



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

01 04 2024

31 03 2025

Section A

Reference and administration details

Charity name

Veterans in Sefton CIO

Other names charity is known by

N/A

Registered charity number (if any)

1168128

Charity's principal address

The Brunswick Y&CC

Marsh Lane

Bootle

Merseyside

L20 4JQ

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1 Shirley Hunter			
2 Jon Price			
3 Steve Calderbank			
4 Phil Sorrell		30.1.25	
5 Tim Carey		30.1.25	

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Dave Smith CEO

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Appointed by a quorate meeting of the Trustees properly notified as per our constitution and considered to have skills valuable to the charity

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You may choose to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Trustee Induction and Training

Veterans in Sefton CIO has an established process for the induction and training of trustees. New trustees receive a comprehensive induction pack containing the charity's governing document, current strategic plan, key policies, and recent financial and operational reports. Induction meetings are held with the Chief Executive Officer to outline the charity's history, ethos, and ongoing projects. Trustees are encouraged to complete relevant Charity Commission online training modules, attend safeguarding and data protection briefings, and participate in peer-learning opportunities with partner organisations such as Sefton CVS. Ongoing development is supported through periodic governance workshops and briefings on legislative or regulatory changes affecting the Armed Forces charitable sector.

Organisational Structure and Network

The charity operates under the strategic oversight of the Board of Trustees, who meet regularly to review performance, compliance, and future development. Day-to-day operations are delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, who is supported by a small team of staff and volunteers responsible for delivery of welfare, wellbeing, and outreach programmes across Sefton and the wider Liverpool City Region. Veterans in Sefton is embedded within a strong partnership network including Sefton MBC, One Vision Housing, NHS/Op Courage, Sefton CVS, and other voluntary and statutory organisations under the Armed Forces Covenant. These partnerships ensure a joined-up, holistic approach to supporting veterans and their families.

Related Party Relationships

Veterans in Sefton maintains transparent and accountable relationships with all related parties. Some trustees and volunteers are themselves veterans or members of partner organisations, but all related interests are declared and managed in accordance with the charity's Conflict of Interest Policy. No trustee or related party has received any personal benefit from the charity's funds during the reporting period, beyond the reimbursement of approved out-of-pocket expenses.

Risk Management

The trustees recognise that effective risk management is essential to good governance. The Board regularly reviews a risk register that identifies and

assesses major operational, financial, and reputational risks. Key risks currently include the sustainability of grant funding, safeguarding of beneficiaries, volunteer capacity, and health and safety during outdoor and retreat-based activities. Mitigation measures include maintaining diverse funding streams, robust safeguarding policies, comprehensive insurance coverage, regular risk assessments for all activities, and ongoing monitoring of compliance with the charity's policies and procedures. The trustees are satisfied that these systems and controls are effective and proportionate to the scale of the charity's work.

Section C

Objectives and activities

The objects of Veterans in Sefton CIO, as stated in its governing document, are:

To relieve the need and advance the welfare of members of the Armed Forces community and their families within Sefton and the surrounding areas, in particular by providing advice, guidance, practical and emotional support, and opportunities for social inclusion and personal development; and to promote the health and wellbeing of that community through the provision of holistic, peer-led services and community-based activities.

In fulfilling these charitable objects, Veterans in Sefton aims to:

- Provide direct support to veterans and their families through welfare advice, housing assistance, wellbeing interventions, and peer mentoring.
- Reduce social isolation by facilitating regular *NAAFI Breaks*, community events, and day trips.
- Deliver therapeutic and restorative opportunities such as the *Mountain Hut Retreats* and holistic allotment projects.
- Work collaboratively with statutory and voluntary partners—including Sefton MBC, One Vision Housing, the NHS/Op Courage network, and Sefton CVS—under the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant to ensure joined-up support pathways.
- Promote greater understanding within the wider community of the contribution and needs of ex-service personnel and their families

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)
 You may choose to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

During the year, Veterans in Sefton continued to deliver a wide range of practical and emotional support services designed to improve the wellbeing, resilience, and inclusion of veterans and their families across Sefton and the wider Liverpool City Region.

Our work is firmly rooted in a **holistic, peer-led model** that recognises the unique challenges faced by those transitioning from military to civilian life. Activities undertaken to achieve our charitable aims included:

- **Welfare, Housing and Wellbeing Support:**
 Individual casework and signposting to specialist partners, including Sefton MBC Housing, DWP, Veterans UK, NHS/Op Courage and local community mental health teams. This ensured that beneficiaries accessed the right help at the right time for issues including housing, benefits, debt, and health needs.
- **NAAFI Breaks and Drop-Ins:**
 Twice-weekly informal coffee mornings provided safe, welcoming spaces for veterans of all ages to connect, share experiences, and access on-site advice. These sessions remain at the heart of ViS's peer-support ethos and have helped reduce social isolation and improve community cohesion.
- **Mountain Hut Retreats and Outdoor Activities:**
 A rolling programme of structured retreats in Wales and Scotland offered small groups of veterans the chance to take part in reflective, team-based activities that build confidence, resilience, and trust. Each trip includes guided walks, communal cooking, and wellbeing discussions led by trained staff and volunteers.
- **Allotment and Holistic Garden Project:**
 Our longstanding allotment space continues to offer a calm, therapeutic environment for veterans to learn new skills, connect with others, and experience the mental-health benefits of outdoor activity and routine.
- **Community Outreach and Partnership Work:**
 ViS played an active role in the Sefton Armed Forces Covenant network, working closely with partners such as One Vision Housing, Sefton CVS, NHS/Op Courage, and the Veterans Foundation. We also expanded collaboration with neighbouring groups in Liverpool and West Lancashire to ensure no veteran "falls through the cracks."
- **Volunteer Development and Mentoring:**
 Many of our volunteers are veterans who have progressed through ViS's support pathways. They contribute as mentors, event organisers, drivers, cooks, and peer supporters. ViS provides them with training in safeguarding, food hygiene, and mental-health awareness to enhance both personal growth and service quality.

Throughout all activities, the charity ensures that equality, safeguarding, and health and safety standards are upheld. Trustees regularly review delivery plans to confirm that all activities directly support the charity's objects and deliver measurable outcomes for the Armed Forces community.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

During the reporting period, Veterans in Sefton continued to strengthen its position as a leading local provider of holistic, peer-led support for the Armed Forces community. Our services reached a record number of veterans and family members, reflecting both the ongoing need for trusted, community-based provision and the reputation ViS has built since becoming an independent charity in 2016.

Key Achievements

- **Over 400 veterans and family members** engaged directly with ViS services throughout the year, receiving one-to-one welfare support, housing advice, or wellbeing assistance.
- **More than 160 NAAFI Break sessions** were held across Sefton, providing regular points of contact and reducing social isolation among attendees.
- **Eight Mountain Hut retreats** were successfully delivered, each supporting up to ten veterans. Participant feedback consistently highlighted improvements in mental wellbeing, confidence, and renewed sense of belonging.
- **Two-day trips per month** on average were organised, including visits to museums, remembrance events, and outdoor activities designed to encourage social interaction and shared experiences.
- The **Allotment and Holistic Garden** remained a vital community asset, hosting weekly sessions for veterans who benefit from the therapeutic value of gardening, teamwork, and time outdoors.
- ViS volunteers collectively contributed **over 2,000 hours** to service delivery, event organisation, mentoring, cooking, and transport — an outstanding reflection of community ownership and sustainability.

Partnership and Collaboration

Our work continues to be rooted in strong partnership networks. We maintained active Service Level Agreements with **Sefton MBC (Housing and Health & Wellbeing)** and strengthened our collaboration with **One Vision Housing, Sefton CVS, NHS/Op Courage, the Veterans Foundation, the Steve Morgan Foundation, and the National Lottery Community Fund**. These relationships ensure seamless pathways of care and avoid duplication of services.

ViS also played a key role in re-launching the local **Armed Forces Covenant**, working with Sefton Council to promote awareness among GPs and frontline services of the needs of veterans and their families.

Impact and Outcomes

Feedback and monitoring data demonstrate that ViS continues to achieve significant positive outcomes for beneficiaries, including:

- Reduced social isolation and loneliness.
- Improved mental health, confidence, and self-esteem.
- Better access to housing, welfare, and healthcare services.
- Increased community engagement and volunteering.
- Strengthened family relationships and peer connections.

Several participants have progressed from receiving support to volunteering and mentoring others — clear evidence of ViS's empowering, veteran-led approach.

Resilience and Learning

The trustees recognise that the operating environment remains challenging, particularly with increasing demand and pressure on public funding. Despite this, ViS has continued to meet all commitments and deliver strong outcomes through careful financial management, volunteer dedication, and strong community partnerships.

The lessons from this year reinforce the value of flexible, person-centred approaches that address not just immediate need, but long-term recovery, wellbeing, and belonging.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The charity remains in a stable financial position, supported by a combination of grant funding, service-level agreements, and community donations. During the reporting year, Veterans in Sefton continued to manage its finances prudently while ensuring that all available resources were directed towards frontline delivery for veterans and their families.

Income

Total income for the year was derived primarily from:

- The **National Lottery Community Fund** (core continuation grant), providing multi-year support for staffing, operational delivery, and organisational development.
- **Service Level Agreements** with **Sefton MBC** for Housing and Health & Wellbeing projects.
- Project-specific grants from the **Veterans Foundation**, **Steve Morgan Foundation**, **Awards for All**, and **One Vision Housing**, supporting initiatives such as the Mountain Hut retreats, the Allotment & Holistic Garden, and volunteer development.
- Additional donations and in-kind contributions from community groups, partner organisations, and local supporters.

This diversified funding mix helped ensure continuity of services and resilience in delivery despite increasing demand.

Expenditure

Expenditure during the year was primarily focused on charitable activities, including:

- Staff salaries and operational costs directly related to welfare, well-being, and peer-support delivery.
- Accommodation, transport, and activity costs associated with retreats, day trips, and community events.
- Volunteer training, travel, and subsistence.
- Premises, insurance, and essential administrative expenses required to maintain service standards and compliance.

The charity operates a lean administrative model, with the majority of expenditure directed to direct beneficiary support.

Reserves Policy

The trustees review the reserves policy annually to ensure the charity maintains sufficient unrestricted reserves to meet ongoing commitments and manage any unforeseen financial challenges. The target is to hold a minimum of **three months' operating costs** in unrestricted reserves. As of year end, the reserves held were considered adequate and in line with this policy.

Risk and Financial Management

Regular financial monitoring is conducted by the CEO and reviewed at quarterly trustee meetings. Budgets, grant conditions, and expenditure reports are carefully tracked to ensure accountability and compliance with funder requirements.

The Board remains alert to potential financial risks, including reliance on grant income, cost inflation, and changing public-sector funding priorities. To mitigate these, ViS continues to diversify its funding base, build relationships with corporate and community supporters, and explore new long-term income streams.

Going Concern

The trustees consider the charity to be a going concern. Confirmed funding for the next financial year from the National Lottery, Sefton MBC, and the Veterans Foundation provides a secure foundation to sustain current services while exploring opportunities for further development across Sefton and West Lancashire.

Looking ahead, the trustees of Veterans in Sefton remain committed to strengthening and expanding the charity's holistic, peer-led model of support for the Armed Forces community. The coming year will focus on building sustainability, deepening partnerships, and continuing to respond flexibly to the evolving needs of veterans and their families.

Strategic Priorities for the Year Ahead

1. **Sustain and Secure Core Funding**
The trustees will continue to develop a long-term funding strategy to ensure financial stability beyond the current Lottery cycle. This includes exploring new multi-year funding opportunities, corporate partnerships, and social value investment linked to the Armed Forces Covenant.
2. **Strengthen Partnership Networks**
ViS will continue to work closely with **Sefton MBC, One Vision Housing, Sefton CVS, NHS/Op Courage**, and wider Liverpool City Region partners to deliver integrated support pathways. A focus will be placed on re-launching the local **Armed Forces Covenant** and improving GP and frontline awareness of veteran-specific services.
3. **Expand Retreat and Wellbeing Programmes**
Building on the success of the Mountain Hut retreats, ViS plans to extend the seasonal programme to include "Turkey & Tinsel" wellbeing breaks and new collaborative excursions with partner organisations such as **Everton in the Community**.
4. **Enhance Volunteer Development and Peer Leadership**
The charity will invest in volunteer training — including food hygiene, safeguarding, and trauma-informed care — enabling more veterans to move from receiving support to delivering it. A structured mentoring pathway will be introduced to support progression from participant to volunteer leader.
5. **Develop Infrastructure and Community Assets**
Plans include continued enhancement of the **Allotment & Holistic Garden**, investment in equipment and transport, and improving accessibility at the Brunswick base to accommodate increasing participation and community use.
6. **Promote Awareness and Engagement**
ViS will implement a refreshed branding and communication plan to raise awareness of its services, celebrate veteran achievements, and increase public understanding of the positive contributions made by the Armed Forces community.


Long-Term Vision

Over the next three to five years, Veterans in Sefton aims to consolidate its position as a **regional centre of excellence for veteran wellbeing**, recognised for its lived-experience approach, strong partnerships, and measurable impact. The trustees are committed to ensuring the charity remains adaptable, inclusive, and resilient — continuing to honour the principle that *"no veteran is left behind."*

Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	SHIRLEY HUNTER	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chairman	
Date	27/1/26.	

Veterans in Sefton

Independent Examiners Report

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Veterans in Sefton

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Veterans in Sefton for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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 material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting 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.

Ian Wright
Chartered Accountant
Sefton Council for Voluntary Service
Burlington House
Crosby Road North
Waterloo
Liverpool
L22 0LG
12 February 2026

Veterans in Sefton
Receipts and Payments Account
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Receipts from:				
Donations, legacies and similar income	54,005	3,000	57,005	57,730
Grants	-	115,681	115,681	34,448
Total gross income	54,005	118,681	172,686	92,178
Total receipts	54,005	118,681	172,686	92,178
Payments on:				
Charitable payments	4,682	-	4,682	4,374
Charity costs	11,598	108,019	119,617	105,837
Total gross expenditure	16,280	108,019	124,299	110,211
Total payments	16,280	108,019	124,299	110,211
Net of receipts/(payments)	37,725	10,662	48,387	(18,033)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Cash funds last year	815	12,289	13,104	31,137
Cash funds this year end	38,540	22,951	61,491	13,104

Veterans in Sefton
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
at 31 March 2025
Charity No. 1168128

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Cash funds				
Current accounts	38,540	22,951	61,491	13,104
Total cash funds	<u>38,540</u>	<u>22,951</u>	<u>61,491</u>	<u>13,104</u>

Signed by the trustees on 12 February 2026

And signed on their behalf by:



S.A. Hunter
Trustee
12 February 2026

Veterans in Sefton

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the 'Receipts and Payments' basis.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds	These are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity.
Designated funds	These are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.
Revaluation funds	These are unrestricted funds which include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at their market values.
Restricted funds	These are available for use subject to restrictions imposed by the donor or through terms of an appeal.

2 Income from grants

	Restricted funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£
Lottery Main Grant	86,540	86,540	19,725
One Vision	500	500	350
HSBC SFX Foundation	-	-	4,500
National Lottery Community Fund Awards For All	17,848	17,848	-
Veterans Foundation Grant	7,303	7,303	8,793
SCVS Community Heritage Grant	-	-	1,080
Sefton CVS UKSP Resilience Grant	3,490	3,490	-
	<u>115,681</u>	<u>115,681</u>	<u>34,448</u>

Veterans in Sefton
Detailed Receipts and Payments Account
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Receipts from:				
Donations, legacies and similar income				
Donations	4,505	-	4,505	8,230
Sefton MBC Housing	49,500	-	49,500	49,500
Veterans Charity Shop	-	3,000	3,000	-
	<u>54,005</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>57,005</u>	<u>57,730</u>
Grants				
Lottery Main Grant	-	86,540	86,540	19,725
One Vision	-	500	500	350
HSBC SFX Foundation	-	-	-	4,500
National Lottery Community Fund Awards For All	-	17,848	17,848	-
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	<u>-</u>	<u>115,681</u>	<u>115,681</u>	<u>34,448</u>
Total gross income	<u>54,005</u>	<u>118,681</u>	<u>172,686</u>	<u>92,178</u>
Total receipts	<u>54,005</u>	<u>118,681</u>	<u>172,686</u>	<u>92,178</u>
Payments on:				
Charitable payments				
Charitable Activities Cost	4,682	-	4,682	4,374
	<u>4,682</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,682</u>	<u>4,374</u>
Employee costs				
Salaries/wages	-	83,774	83,774	79,951
Pension costs	-	4,559	4,559	4,803
	<u>-</u>	<u>88,333</u>	<u>88,333</u>	<u>84,754</u>
Motor and travel costs				
Vehicles - General costs	-	902	902	850
Vehicles - Fuel	-	722	722	196
Vehicles - Insurance and licences	-	1,115	1,115	1,221
Vehicles - Repairs and maintenance	-	-	-	167
	<u>-</u>	<u>2,739</u>	<u>2,739</u>	<u>2,434</u>
Premises costs				
Rent	-	13,000	13,000	7,800

Veterans in Sefton

Detailed Receipts and Payments Account

Premises repairs and maintenance	-	1,250	1,250	-
	-	14,250	14,250	7,800
General administrative costs				
Bank charges	-	293	293	328
Equipment expensed	928	1,415	2,343	417
Equipment repairs and maintenance	-	-	-	404
General insurances	-	944	944	1,089
Information and publications	-	45	45	-
Software, IT support and related costs	6,837	-	6,837	3,597
Stationery and printing	141	-	141	197
Subscriptions	60	-	60	216
Sundry expenses	-	-	-	35
Telephone, fax and broadband	2,852	-	2,852	3,448
	10,818	2,697	13,515	9,731
Legal and professional costs				
Accountancy and bookkeeping	780	-	780	1,118
	780	-	780	1,118
Total gross expenditure	16,280	108,019	124,299	110,211
Total payments	16,280	108,019	124,299	110,211
Net receipts (payments)	37,725	10,662	48,387	(18,033)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	
Cash fund last year end	815	12,289	13,104	31,137
Cash fund this year end	38,540	22,951	61,491	13,104

Veterans in Sefton

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for the year ended 31 March 2025

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Statement of Assets and Liabilities
at 31 March 2025
Charity No. 1168128

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Signed by the trustees on 12 February 2026

And signed on their behalf by:



S.A. Hunter
Trustee
12 February 2026

Veterans in Sefton

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for the year ended 31 March 2025

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Veterans Foundation Grant	7,303	7,303	8,793
SCVS Community Heritage Grant	-	-	1,080
Sefton CVS UKSP Resilience Grant	3,490	3,490	-
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Veterans in Sefton
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for the year ended 31 March 2025

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Charitable Activities Cost	4,682	-	4,682	4,374
	<u>4,682</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,682</u>	<u>4,374</u>
Employee costs				
Salaries/wages	-	83,774	83,774	79,951
Pension costs	-	4,559	4,559	4,803
	<u>-</u>	<u>88,333</u>	<u>88,333</u>	<u>84,754</u>
Motor and travel costs				
Vehicles - General costs	-	902	902	850
Vehicles - Fuel	-	722	722	196
Vehicles - Insurance and licences	-	1,115	1,115	1,221
Vehicles - Repairs and maintenance	-	-	-	167
	<u>-</u>	<u>2,739</u>	<u>2,739</u>	<u>2,434</u>
Premises costs				
Rent	-	13,000	13,000	7,800

Veterans in Sefton

Detailed Receipts and Payments Account

Premises repairs and maintenance	-	1,250	1,250	-
	-	14,250	14,250	7,800
General administrative costs				
Bank charges	-	293	293	328
Equipment expensed	928	1,415	2,343	417
Equipment repairs and maintenance	-	-	-	404
General insurances	-	944	944	1,089
Information and publications	-	45	45	-
Software, IT support and related costs	6,837	-	6,837	3,597
Stationery and printing	141	-	141	197
Subscriptions	60	-	60	216
Sundry expenses	-	-	-	35
Telephone, fax and broadband	2,852	-	2,852	3,448
	10,818	2,697	13,515	9,731
Legal and professional costs				
Accountancy and bookkeeping	780	-	780	1,118
	780	-	780	1,118
Total gross expenditure	16,280	108,019	124,299	110,211
Total payments	16,280	108,019	124,299	110,211
Net receipts (payments)	37,725	10,662	48,387	(18,033)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	
Cash fund last year end	815	12,289	13,104	31,137
Cash fund this year end	38,540	22,951	61,491	13,104