to support integrated care systems and workforce capacity objectives; improving quality through professional practice training and development opportunities; and supporting the development of new roles through the IPS expansion programme from a mental health and social approach perspective.

Other key activities this year included an internal review of governance assurance and associated reporting; and a plan to review the wider strategic risk profile of the organisation as the new strategy is implemented.

## **Equality, diversity and inclusion**

Diversity of thought and experience intrinsically improves the performance of teams and organisations. We are constantly looking at ways to ensure that diversity and an inclusive approach to work is embedded at all levels in the charity.

This year, we set up an employee led Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Group to enable and amplify diverse voices within the organisation, examine our approaches to inclusiveness,

and advise the Senior Leadership Team on improvements and change. The group's work will include a review of our anti-racist commitments and strategy in 2024.

We strongly encourage applicants to our programme who are from diverse backgrounds including people from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse communities, people with disabilities, people who identify as being part of the LGBTQ+ community, and men who remain under-represented in the workforce.

In our 2023 cohort:

- 26% are from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse communities
- 23% are men
- 20% are from the LGBTQ+ community
- 12% are disabled people.

Our diversity is greater in all areas than sector averages, ensuring that our recruitment approaches and processes improve opportunities in local communities through a connected and culturally competent mental health workforce.

We recognise that lack of access to opportunities in postgraduate and professional education can be a barrier to entry to regulated professions like social work and we consciously monitor social mobility measures as well. In 2023, over a quarter (28%) of our trainees were eligible for free school meals growing up, a significant increase from 17% when we started (the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals in England is currently 24.6%). Over half (53%) of our trainees were the first generation in their family to attend university, an increase from 41% in 2017.

Our mental health social work training programme is fully funded, and we have a hardship fund to support first-year trainees. As students receiving a bursary, they are unable to access benefits or tax-free childcare making the fund an important resource in times of financial difficulty. The fund provides non-repayable, discretionary awards of up to £3,000 and supported 35 trainees in 2023/24.

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## Looking forward

Our vision is a thriving mental health workforce. One that has the investment it needs to support people living with mental health needs to live the life they want and deserve.

We launched our new five-year strategy in 2023, committing to reaching further in our support for the mental health workforce, in social work and beyond. Advocating for growth, investment and opportunities to connect the workforce, we want to ensure that every person who experiences mental health problems receives timely, tailored, and holistic support.

Our work is guided by these four strategic goals:

- Increase public and policy engagement with the mental health sector
- Identify research and innovation for workforce solutions
- Plug the gap between demand and supply in the mental health workforce
- Create an entrepreneurial outlook to increase our impact.

Looking to 2024 and beyond, Think Ahead will draw insight and expertise from partners in the NHS, local authorities, integrated care systems, workforce development sector, frontline practitioners, and people with lived experience to:

- Put people with lived experience at the heart of everything we do.
- Ensure that our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in the mental health workforce drives our decision-making.
- Engage with and enhance the impact of our Alumni Community to inform our agenda for change and development.
- Contribute to conferences and events to help to shape new opportunities that support the mental health workforce in social work and care.
- Develop relationships and engage with our stakeholders (regulators, policymakers, government, educators and employers).
- Seek funding for baseline research and benchmarking in mental health social work.

Under a new government in 2024, we will continue our values-based mission to secure ongoing funding for the development of the mental health workforce and to extend and expand our flagship mental health social work programme.

We believe that social work sits at the heart of economic, social and wellbeing support for communities; and that scarce financial resources should be focused in local areas of need. We will continue to develop tools and use our data, evidence and insights to support reductions in vacancy rates in health and social care systems; and to contribute at a policy level through research and reporting on innovative ways to increase recruitment and retention in areas which are not engaged through our programmes.

This is an ambitious aspiration which will require us to think and act differently as we grow, develop and deepen our impact and we look forward to tackling these ongoing and new challenges in the next five years.

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## **Structure, governance and management**

### **Constitution of the charity**

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19 February 2016 and registered as a charity on 18 April 2016. The charity remained dormant until 1 July 2016, when the Think Ahead programme transferred over to the charity from the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR).

The company was established under a memorandum of association, which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

### **Charitable objectives**

#### **The charitable objectives of Think Ahead are:**

- The advancement of education and training, in particular in the fields of mental health support, social work, social care and allied fields.
- The advancement of physical and mental health to improve standards of social care.
- To raise the awareness of mental health issues and promote research for the education of the public.
- The relief of those in need.

### **Our Board and governance**

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note seven to the accounts.

The day-to-day decisions and management of the charity is delegated by the trustees to the CEO and senior staff detailed on page 3.

### **Appointment of trustees**

The charity's governing document does not specify a time limit for the term of office for trustees. It does however require one third of the trustees, being those who have been longest in office since their last appointment or reappointment, to retire from office at the annual meeting when the accounts are adopted.

On retirement from their first term of office, a trustee can immediately be reappointed for a second term. Following a second term a trustee generally must take a year's break from office, although provisions are in place for a third consecutive term up to a maximum of three years at which point a trustee must retire from the Board, unless a Special Resolution of the members of the charity allows for a further year.

### **Trustee induction and training**

The current trustees have a good knowledge and understanding of the charity, its flagship programme, and their responsibilities as trustees. Induction processes for new trustees have been developed to include background information on the charity, its strategy, aims and governance arrangements as well as opportunities to meet key staff members, trainees on the programme and members of the Lived Experience Partnership who work closely with staff to deliver the charity's aims.

### **Related parties and relationships with other organisations**

There were no related parties or relationships with other organisations during the year.

### **Remuneration policy for key management personnel**

The trustees consider that the senior leadership team as detailed on page 3 comprises the key management personnel of the charity. The trustees decide the reward strategy and annual remuneration for the CEO whilst the pay for the remainder of the senior leadership team is delegated to the CEO. The charity's remuneration policy allocates a salary range to each position which is based on external benchmarking.

### **Principal risks and uncertainties**

Trustees have overall responsibility for risk management and in line with their policy maintain a risk register. However, the trustees also recognise that, for the risks to be identified and managed successfully, there needs to be shared accountability throughout the organisation.

Risks are considered at a strategic, programme and operational level with the nature of the risk noted on the register along with an assessment of its likelihood and potential impact. The senior leadership team conducts a comprehensive audit of risks facing the charity on a quarterly basis and supports the Board to do the same. Dependent on the nature of the risk, its management will consist of either measures put in place to mitigate against the risk or, where an external risk is outside of the charity's control, a response plan.

#### **The main strategic risks to the charity are:**

- **Reliance on a single source of funding in the form of a contract from the Department of Health and Social Care.** The current contract extension covers cohorts for 2024/25 and 2025/26. We currently await details of a contract retender to extend beyond these dates.
- **Changes in health and social care policy.** At the point of writing, there is a lack of clarity regarding the extent to which the new Government will support mental health and social work initiatives. We mitigate this risk through sustained and effective engagement with key stakeholders across the sector and the influencing spectrum, and delivering strong external relations and public profile-building activities.

#### **The main programme risks to the charity are:**

- **Availability of year two job placement positions.** Availability of NHS and local authority funding means that long term workforce planning is challenging.
- **Lack of trainee retention through year two of the programme.** Risk of early drop-out could impact the reputation of the charity. In mitigation of this the charity has implemented (and continues to refine) robust selection procedures, carefully places



trainees in suitable locations and uses a range of in-person and online mechanisms for supporting trainee progress and implementing early additional help if they are struggling.

**The main operational risk to the charity is:**

- **Organisational capacity to deliver objectives.** Diversification and implementation of the Department of Health and Social Care contract, alongside simultaneous contact with multiple cohorts and alumni, could impact the capacity to achieve all objectives to a sufficient quality. This is mitigated by ensuring any new work is sufficiently budgeted to include new resourcing, recruiting new staff as needed and having a robust set of key performance indicators and measures to give advance warning of any potential delivery issues.

**Fundraising**

The charity does not engage in public fundraising. The charity nevertheless observes and complies with the relevant fundraising regulations and codes. During the year there were not compliance issues arising from the regulations and codes, and the trustees received no complaints relating to its fundraising practice.

# Financial performance

## Income

Think Ahead had income of £9 million for the year (2023: £8.9 million) from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to operate the Think Ahead programme as detailed in note three to the accounts. A further £234k of income (2023: £20k) was received from other consultancy projects.

## Expenditure

Overall expenditure for the year totalled £9.3 million. Expenditure relating to the delivery of the programme was £8.9 million during the year (2023: £8.8 million). Expenditure relating to secondary activities totalled £182k, business development £111k and policy work £30k.

The cost of recruiting trainees and delivering training to them accounted for 89% of total expenditure (2023: 91%). Indirect costs totalled 8% of expenditure compared to 9% in the previous year, and secondary activity costs totalled 3%.

The charity's direct training programme itself cost £7.2 million (2023: £7.2 million) equating to 77% (2023: 81%) of charitable expenditure. These costs included payment to partners supplying academic tuition and workplace training facilities, as well as bursary payments to trainees on the programme. Contained within the bursary costs were committed liabilities of £0.9 million to September 2024 (2023: £0.9 million) and these are accrued within the creditor balance at the year end. The intensive training approach in our programme requires robust trainee recruitment processes, and the direct cost of these recruiting activities totalled £1.1 million (2023 £0.9 million), 12% of the total expenditure.

Total reserves at the close of the 2022/23 accounting period totalled £1.04 million. This comprised £959k retained contingency fund and £81k of general reserve. Agreement was reached with DHSC to divide the retained contingency between a newly created designated fund intended for the expansion and enhancement of the flagship programme totalling £534k and an unrestricted reserve of £425k. At the end of the current reporting period, £154k of the designated fund had been spent, leaving £380k to be carried forward. The unrestricted reserve remains at £425k, and the general reserve has reduced to £384k which, when added to the current year surplus of £215k, makes the total reserve carried forward £1.024 million.

It has been agreed with the DHSC that, of the current year surplus of £215k, £110k will be invested in funding an additional two places on the programme, increasing initial participant numbers from 160 to 162, and the balance will be repaid to DHSC.

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## Reserves policy

In considering the reserves requirements, trustees consider the nature of the charity's aims and its business model. At their meeting of 31 January 2024, trustees determined that, in order to cover any future costs not included in the existing contract, such as an orderly wind down if required, a range of unrestricted reserves should be held. This range should be between £280k and £480k. The current available reserve of £425k sits within this range.

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## Going concern

In October 2023 Think Ahead signed a contract extension with DHSC which guaranteed the cohorts for 2024 and 2025. The 2025 cohort runs until September 2027. The trustees consider that, with this contract extension, the charity has sufficient income and liquidity to cover a period of at least 12 months from the date of approving the accounts and that the charity is, therefore, a going concern.

The contract is due to be retendered at the end of 2024. At the time of writing it is unclear precisely what form this new contract will take.

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## Statement of trustee's responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of The Think Ahead Organisation for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law 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 charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

- 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 adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware.
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

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

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2024 was twelve (2023: twelve). The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

The Trustees' Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime. The Trustees' Annual Report has been approved by the trustees on 12 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

**Professor Dame Carol Black GBE**  
**Chair of Trustees**

# Independent auditor's report

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Think Ahead Organisation (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

### **In our opinion, the financial statements:**

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on The Think Ahead Organisation's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### **Other Information**

The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees' Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the Trustees' Annual Report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The Trustees' Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

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## Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the Trustees' Annual Report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

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## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

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## Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;



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- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
  - We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
  - We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
  - We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
  - We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
  - We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
  - We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
  - In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

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## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Joanna Pitman (Senior statutory auditor)**

17 December 2024

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor  
110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

The Think Ahead Organisation  
**Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

				2024	2023
	<u>Note</u>	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Year to 31 March 2024	Year to 31 March 2023
		£	£	£	£
<b>Income from:</b>					
Charitable activities					
Think Ahead Programme	3	9,008,666	-	9,008,666	8,955,121
Other Charitable activities		234,311	-	234,311	20,833
Donations		432	-	432	-
Investment income		6,435	-	6,435	1,742
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>9,249,844</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,249,844</b>	<b>8,977,696</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds					
Business development		110,946	-	110,946	13,723
Policy & research		30,085	-	30,085	2,598
Charitable activities					
Think Ahead Programme		8,947,602	-	8,947,602	8,830,713
Other Charitable activities		181,969	-	181,969	28,511
<b>Total expenditure</b>	4a	<b>9,270,602</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,270,602</b>	<b>8,875,545</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds for the year</b>	6	<b>(20,758)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(20,758)</b>	<b>102,151</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		1,044,785	-	1,044,785	942,634
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>1,024,027</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,024,027</b>	<b>1,044,785</b>

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 15 to the Financial Statements.

The Think Ahead Organisation  
**Balance Sheet**  
**As at 31 March 2024**

	Notes		31 March 2024		31 March 2023
		£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets:</b>	11		8,209		24,627
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors and prepayments	12	1,225,134		112,218	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,075,809		4,498,396	
		5,300,943		4,610,614	
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	4,035,678		3,358,865	
		4,035,678		3,358,865	
<b>Net Current Assets</b>			1,265,265		1,251,749
<b>Total Fixed and Net Current Assets</b>			1,273,474		1,276,376
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	14		249,447		231,591
<b>Net Assets</b>			1,024,027		1,044,785
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Unrestricted funds			219,519		1,044,785
Designated Funds			804,508		-
Restricted income Funds			-		-
			1,024,027		1,044,785

**APPROVED** by the Trustees on 12 December  
2024 and signed on their behalf by:

**Professor Dame Carol Black GBE**  
Chair of Trustees

The Think Ahead Organisation  
**Statement of cash flows**  
**For the year ending 31 March 2024**

		<b>Year to 31 March 2024</b>	<b>Year to 31 March 2023</b>
	<u><b>Note</b></u>		
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	16	(429,022)	449,281
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	6,435	1,742	
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets	-	-	
Purchase of fixed assets		(8,700)	
Proceeds from sale of investments	-	-	
Purchase of investments	-	-	
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>		6,435	(6,958)
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the period</b>		(422,587)	442,323
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		4,498,396	4,056,073
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period</b>		<b>4,075,809</b>	<b>4,498,396</b>

The Think Ahead Organisation  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ending 31 March 2024**

**1 Accounting policies**

**1.1 Statutory information**

The Think Ahead Organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office address is Unit 318, The Record Hall, 16-16a Baldwins Gardens, London, EC1 N 7RJ.

**1.2 Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The charity was incorporated in February 2016 and commenced operations on 1 July 2016.

Key judgements that the charitable company has made which have a significant effect on the accounts include the treatment of bursary payments as described more fully in Note 1.9 below.

The Trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

**1.3 Public benefit entity**

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

**1.4 Going concern**

The Trustees consider there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. In reaching this conclusion they have in particular considered the financial stability secured by having agreed a procurement contract with the Department of Health and Social Care ("DHSC") for delivery of three Cohorts of Participants (the 2021, 2022 and 2023 Cohorts). That financial stability has been further solidified by having agreed with DHSC a contract extension to cover two further Cohorts of Participants (the 2024 and 2025 Cohorts) thereby providing core income extending into financial year ending 31 March 2028. In addition, a new business development team has been established with the intention that significant new sources of funding can be secured, thereby giving the charitable company a more diverse and sustainable funding base.

**1.5 Income**

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

Income from 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.

With regard to income arising under the primary Contract for the Provision of Services entered into with DHSC, as referred to in Note 1.4 above, some elements of total income are specifically identified as being related to certain categories of expenditure. Only those income elements which relate to expenditure which is committed to and binding upon the charity as at 31 March 2024 has been recognised during the year. Such income elements as have been received from DHSC prior to 31 March 2024, but which relate to expenditure not at that date binding upon the charity, have been deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

**1.6 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.

**1.7 Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund. The primary activity of the charity is the implementation of the Think Ahead Programme, a graduate training scheme for mental health social workers. During the previous year the Programme remained partly funded by grant income from DHSC. The grant funding related to expenditure for the 2020 and earlier Cohorts and all income and expenditure relating to those elements of the Programme was dealt with as Restricted activity. As per Note 1.4 above the Programme is now fully governed by a procurement contract (as amended). Those elements of the Programme are reported as Unrestricted activity.

As explained in the above section on Restricted funds Unrestricted funds includes those elements of the Think Ahead Programme which are governed by a procurement contract with DHSC. Therefore income and expenditure relating to the delivery of all active Cohorts are dealt with as Unrestricted activity. Also included are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes. During the year a series of Designated Funds were established, as recorded in Note 14a and the sub-Notes thereto.

**1.8 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. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Recruitment function - expenditure relating to the identification of potential candidates to become Participants on the Programme; assessment of those candidates and selection as confirmed Participants.
- Programme function: expenditure relating to the delivery of the Programme, to include: liaising with the Academic Partner (Middlesex University) regarding delivery of the academic content of the Programme; identifying potential candidate Host Organisations; negotiating Delivery Agreements whereby confirmed Host Organisations undertake the delivery of the placement learning content of the Programme; providing support to Participants through the team of Practice Specialists; providing financial and logistic support to Participants, primarily by means of bursary payments; providing logistic and administrative support for the Programme generally. Expenditure is recognised when services are received (with the exception of bursaries, covered in Note 1.9 below). For the Host Organisations providing placements for the units of (typically) four Participants, the fees payable to them under the governing Delivery Agreements are paid in three Instalments. The expenditure represented by the First and Second Instalments is recognised in the reporting period when the costs are incurred to provide the service. An accrual is made for the Third Instalment which is payable in the July of the following reporting period. As with bursaries, this accrual recognises that although the services provided by the Host in consideration of the Third Instalment are incurred in the following reporting period, the charity has a commitment under the governing delivery agreement to pay that Instalment as at the
- External Relations, and Evaluation functions - expenditure relating to promoting awareness of the existence and content of the Programme, so as to facilitate the recruitment of potential Participants and Host Organisations: to include written publications, production of visual media, use of website and other social media. Additionally, evaluation of the impact of the Programme, using both internal resources and external consultants.
- Business development function - expenditure relating to the identification of potential new funded activities, and the delivery thereof as and when secured. This includes a policy and research arm, seeking to inform the charity as to current issues and trends in the mental health landscape so as better to position the charity to optimise delivery of its existing activities and to identify suitable new activities, all in line with the overall charitable objectives.

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

## 1 Accounting policies (continued)

### 1.9 Grants payable

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects. Single or multi-year grants are accounted for when either the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and the trustees have agreed to pay the grant without condition, or the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and that any condition attaching to the grant is outside of the control of the charity.

Grants are made under the Think Ahead Programme in the form of bursary payments to the Participants. These bursary payments are governed by a Participant Training Agreement entered into between the charity and each Participant. The total amount of the bursary payment covers a period of fourteen months from July of one calendar year (when the Participant begins the Programme) up to September of the following calendar year (when the Participant achieves a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work). As at the accounting year end of the charity, therefore, six further instalments of the bursary have yet to be paid. Since the charity has a commitment to pay these further instalments, an accrual for the remaining instalments has been recognised in the accounts.

### 1.10 Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity.

Direct staff and support costs are salary and overhead costs of the operational department responsible for that activity.

Senior management remuneration costs are apportioned between operational and support activities dependent on time spent. This results in the following allocation:

	Direct (operational)	Business Development	Indirect
CEO	67.5%	10%	22.5%
Programme and Recruitment Director	100%		-
External Relations Director	100%		
Finance and Operations Director	-		100%
Director of Business Development		100%	

These apportionments are effected in the "Apportion Staff Costs" line of Note 4. Two further apportionments are made there, those being (1) to apportion those staff costs for the Policy and Research function to the Raising Funds section and (2) to apportion the remaining staff costs for the External Relations department in line with the next paragraph.

External relations costs are considered to be direct operational costs in support of the primary operational functions of recruitment and programme. They are respectively apportioned at 70% to recruitment and 30% to programme, on the basis of time spent. This apportionment is applied to support costs in the lower section of Note 5.

Indirect staff and support costs are the costs of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central and governance functions. These have been respectively apportioned at 20% to recruitment and 80% to programme on the basis of time spent. This apportionment is applied in the lower section of Note 4.

### 1.11 Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

### 1.12 Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,750. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

The only assets capitalised relate to tenant's improvements to the office premises at the Record Hall, Baldwins Gardens, London EC1N 7RJ, being building works, audio visual equipment, and door security systems. The value of those works / assets will be amortised over the 3 year duration of the Lease of the Record Hall which commenced as of 27 September 2021.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

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:

Leasehold property - tenant's improvements	3 years
--------------------------------------------	---------

### 1.13 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.

### 1.14 Short term deposits

Short term deposits includes cash balances that are invested in accounts with a maturity date of between 3 and 12 months. At the reporting period end the charity did not hold any short term deposits.

### 1.15 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.

### 1.16 Creditors and provisions

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.

### 1.17 Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charity to the fund. The charity has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions.



The Think Ahead Organisation  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ending 31 March 2024**

2 Detailed comparatives for the statement of financial activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Year to 31 March 2023
	£	£	£
<b>Income from:</b>			
Charitable activities			
Think Ahead Programme	8,411,112	544,009	8,955,121
Other Charitable Activity Income	20,833	-	20,833
Investment income	1,742	-	1,742
Other income	-	-	-
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>8,433,687</b>	<b>544,009</b>	<b>8,977,696</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Raising funds	16,322	-	16,322
Charitable activities			
Think Ahead Programme	8,286,703	544,009	8,830,712
Other Charitable Activity Expenditure	20,833	7,678	28,511
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>8,323,858</b>	<b>551,687</b>	<b>8,875,545</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds for the year</b>	<b>109,829</b>	<b>(7,678)</b>	<b>102,151</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>			
Total funds brought forward	934,956	7,678	942,634
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>1,044,785</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,044,785</b>

3 Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024 £ Total	2023 £
<b>Think Ahead Programme:</b>				
Grant received from DHSC	-	-	-	571,533
Unspent grant to be repaid - included within Other Creditors (Note 13)	-	-	-	(27,524)
		-	-	<b>544,009</b>
Contract payments received from DHSC	9,008,666		9,008,666	8,411,112
	<b>9,008,666</b>	-	<b>9,008,666</b>	<b>8,955,121</b>
<b>Other Charitable Activity Income</b>	234,311	-	234,311	20,833
	<b>9,242,977</b>	-	<b>9,242,977</b>	<b>8,975,954</b>

The previous year was the last when the Think Ahead Programme remained partially funded by a Grant Award from the DHSC, insofar as it related to delivery of the 2020 and earlier Cohorts. The amount of £27,524 represented unspent grant funding from the year ending March 2023 which was paid back to DHSC on 7 July 2023. This was treated as a creditor (see DHSC Creditor in Note 13). All this income was Restricted in nature. During year ending 31 March 2021 activity commenced for the recruitment of the 2021 Cohort, and continuing activity relating both to this and the 2022 and 2023 Cohorts is funded by a procurement contract with DHSC. During this year ending 31 March 2024 activity has commenced for the recruitment of the 2024 Cohort, and continuing activity relating both to this and the 2025 Cohort is funded by a Variation Agreement with DHSC. Income derived from both contracts is Unrestricted in nature.

The Think Ahead Organisation  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ending 31 March 2024**

4a Analysis of expenditure

Charitable activities								
	Recruitment	Programmes	External Relations, Policy and Evaluation	Raising Funds	Governance costs	Support costs	TOTAL 2024	TOTAL 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs (Note 7)	355,807	894,324	296,020	182,610	-	449,323	2,178,084	1,923,629
Apportion Staff Costs (Note 1.10)	252,088	123,122	(296,020)	11,732	-	(90,922)	-	-
Apportioned staff costs	607,895	1,017,446	-	194,342	-	358,401	2,178,084	1,923,629
<b>Think Ahead Programme:</b>								
Bursaries (see note below)	-	2,695,503	-	-	-	-	2,695,503	2,819,630
Other Participant support	-	84,331	-	-	-	-	84,331	75,953
Alumni	-	5,704	-	-	-	-	5,704	8,178
Placement learning	-	1,173,088	-	-	-	-	1,173,088	1,184,052
Academic tuition	-	2,041,959	-	-	-	-	2,041,959	2,078,326
Monitoring, evaluation and research	-	27,969	-	6,243	-	-	34,212	8,847
Attraction of Participants	3,575	-	-	-	-	-	3,575	1,897
Selection of Participants	171,546	-	-	(3,404)	-	-	168,142	103,791
Preparation for Programme	82,626	-	-	-	-	-	82,626	57,377
Innovation Fund Initiatives	-	630	-	-	-	-	630	-
<b>Other Programmes:</b>								
Other Charitable Activities	-	181,969	-	(73,378)	-	-	108,591	28,511
Total support costs (Note 5a)	189,947	119,930	-	6,180	45,186	332,914	694,156	585,354
	1,055,589	7,348,529	-	129,983	45,186	691,315	9,270,602	8,875,545
Apportion Governance costs	8,359	36,149	-	678	(45,186)	-	-	-
Apportion Support costs	127,893	553,052	-	10,370	-	(691,315)	-	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,191,841</b>	<b>7,937,730</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>141,031</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,270,602</b>	<b>8,875,545</b>
<b>Analysed as:</b>								
Business development	-	-	-	110,946	-	-	110,946	13,723
Policy & research	-	-	-	30,085	-	-	30,085	2,598
Think Ahead Programme	1,191,841	7,755,761	-	-	-	-	8,947,602	8,830,713
Other Charitable activities	-	181,969	-	-	-	-	181,969	28,511
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,191,841</b>	<b>7,937,730</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>141,031</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,270,602</b>	<b>8,875,545</b>

Grants are made under the Think Ahead Programme in the form of bursary payments to the individual Participants. For a detailed description of the bursaries, including as to timing and accounting treatment, see Note 1.9.

4b Analysis of expenditure (Prior year)

Charitable activities							
	Recruitment	Programmes	External Relations, Policy and Evaluation	Raising Funds	Governance costs	Support costs	TOTAL 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs (Note 7)	357,411	815,912	273,727	13,723	-	462,856	1,923,629
Apportion Staff Costs (Note 1.10)	238,878	118,876	(273,727)	2,598	-	(86,625)	-
Apportioned staff costs	596,288	934,788	-	16,321	-	376,231	1,923,629
Bursaries (see note below)	-	2,819,630	-	-	-	-	2,819,630
Other Participant support	-	90,353	-	-	-	-	90,353
Alumni	-	8,178	-	-	-	-	8,178
Placement learning	-	1,184,052	-	-	-	-	1,184,052
Academic tuition	-	2,078,326	-	-	-	-	2,078,326
Monitoring and evaluation	-	8,847	-	-	-	-	8,847
Attraction of Participants	1,897	-	-	-	-	-	1,897
Selection of Participants	103,791	-	-	-	-	-	103,791
Preparation for Programme	42,977	-	-	-	-	-	42,977
<b>Other Programmes:</b>							
Other Charitable Activities		28,511	-	-	-	-	28,511
Total support costs (Note 5b)	144,543	77,912	-	-	44,521	318,378	585,354
	<b>889,496</b>	<b>7,230,598</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,321</b>	<b>44,521</b>	<b>694,609</b>	<b>8,875,545</b>
Apportion Governance costs	8,904	35,617			(44,521)		
Apportion Support costs	138,922	555,687	-	-		(694,609)	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,037,322</b>	<b>7,821,902</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,321</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>8,875,545</b>
<b>Analysed as:</b>							
Business development	-	-	-	13,723	-	-	13,723
Policy & research	-	-	-	2,598	-	-	2,598
Think Ahead Programme	1,037,322	7,793,391	-	-	-	-	8,830,713
Other Charitable activities		28,511	-	-	-	-	28,511
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,037,322</b>	<b>7,821,902</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,321</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,875,545</b>

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5a	Support Costs	Recruitment	Programmes	External Relations, Policy and Evaluation	Raising Funds	Governance costs	Support costs	Total	Total
								2024	2023
		£	£	£	£			£	£
	Office costs	116,277	62,216	72,071	2,330	18	307,525	560,438	481,955
	Website, publications and events	-	-	30,988	-	-	-	30,988	12,281
	Audit and accountancy	-	-	-	-	16,200	-	16,200	15,120
	Committee expenses	-	-	-	-	5,651	-	5,651	4,203
	Travel	152	25,518	831	445	937	6,260	34,143	29,153
	Finance, insurance, legal & professional	-	688	1,135	3,405	22,380	19,129	46,737	42,642
	Apportion External Relations and Impact costs	73,518	31,507	(105,025)	-	-	-	-	-
	<b>Total Support Costs (to Note 4a)</b>	<b>189,947</b>	<b>119,930</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,180</b>	<b>45,186</b>	<b>332,914</b>	<b>694,157</b>	<b>585,354</b>
5b	Support Costs (Prior year)	Recruitment	Programmes	External Relations, Policy and Evaluation	Raising Funds	Governance costs	Support costs	Total	Total
								2023	
		£	£	£	£		£	£	
	Office costs	68,036	23,606	96,447	-	-	293,866	481,955	
	Website, publications and events	-	-	12,281	-	-	-	12,281	
	Audit and accountancy	-	-	-	-	15,120	-	15,120	
	Committee expenses	-	-	-	-	4,203	-	4,203	
	Travel	152	21,583	223	-	1,050	6,145	29,153	
	Finance, insurance and legal	-	-	127	-	24,148	18,367	42,642	
	Apportion External Relations and Impact costs	76,355	32,723	(109,078)	-	-	-	-	
	<b>Total Support Costs (to Note 4b)</b>	<b>144,543</b>	<b>77,913</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>44,521</b>	<b>318,377</b>	<b>585,354</b>	
6	Net Income / (Expenditure) for the year							2024	2023
								£	£
	This is stated after charging:								
	Auditors' remuneration excl VAT:	Statutory audit					13,500	12,600	
		Other services					-	-	
	Operating leases:	Property					145,085	138,029	
		Other					8,771	8,771	

**7 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel**

**Staff costs were as follows:**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries	1,773,421	1,549,910
Social Security costs	179,697	166,929
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension scheme	130,658	110,643
Redundancy payment	15,139	9,398
Recruitment and other costs	79,169	86,749
	<b>2,178,084</b>	<b>1,923,629</b>

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2024	2023
£60,000 - £69,999	2	3
£70,000 - £79,999	1	2
£80,000 - £89,999	1	1
£90,000 - £99,999	1	-
£120,000 - £129,999	1	-

**Key management personnel:**

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employers national insurance) of the key management personnel were £529,453 (2023: £453,758 ).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from engagement with the charity in the period. No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity.

Trustees' expenses represent the payment or reimbursement of travel, accommodation and subsistence costs totalling £2,630 (2023 - £1,100) incurred by or on behalf of four (2023 - three) members. These costs were connected with trustee meetings or other external events or activities of the charity.

**8 Staff numbers**

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the period was:

**Average headcount:**

	2024		2023	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
Full time employees	30.6	30.0	27.3	26.0
Part time and temporary employees	8.1	6.9	8.3	6.0
	<b>38.7</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>32.0</b>

Staff are split across the various functions of the charity as follows (headcount basis):

	2024		2023	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
Business Development	2.0	2.0	0.4	0.4
Central Programme team	9.0	8.7	7.2	7.2
External Relations and Evaluation	5.7	5.2	5.0	4.4
Finance and Executive	6.5	6.3	6.7	6.2
Policy & research	1.0	1.0	0.1	0.1
Practice Specialist team	7.0	6.8	6.3	6.3
Recruitment	7.5	6.9	9.9	7.4
	<b>38.7</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>32.0</b>

**9 Related party transactions**

No transactions with RPs and no donations from RPs.

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**10 Taxation**

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

**11 Tangible fixed assets**

Cost	Freehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
At the start of the year	-	45,276	-	-	45,276
Additions in year	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals in year	-	-	-	-	-
At the end of the year	-	45,276	-	-	45,276
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At the start of the year	-	20,649	-	-	20,649
Charge for the year	-	16,418	-	-	16,418
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	-	-	-
At the end of the year	-	37,067	-	-	37,067
<b>Net book value</b>					
<b>At the end of the year</b>	-	8,209	-	-	8,209
At the start of the year	-	24,627	-	-	24,627

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

**12 Debtors**

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	573,456	25,000
Other debtors	46,933	46,684
Prepayments	78,181	40,534
Provision for Income	526,564	-
	<b>1,225,134</b>	<b>112,218</b>

Under the Variation Agreement with DHSC which governs the delivery of the 2024 and 2025 Cohorts, invoicing is rendered to DHSC in arrears. Hence the income which relates to C2024 delivery during the period January to March 2024 was invoiced in April, hence the largest component (£503,976) of the Provision. Provision has also been made for income of £27,569 connected to the IPS Grow Project. Finally, a negative component is included of £6,157 which represents an income adjustment in favour of DHSC under the Original Contract which relates to participant withdrawals during the period January to March 2024.

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade Creditors	1,023,905	479,989
Taxation and Social Security	62,632	42,431
VAT	36,654	4,127
Pensions	20,917	15,844
Accruals	2,398,028	2,375,212
Amortised rent free period	3,173	6,492
Provision for dilapidations	8,333	-
DHSC Creditor	-	27,524
Other Creditors	324	423
Deferred income	481,711	406,823
	<b>4,035,678</b>	<b>3,358,865</b>

"DHSC Creditor" in 2023 represents the part of the Department of Health and Social Care ("DHSC") grant funding for the year ending 31 March 2023 which was unspent as at 31 March 2023 and which was paid back to the Department on 7 July 2023. With this being the final tranche of Grant funding there is no equivalent creditor figure as at 31 March 2024.

"Deferred income" in both 2023 and 2024 relates to certain elements of income received from DHSC pursuant to the Original Contract for the Provision of Services but in respect of which the related expenditure was yet to be incurred as a binding commitment of the charity. The amount deferred under this Note 13 will be allocated to expenditure expected to be incurred during financial year ending 31 March 2025.

The Think Ahead Organisation  
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14	Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	2024 £	2023 £
	Amortised rent free period	-	3,173
	Provision for dilapidations	-	5,000
	Deferred income	249,447	223,418
		<b>249,447</b>	<b>231,591</b>

"Deferred income" in both 2023 and 2024 relates to certain elements of income received from DHSC pursuant to the Original Contract for the Provision of Services but in respect of which the related expenditure was yet to be incurred as a binding commitment of the charity. The amount deferred under this Note 14 will be allocated to expenditure expected to be incurred during financial year ending 31 March 2026.

15a	Movements in funds (current year)	At 31 March 2023	Income and transfers	Staff Costs	Expenditure Support Costs	Operations	TOTAL	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
		£	£	£	£	£	£		£
	Restricted funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<b>Total Restricted funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>General funds</b>								
	General Funds	1,044,785	6,867	(23,841)	(6,244)		(30,085)	(959,000)	62,567
	Business Development		234,311	(167,097)	(17,227)	(108,591)	(292,915)	-	(58,604)
	Think Ahead Programme		9,008,666	(1,975,334)	(668,958)	(6,148,818)	(8,793,110)	-	215,557
	<b>Total of General Funds</b>	<b>1,044,785</b>	<b>9,249,844</b>	<b>(2,166,272)</b>	<b>(692,429)</b>	<b>(6,257,409)</b>	<b>(9,116,109)</b>	<b>(959,000)</b>	<b>219,520</b>
	<b>Designated Funds</b>								
	<b>DHSC Reinvestment Fund:</b>								
	Alumni Development						-	56,000	56,000
	Website Development					(22,822)	(22,822)	40,000	17,178
	Evaluation				(1,728)		(1,728)	21,800	20,072
	Involvement Lead			(11,812)			(11,812)	62,000	50,188
	Improving Applicant Experience					(77,280)	(77,280)	108,000	30,720
	Online Portal Development					(10,959)	(10,959)	36,000	25,041
	Video Application System					(15,581)	(15,581)	56,000	40,419
	Salesforce Development					(13,680)	(13,680)	32,200	18,520
	Innovation Fund					(630)	(630)	122,000	121,370
	<b>DHSC Retained Contingency Fund</b>						-	425,000	425,000
	<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>1,044,785</b>	<b>9,249,844</b>	<b>(2,178,084)</b>	<b>(694,156)</b>	<b>(6,398,361)</b>	<b>(9,270,601)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,024,028</b>
	<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,044,785</b>	<b>9,249,844</b>	<b>(2,178,084)</b>	<b>(694,156)</b>	<b>(6,398,361)</b>	<b>(9,270,601)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,024,027</b>

The amount brought forward from the previous Financial Year of £1,044,785 was primarily derived from surpluses of income over expenditure relating to ongoing delivery of the 2021, 2022 and 2023 Cohorts under the flagship Think Ahead Programme. Discussion ensued between Think Ahead and DHSC over the disposition of such surpluses. Whilst it was acknowledged by DHSC that the contractual nature of the delivery agreement dictated that such surpluses belonged to Think Ahead, it was at the same time mutually recognised that the COVID crisis had fundamentally altered the conditions under which delivery of the Programme was undertaken, with the result that the surpluses were of a higher order than the parties would reasonably have expected. Hence the parties sought to agree a mutually acceptable plan to use the greater part of such surpluses to establish two Designated Funds.

The amount of £425,000 was to be set aside to form a **DHSC Retained Contingency Fund**. This would be retained by Think Ahead as a safeguard against unforeseen future costs which Think Ahead might need to incur in the course of continuing to deliver the flagship Programme, and also to be a fund of last resort to facilitate an orderly winding down of the Programme in the event that future funding was scaled back or discontinued altogether.

A total amount of £534,000 was to be set aside as a resource to fund a series of future activities to be undertaken by Think Ahead, collectively to be known as the **DHSC Re-Investment Fund**.

The amounts forming the sub-Funds **Alumni Development** and **Evaluation** are intended to fund the continuation of those activities which support the flagship Programme but which are not directly funded for the 2024 and 2025 Cohorts by the governing Variation Agreement.



The Think Ahead Organisation  
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**15 Movements in funds (continued)**

The amount forming the sub-Fund **Website Development** is intended to fund future improvement and enhancement of the Think Ahead website.

The amount forming the sub-Fund **Involvement Lead** is intended to fund the establishment of a new staff position dedicated to enhancing and expanding the contribution made to delivery of the flagship Programme by the members of the Lived Experience Partnership.

The four linked sub-Funds for **Improving Applicant Experience, Online Portal Development, Video Application System, and Salesforce Development** are intended to fund the introduction and maintenance of new systems and processes which are designed to streamline and enhance the experiences of candidates and participants as they apply to join, and, if successful, progress through the Programme.

Finally the **Innovation** sub-Fund is intended as a resource for Think Ahead to use to identify new projects which complement, expand or enhance the existing scope of the flagship Programme. The current focus of deployment is the provision of Substance Misuse Training to external qualified social workers, and all reported expenditure relates to this.

The agreement between Think Ahead and DHSC to establish these Funds was recorded as part of Schedule 6 to the Variation Agreement extending funding to the 2024 and 2025 Cohorts. It was in turn confirmed by the Board of Trustees at their Meeting on 19 July 2023.

It will be seen from this Note 15a that in Financial year ending 31 March 2024 there was a surplus of income over expenditure of £221,557 as regards delivery of the Think Ahead Programme. This has led to discussions with DHSC applying the Gainshare provisions of the governing Contract. These discussions have in turn led to the parties' agreeing to enter into a Change Authorisation Note as of 6 June 2024 whereby £110,000 from the surplus of £221,557 will be retained by Think Ahead and used to establish a Designated Fund to support the recruitment of an additional two Participants to form part of the 2024 Cohort. The remainder (insofar as it relates to delivery of the 2021, 2022 and 2023 Cohorts) will be returned to DHSC via a deduction made to the first quarterly invoice raised after Think Ahead's accounts have been finalised at audit.

**15b Movements in funds (prior year)**

	At 31 March 2022	Income	Expenditure					At 31 March 2023
	£	£	Staff Costs £	Support Costs £	Operations £	TOTAL £	Transfers	£
Restricted funds	7,678	544,009	(187,344)	(49,635)	(314,707)	(551,687)		-
<b>Total Restricted funds</b>	<b>7,678</b>	<b>544,009</b>	<b>(187,344)</b>	<b>(49,635)</b>	<b>(314,707)</b>	<b>(551,687)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
General funds	76,581	1,742	(16,322)			(16,322)		62,001
Other Charitable activity	858,375	8,431,945	(1,719,963)	(268,742)	(6,318,831)	(8,307,536)		982,784
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>934,956</b>	<b>8,433,687</b>	<b>(1,736,285)</b>	<b>(268,742)</b>	<b>(6,318,831)</b>	<b>(8,323,858)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,044,785</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>942,634</b>	<b>8,977,696</b>	<b>(1,923,629)</b>	<b>(318,378)</b>	<b>(6,633,538)</b>	<b>(8,875,545)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,044,785</b>

**16 Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities**

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per SOFA)	(20,758)	102,151
investments	(6,435)	(1,742)
Depreciation of fixed assets	16,418	15,451
(Increase) in debtors	(1,112,916)	(6,701)
Increase in creditors	694,669	340,122
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>(429,022)</b>	<b>449,281</b>

**17 Operating lease commitments**






The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods:

	Property 2024 £	Equipment 2024 £	Property 2023 £	Equipment 2023 £
Less than one year	72,782	3,989	145,255	8,771
One to five years	-	-	72,782	3,989
	<b>72,782</b>	<b>3,989</b>	<b>218,037</b>	<b>12,761</b>

**18 Legal status of the charity**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.



-  @ThinkAheadMH
-  thinkaheadorg
-  think-ahead-org
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[thinkahead.org](https://thinkahead.org)

The Think Ahead Organisation is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee.  
Charity number: 1166577. Company number: 10015893.