

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025



PLATFORM FOR LIFE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mr G Hartley Ms EL Price Ms C Jones Mrs S Taylor Ms AV Gill Mr A Kerr Mrs JM Hinnigan Mr A Sieber Mr I Minshall Mrs K Ferdenzi Ms CL George	(Appointed 10 July 2024) (Appointed 10 July 2024) (Appointed 20 May 2025)
Patron	David Briggs MBR KStJ	
Senior management	Shelagh Hatton Debbie Thomas	Clinical Director Operations Director
Charity number	1176429	
Company number	10729008	
Registered office	Unit 8 Parade Enterprise Centre The Parade Blacon Chester CH1 5HN	
Independent examiner	Mr R Smith FCA c/o UHY Hacker Young 4th Floor Merchants House Crook Street Chester CH1 2BE	

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

The charitable objectives of Platform for Life agreed with the Charity Commission are:

1. To enable the treatment and care of parents, parents-to-be and carers who experience individual, societal, economic or relationship psychological stress by the provision of counselling to enable them to provide safe, secure and nurturing environments for their children.
2. To enable the treatment and care of children and young people who are in families where psychological stress could be impairing their normal emotional development by the provision of play therapy and counselling.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities and setting the strategy for the year.

Working in communities with high levels of deprivation the charity provides therapy, including counselling and family support, that is:

- Local and community-based - working where clients live so there are no transport problems for them to address or children to pull out of school.
- Flexible - working around clients and not restricting the number of sessions they can access or penalising them if they do not attend every session. The charity understands the challenges clients face and tries to be as flexible as possible to their needs and situation at any given time.
- Accessible - our charity is local, quick to respond and easy to access. We work with local schools so that children have direct access without relying on others to take them to their appointments. Equally we offer adults appointments in various venues across our localities which are within walking distance for easy access.
- Tailored to the needs of each client - providing support for as long as they require it rather than a fixed number of sessions as offered by mainstream mental health services.
- Preventative - with an aim of breaking the cycle of poor mental health being passed down from one generation to the next.
- Family focused - recognising that parental trauma can have a profound effect on children. This means the charity may sometimes work with a parent(s), child or both to make a difference for the family.
- Free of charge to clients.

There's an inextricable link between poverty and poor mental health. Those living in poverty are at significantly higher risk of experiencing mental health issues and much less likely to be able to access suitable support to address those issues. Many of the adults, children and young people we support have suffered significant traumas, abuse and/or other adversities, often in childhood, which shape their life choices and have a detrimental effect on their mental wellbeing. Without support this can leave people feeling trapped and disadvantaged throughout their life. All too often it becomes a negative cycle that's repeated through the next generation, sentencing their children to a life of difficulties and lost opportunities.

We work in areas of Chester that fall within the bottom 10% of the government produced Index of Multiple Deprivation. The current global cost of living crisis has heaped further pressure on families and intensified matters for those already living in poverty and struggling with their mental health.

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Those who are most in need of help often find themselves unable to access suitable and timely support due to there being too many barriers put in their way. These include restricted referral routes, high thresholds for access, extremely long wait times to be seen, inflexible session times, lack of childcare, costs of transport and an overall lack of trust in statutory services. The clients Platform for Life works with often feel invisible and forgotten in society and the difficulties they have accessing help to address mental health issues only serves to reinforce this.

Platform for Life exists to fill this gap. We work to remove the barriers and improve access to mental health support for those who would otherwise go un-helped. We support those who cannot afford to pay for private therapy when mainstream services are unavailable or difficult to access. We also offer practical support alongside our counselling services. In addition, we offer longer-term support to help clients to achieve long term healing rather than just short-term symptom reduction. Our vision is to stop the cycle of poor mental health prevalent in disadvantaged communities, preventing it being passed from one generation to the next.

Demand for the charity's service continues to be strong. From April 2019 – March 2020 we received 169 referrals and provided 1,375 sessions. Five years later, from April 2024 – March 2025, we received 244 referrals and provided 4,411 sessions, representing an increase in referrals of 44% and an increase in sessions of 220%. In recent years, our referrals have become increasingly complex. There are a variety of reasons for the increase in referrals which include higher thresholds for other services, and increased pressures on NHS Mental Health Services resulting in longer waiting times or being discharged after fewer sessions. The impact of this is that we are seeing more complex cases, which would historically have gone to NHS Mental Health Services. Increasingly our referrals may include neurodiversity, those with undiagnosed ADHD/ASD, an increase in SEND needs and domestic abuse further exacerbated by cost of living pressures. These complexities are reflected in the increase of sessions required and provided. There is an acute shortage of suitable mental health services available to people, particularly those on low incomes who cannot afford to pay for private therapy and a recognised “mental health crisis” within our schools.

Without Platform for Life many in the highest need areas of Chester would go without much needed support. Platform for Life doesn't restrict the number of sessions a client can access (many services restrict access to 6-8 sessions) and, due to the increased levels of complexity that clients are presenting with, many require a much longer therapeutic intervention to feel well again. Despite the charity increasing the number of counselling sessions it offered over the year by 28% to 4,096 (excluding family support sessions), the level of client complexity has undoubtedly impacted on wait times, which rose to an average of 15 weeks.

39% of all referrals received in the financial year were self-referrals for adults and young people and parent referrals for a child and young person. Other key referral routes included schools (29%), primary care (13%) and local authority (including Social Services) (8%).

A key tenet of Platform for Life's service is accessibility, and the growth of self and parent referrals is a testament to this approach. At a time when NHS services are under severe strain and getting a GP appointment can be challenging, providing alternate referral routes including via self-referral, helps to ensure clients can access the help they need when they need it.

Being based in the heart of the communities we serve has helped us forge a relationship of trust with clients. We work hard to ensure every client who accesses our service feels visible, valued and cared for and we always look for additional ways in which we can meet their individual needs.

“Absolutely would recommend this service to anybody. Feeling so much more confident and mentally healthier and happier.” Adult client

“This helped me be a better version of myself & to see myself in a better way.” Young Person

“I have enjoyed coming here and all my worries have been solved” Child

Our Team

We have a team of highly qualified counsellors, art and play therapists with experience of working successfully with clients with multiple challenges. Most of our clients have suffered significant traumas, abuse and other adversities, so we believe it is important that therapists have the appropriate level of qualifications and experience to work with this level of complexity. Our team is managed by a Clinical Director with over 25 years' experience and a deep understanding of our client needs.

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We provide placement opportunities for a small number (usually 2) of students at any one time. Students are closely supervised by either the Clinical Director or Counselling Lead, and their client load is assessed as appropriate to their level of experience. This is critical for both client and student. We follow British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) guidelines on managing placements to ensure our students have an excellent training experience which is safe, conducted ethically and focuses on sound practice without using students as an additional resource that replaces established professional roles.

As well as offering clients access to therapeutic services, we also provide practical support through our Family Support Worker. Their role is to help reduce some of the other stressors our clients face and ensure they can effectively engage with therapy. They work with clients on a 1-2-1 basis to help them access support to address practical needs and, where necessary, act as an advocate on their behalf. They also facilitate warm introductions for clients who sometimes lack the confidence to contact local agencies independently.

In the last year, our Family Support Worker has helped 47 clients and offered 315 support sessions. Their support has included introducing clients to local domestic abuse support groups and recovery programmes, helping clients attend social groups for the first time, making referrals to other local services, helping clients make hospital appointments and advocating for them in meetings with school and in team around family discussions. Many clients have received help to negotiate their finances and benefit applications, which causes much distress and confusion.

Whilst striving to provide an excellent level of support for all clients, we aim to do the same as an employer. We are an accredited Living Wage Employer and believe in paying our staff fairly for the work they do. We offer our team flexible working options and foster a compassionate approach to leadership with the whole team receiving trauma informed training.

Connections with groups working locally

Our clients often have multiple needs, and we have well established links with several other local charities and agencies that provide complementary services designed to support clients in the local communities where we work. These include local food banks and food community stores, KidsBank which provides clothes, toys and equipment for babies and children, Koala Northwest offering practical family support, Penny Smart debt advice service and Citizen's Advice Community Connectors. More recently we have formed links with Rage Fitness, a local community gym, offering all round health and wellbeing support in our local community. We have developed reciprocal signposting and referral processes, and this ensures clients can receive more holistic support.

We are active members of the Cheshire West Mental Health Alliance and the Children and Young People's Alliance supporting their recent conference and networking events. Both Alliances are facilitated by Cheshire West Voluntary Action. Now with over 120 members, the Alliance provides a forum for networking, knowledge sharing and collaboration amongst members. Through membership of this Alliance, we were awarded a small grant to undertake group work with a small number of clients who met weekly to establish goals for change using art therapy as a medium of expression. We ran three weekly groups for women across Blacon and Lache, each lasting for a period of eight weeks. The creative aspect used art therapy, not an art lesson, so no skill or knowledge of art was needed, just a willingness to have a go. Each week had a theme that helped participants to gain a greater understanding of self, gain confidence and identify goals for the future.

"I would tell anyone to do this group. I didn't really know what to expect, but thinking differently about things, my life, has helped me want to make changes." Adult client

"I have loved all the sessions and felt it was something for me. I've started looking at my home and thinking I want to make this mine, my bedroom, my house. I haven't thought like this in years." Adult client

This year our Family Support Worker has established a weekly drop-in Wellbeing Group which has a healthy membership and means that clients are never more than one week away from accessing mental health support. The drop-in encourages peer to peer support and serves as a valuable resource for people on our counselling waiting list and those who have completed counselling and want to make meaningful connections to reduce social isolation.

"I like having somewhere to socialise every week, have a natter and a brew. I really enjoy the arts and crafts too." Adult client

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"I find it helpful to have the drop-in as a consistent part of my routine. It helps me to engage with other people, I feel connected and accepted. It is somewhere I can be myself with people I can trust, as well as seek support and advice if I need it." Adult client

We also have relationships with specific Local Authority departments such as Social Services, Education Access and Domestic Violence support teams and receive referrals from these, alongside the other well established referral routes from schools, GPs, health visitors, local charities etc. We also engage with specific roles within the Local Authority such as the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) as approximately 44% of clients who accessed our service in 2024 experienced domestic violence.

As well as formal referring relationships to and from local agencies, we have also developed relationships with Sanctuary Housing (local social housing provider), ward councillors, community forums and local groups. They know that they can signpost clients or make referrals on their behalf into our service and alongside direct client input, help inform our understanding of local issues and how we develop our service.

Achievements and performance

Key achievements 2024-25

The following provides a summary of key achievements over the past financial year:

- 318 clients actively engaged with Platform for Life's service. Whilst the number of clients seen did not significantly increase over the previous year, the average number of sessions each client accessed grew to 13 as more clients required a longer intervention because of complexities they presented with.
- Offered 4,096 therapy sessions, an increase of 28% on the previous year.
- Maintained a high client attendance rate of 76%. Given the challenges many clients face, this level of engagement in therapy is extremely positive.
- 47 clients actively worked with Platform for Life's Family Support Worker, who offered 315 Family Support sessions throughout the year.
- Launched a new website that is more user friendly and easy to navigate. Our referral system went online and is accessible via the website so that anyone can easily refer themselves. We will continue to develop the website over the next year to include more resources and to promote our fundraising efforts.
- Strengthened our social media strategy and have an increased presence on several platforms with good local interaction. A local business has responded to our social media appeals for support and has adopted us as their charity of the year. We also were approached by several individuals who went on to run at marathons/similar events or made other offers of fundraising support having seen our appeals.
- Strengthened our Cheshire wide profile by being active members of the local mental health alliance, and the children and young people's mental health alliance.
- Fostered strong relationships with local statutory services through the Starting Well teams (NHS), the Domestic Abuse prevention service (Local Authority), local social work teams and GP/Social Prescribing teams.
- Raised our profile in Chester by being selected to be the Sheriff of Chester's Charity, and we were invited to the Lord Mayor's breakfast for International Women's Day, and the High Sheriff's dinner, both events celebrating our contribution to the work of the city.
- Received a Highly Commended Award from Cheshire Community Foundation for our work with the Reframe project, supporting families surviving domestic abuse.
- Provided a weekly well-being drop in group in Blacon and introduced a second group in Lache which have developed as a popular and valuable community-based resource, consistently well attended and lots of positive engagement.

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- Collaborated with a project called 'Don't tell me to calm down' - Partnership with The Agency – a project giving young people in Lache agency to make a mark on their community, with support and financial investment to create lasting positive change and develop skills. We helped support a Lache Community Project for adult women to explore their anger freely. Over three weekends a pop-up rage room became the focus of anger, expression and learning, followed by a workshop to turn destroyed material from the 'rage' into a mosaic.
- Secured funding to develop a program of work to support teachers and pastoral staff with bereavement, grief and loss. Alongside support for bereaved children, we ran workshops for staff and provided resources and guidance for learning mentors. Individual support for parents and caregivers, who are managing grief within the family, was also made available.
- Collaborated with Koala North West, Capa First Response & Power 2 to form the Thriving Families project, combining expertise and resources to deliver targeted holistic support to families; prioritising families who have a child in the 11-16 age bracket and focusing on child to parent aggression. By fostering early intervention and tailored support our collective goal is to build family resilience, reduce the need for statutory intervention, and empower families to overcome challenges and thrive independently within their communities.
- Organised a variety of events for a Christmas Fundraising Marathon which successfully raised over £8,100.

Impact of the Charity's work

We capture a mix of quantitative and qualitative data to assess the impact of our service on clients at an individual, family and sometimes community level. Changes are individual to each client and, however big or small, we celebrate them all.

We know that positive changes to a person's mental health can have significant benefit for the rest of their family, meaning the impact of our service on people's lives can be further amplified 3-4 times.

Outcomes

We use an online system, Lamplight, to collect and report client outcome data in terms of number of referrals, number of sessions offered, attendance rate, client location etc.

Impacts

We currently use CORE Standardised Assessment Tool to measure risk and wellbeing of adult and young person clients at the beginning, middle and end of therapy. Data suggests that 100% of adults and 93% of young people recorded positive changes in their life by the end of their work with Platform for Life. At the beginning of the year we used the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) for children. This was completed by either a parent/carer or teacher and assesses before, middle and after therapy emotional health needs. We have found this more challenging to capture data from, as parents sometimes fail to return completed forms and pressures in school mean teachers don't have the time to complete their part of the assessment.

To address this issue from September 2024 we introduced a new evidence-based assessment tool, developed by Triangle Consulting Ltd, called 'Outcome Star'. This is a more holistic measurement tool which can empower the client in making changes or adapting to factors in their life. Children complete their 'My Star' themselves which strengthens the child voice in our evaluation process. It is our intention to introduce the 'Outcome Star' tool to adults and young people from mid-2025 and use one assessment tool for all client groups.

In addition, through our end of counselling feedback form, Platform for Life also asks adult and young person clients to rank how they feel and capture changes they have noticed since having therapy. A simplified version of this form which is more pictorial is used with children. The following table provides a selection of feedback received from adults, young people and primary school aged children over the past year:

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Adults	Young People	Children
93% said <i>"I am more positive about my future"</i>	86% said <i>"it was easy to contact Platform for Life"</i>	93% said <i>"the counsellor helped me to understand my situation"</i>
87% recognised some of their relationships had improved since having therapy	100% reported they were able to talk about their thoughts and feelings in the sessions	85% feel more able to cope
97% said <i>"the sessions gave me a greater understanding of myself and my situation"</i>	93% said <i>"the sessions gave me a greater understanding of myself and my situation"</i>	96% noted they feel happier since having counselling
83% noted their health had improved since having therapy	100% said <i>"I am more positive about my future"</i>	86% said <i>"I feel more positive about myself"</i>
97% said <i>"I am more positive about myself"</i>	93% noticed positive changes in their life since having counselling/ play or art therapy	89% said <i>"counselling helped me understand my thoughts and feelings"</i>
100% reported they were able to talk about their thoughts and feelings in the sessions	93% felt more able to cope	93% said <i>"I would tell my friends about counselling if they needed help"</i>

Capturing individual changes

We also share individual client testimonials, feedback and stories which capture their journey, including any changes to how they feel about themselves and what they are now able to do which might previously have been difficult or impossible.

Examples of client feedback

"I believe X has really helped me find myself. Ever since I came here day by day has got better. Thank you, X." Child

"I've noticed myself more outgoing and more fun and talking" Young Person

"When I started coming for therapy I was in a dark place & felt really mentally unwell. Leaving here today, I feel so different. Counselling has really helped me with my feelings around grief. My counsellor helped me work out what I was feeling & how to move forward with my feelings. I feel hopeful about the future." Adult client

Adam's Story

Adam (not his real name), a young parent, was struggling to cope working long hours trying to provide for his family. He felt his family life was falling apart and worried constantly about the volatile relationship with his partner and the impact this was having on their two children. Adam's partner was seeing a Platform for Life counsellor, and his son, who had recently been diagnosed with autism, was seeing one of our creative therapists. Adam felt he had nothing to lose and decided to self-refer for counselling.

Adam was anxious about being able to commit due to his work. We were able to be flexible and work around his rotas and this helped build trust. Adam spoke about the difficulties in his current relationship and lack of certainty in his approach to parenting. As the work progressed Adam shared how he had suffered abuse in his childhood and never had a positive role model to learn from. The only certainty was that he knew what type of parent he didn't want to be.

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Adam was a teenager when his son was born twelve years ago. He began to realise he'd not been able to acknowledge and grieve the loss of his childhood or the loss of a 'good parent.' Adam's traumatic childhood had both an emotional and physical effect on him. By working through his feelings and bodily responses, he could understand his nervous system and make links to his 'angry responses' and need to disengage at times. The awareness and understanding of how his past related to his present had a calming effect on Adam and consequently a positive effect on his relationship. Adam was able to separate his sense of self from his own abusive parents and with growing confidence began to accept he was a kind, loving and compassionate parent.

***"Thank you, you saved my life."* Feedback from Adam**

Longer term impacts

The way in which Platform for Life works gives clients the time and space they need to process and heal from their traumas and experiences. We know from client feedback that for some, therapy is quite literally lifesaving. It also leads many clients to feel more empowered and able to make specific changes in their life. These include:-

- Strengthening or re-building relationships with family, friends and peers.
- Applying for work for the first time or after an absence.
- Pursuing opportunities to volunteer.
- Having the confidence to seek increased responsibility or promotion at work
- Making lifestyle changes, including taking up exercise and eating more healthily.
- Accessing school or college when this has previously been difficult or not possible at all.
- Making successful transitions from the nurturing environment of primary school to high school where more independence is required.
- Breaking free from abusive and negative relationships.
- Stopping destructive and risky behaviours, including self-harm.
- Pursuing new hobbies and interests.

Our commissioned research project, being undertaken by Dr Emma Price at the University of Chester, is aimed at identifying the wider social impacts of Platform for Life's work, evidencing that the benefits extend beyond the individual service user. The literature review has been completed this year and referrers to Platform for Life contacted to take part in interviews. Some interviews have already been conducted, and we will have a detailed analysis of the research for inclusion in next year's Trustees' Report.

Progress on priorities identified in last year's report

To reflect the speed of change and increased levels of uncertainty, the charity believes it needs to be agile and able to respond quickly to outside events. Rather than set long-term objectives, it was agreed that the charity should identify a series of projects that would enable it to move forward. The projects the charity agreed to focus on in the last financial year were as follows:-

- Growing and diversifying funding sources
- Trauma informed leadership
- Support more pockets of deprivation within our locality
- Sustainably broaden our mental health support
- Raise our profile and be recognised as a centre of excellence for the provision of mental health and wellbeing services
- Work collaboratively with like-minded organisations and individuals
- Increase our volunteering opportunities.

Growing and diversifying funding sources

In line with many other charities, we found the fundraising environment increasingly challenging over the course of the year. Given this background, we believe it represents a solid outcome for the charity to raise a broadly similar level of income (£376,606) compared to the previous year (£386,218). Of particular note, we have been successful over the past year in securing several multi-year funding arrangements (for example, the National Lottery and the Henry Smith Foundation) which provide the charity with much-needed core funding for a number of years in the future.

We had more limited success in terms of diversifying our funding sources. Notable progress in this area included the Christmas fundraising marathon, improving the ability of our website to take donations and continuing to build our relationships with local schools and businesses.

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Trauma informed leadership

Progress has continued in this area with all staff adopting a trauma informed approach with clients and the therapy team has received more specialist training in trauma informed work through their Continuing Professional Development training. Leadership within the charity continues to promote self-care and resilience and this is regularly included in the team agenda.

Support more pockets of deprivation within our locality

We expanded our service into Kingsway and are slowly building our presence within that community. We hold regular individual counselling sessions in a room provided by Kingsway chapel in the centre of this community and in a local High School which serves pupils from the Kingsway catchment area, as well as maintaining an active presence in a local primary school.

We have worked in positive partnership with Bridge Foyer, a service offering accommodation to young people who would otherwise be homeless. This hostel is in a neighbouring ward of Chester and just on the outskirts of Blacon. We were successful in securing funding to provide counselling services at the hostel, which improves access to mental health support for extremely vulnerable young people aged 16 –25 years old.

Sustainably broaden our mental health support

As reported above, the Family Support Worker role has strengthened the range of services we can offer to clients. This year has seen increasing financial challenges for our clients, with the rising cost of living and energy expenses being a dominant source of worry. We have made referrals to foodbanks and KidsBank charity and helped people navigate the benefits system. Helping people manage debt and become financially stable has been an important part of the family support role this year.

A key part of our work has been helping clients who feel isolated and disconnected from their community to connect with others, focusing on empowerment and building self-esteem. This involved referring them to local community groups and our own well-being group. Whilst signposting can be effective, the Family Support Worker understands that supporting people 'through the front door' makes a huge difference as to whether they engage with the support on offer. Many have said, ***'I never would've come without your support,'*** and it's heartwarming to witness first-hand people overcoming barriers that have hindered their wellbeing for years.

Raise our profile and be recognised as a centre of excellence for the provision of mental health and wellbeing services.

Our Theory of Change model demonstrated its effectiveness in identifying that family support was a gap in our provision which we successfully addressed. Applying the model, we identified further aims this year that included developments around group work (specifically targeting women who have low confidence and to support goal setting) and to target adult men's health issues. Our creative well-being groups and the weekly drop-in extended our reach and allowed us to become even more embedded in our local communities. Our model is always evolving through continuous improvement and learning to ensure we adapt to new demands and remain focused on addressing the core problem we have identified and want to solve.

Work collaboratively with like-minded organisations and individuals

The Theory of Change model identified that men's health was an area of challenge for us and we also recognised that there has been a growth of support groups specifically for men moving into our locality. In the last 12 months we have therefore continued to offer individual sessions to our male clients, but also worked alongside other partnerships to support attendance at groups designed specifically for men. In Chester both Mentell and Andy's Man Shed have introduced weekly support groups, and a local Blacon organisation, Rage Fitness, has introduced sessions aimed at supporting physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Rather than introduce our own competing group, we have worked to promote these services with our male clients who would benefit from group support, whilst at the same time continuing to offer individual sessions for as long as needed. We hope to pursue active partnerships with Rage Fitness, and we are considering joint applications for funding to extend our reach further to young people and men in our community.

We continued to provide support for those experiencing or recovering from domestic abuse. This included connecting clients with organisations such as Tomorrow's Women, the Open Access Support Group facilitated by the Domestic Abuse Intervention and Prevention Service and referrals to the Gateway Programme run by Tools4Change CIC.

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Our Thriving Families collaboration with Koala North West, Capa First Response and Power 2 has also strengthened relationships between these like-minded organisations and expanded our work into another neighbouring locality with demonstratable pockets of deprivation, which was another aim outlined above.

Increase our volunteering opportunities

Unlike many counselling charities, Platform for Life does not make extensive use of volunteer therapists as a matter of policy. This is because the client needs are often complex and therapy is demanding and it's important that our therapists have relevant qualifications and experience to manage this.

However, we recognise the importance and value of volunteers across our work force and have successfully recruited and retained four volunteers who work regularly in support of our administrative roles and Family Support work. In addition, we have volunteers who step in to help at fundraising events such as bucket collections in supermarkets and football games as and when needed. We have also been encouraged by several community volunteers who have raised funds on our behalf through various events such as running a marathon or climbing a mountain.

Financial review

The trustees believe that the current financial position is satisfactory, with sufficient funds to continue to deliver the current levels of service.

Over the course of the financial year, net expenditure (£456,381) exceeded net income (£376,606). As a result, this deficit of £79,775 was funded by a reduction in our reserves, which stood at £105,850 at our financial year end. The charity's expenditure grew steadily throughout the first half of the financial year, reflecting increasing demand for our services and our plans to meet this demand. The increasingly difficult fund-raising environment caused a pause in our expansion plans and some consolidation was necessary to ensure our costs are better aligned to the income we expect to receive.

The charity continues to be very conscious of the need to ensure that resources are focused on the provision of services to our clients. In this context, support service costs amounted to 31% of total expenditure (28% last year). Although this is a slight increase, the Board believes Platform for Life compares favourably with similar charities.

During the course of the financial year, we saw a significant increase in the proportion of restricted grants, which amounted to 70% of income (31% in the prior year). This shift is a result of more new grants being restricted in nature and the completion of our multi-year funding grant with Westminster Foundation, which provided unrestricted funds. Of the remaining sources of funds, 19% of our income came from unrestricted grants and donations, 10% derived from the provision of counselling services and 1% was income from investments. As noted earlier in the report, we have been successful in securing a number of multi-year funding arrangements which provide a level of financial security for future years.

A number of the restricted grants include provisions for the coverage of core costs, which is very beneficial to the charity. The following table provides a summary of the restricted grants which the charity benefited from during the course of the financial year:

Name of Funder	Brief Description of the Objectives of the Award
Cheshire Community Foundation - Bridge Foyer project	Supporting the charity to deliver multiple therapy sessions to young people resident at the Cheshire West & Chester Bridge Foyer accommodation centre
The Pixel Fund	This grant was complete as at 31 March 2025 and was used to provide counselling for children and young people struggling to attend school
Sanctuary Housing	Supporting the charity to deliver therapy sessions to clients based in Lache. This grant was complete as at the 31 March 2025
Cheshire Community Foundation - Reframe Project	As part of a wider project, known as "Reframe", to support local women and children affected by domestic violence. Includes a contribution towards core costs

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Steve Morgan Foundation	A multi-year award funding the activities of the Family Support Worker, who provides practical support to families with mental health challenges. This award includes a client fund to support activities such as travel to dentist appointments, etc
Nationwide Community Grant	This grant was complete as at 31 March 2025 and was used to provide counselling and support to women and children affected by domestic violence, with some contribution to the charity's core costs
Grocers Hall Charity	This grant was complete as at 31 March 2025 and was used to provide counselling for young people at risk of homelessness
Clarion Futures	Provides funding for part of the client coordinator/volunteer manager role, which ensures the efficient management of client referrals and the coordination of volunteer activity. This grant was complete as at 31 March 2025
Global's Make Some Noise	A multi-year award providing funding towards the costs of the therapy team, including a contribution to the charity's core costs
Cheshire West Mental Health Alliance Funding	This grant was complete as at 31 March 2025 and was used to run a programme of community-based wellbeing and creative expression groups for women
National Lottery - Reaching Communities Fund	A multi-year award providing funding towards the costs of the therapy team, including a contribution to the charity's core costs
National Lottery - Awards for All Fund	As part of the Reframe Domestic Violence project, providing individual one-to-one therapy support together with a number of group sessions and a contribution to wider operational and governance costs
Earl of Chester Fund	Supporting the delivery of a bereavement project to a number of local primary schools, including a contribution to the charity's core costs
Avenue Services	Supporting the delivery of counselling services to a number of schools in the Blacon area
Henry Smith Foundation	A multi-year award providing funding towards core costs incurred by the charity
James Tudor Foundation	Supporting the charity to deliver therapy sessions to school aged children, often in partnership with local schools
Cheshire Community Foundation - Thriving Families project	Working in partnership with Koala North-West, Capa First Response and Power 2, provides funding to deliver targeted holistic support to young people and their families.

The amount of income awarded but not yet recognised is £617,817, a significant increase on the position last year (see note 19).

The operation of our reserves policy has been unchanged over the year. It continues to require that our free reserves balance should be sufficient to undertake an orderly wind-up of the charity over a six-month period. This policy is a prudent approach and is designed to allow us to safely finish therapy without damaging our clients' mental health. We ended the year with free reserves of 90% of the estimated amount required to undertake an orderly wind-up over a six-month period however, with the new multi-year funding arrangements, the amounts of income received can be "lumpy" from quarter to quarter and significant income was received in the following quarter April to June 2025.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The majority of our financial assets comprise bank deposits. We have maintained a diversified cash position across a number of financial institutions in order to ensure our funds enjoy a better level of protection from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. We seek to earn a competitive amount of investment income, whilst still maintaining a very prudent approach to investments.

Our key financial objective for the year ahead reflects the challenging environment which we are operating in. In this context, we seek a modest level of growth and look to diversify our income and funding sources. This is especially the case given the overall environment for foundations and trusts, which is more competitive than ever.

Funding sources

The charity is very grateful to its principal grant funders:

Avenue Services

Cheshire Community Foundation

Cheshire West and Chester Members Awards Scheme

Cheshire West Mental Health Alliance Funding

Clarion Futures

Earl of Chester Fund

Global's Make Some Noise

Grocers Hall

JD Foundation

James Tudor Foundation

National Lottery - Awards for All Fund and Reaching Communities Fund

Nationwide Community Grant

Sanctuary Housing

Sir Donald and Lady Edna Wilson Charitable Trust

Steve Morgan Foundation

The Fitton Trust

The Henry Smith Foundation

The Pixel Fund

Trusthouse Foundation

Westminster Foundation

We are also very appreciative of donations/ fundraising support provided by Back Quarter Art Collective, Blacon Butterflies, Bristol Myers Squibb, Cavern of the Curious Gnome, Chester BID, Chester Business Club, Chester City Club, Chester Music Society, Chester University Pole Fitness Team, Chester Races, Excel TM Group, Mitchell Group, PDA Law, Portal Golf Club, PSR Solicitors, Sykes Holiday cottages, St Mary's Lodge (Masonic Hall), TUV Rheinland, Upton Drama Society and The Ship Inn. Thanks to the individual fundraisers who also participated in various events to raise funds to support our work and to the various organisations who donated prizes to support our fundraising activity.

Plans for future periods

Given the current challenging funding environment and the continued cost of living crisis which is significantly impacting the charity sector, as well as the beneficiaries we support, the challenge to remain sustainable sits at the forefront of our focus and priorities for the future. As with last year we will continue to focus on short to medium term priorities, as opposed to long-term objectives, to ensure we can react to change and increase our sustainability. We plan to further strengthen our organisation and our offer, in preparation for safe and sustainable longer-term growth.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The priorities for the charity for this year will therefore be:-

- NHS/Local Authority relationships being fostered with a view to ongoing partnership.
- Working relationships and partnerships with other charities to offer comprehensive packages/solutions to clients across a continuum of support.
- To continue to grow and diversify our income and funding sources through the development of increased supporter and corporate/charity of the year partnerships, growing our individual fundraising strategies, and growing connections with major donors.
- To continue to apply our Theory of Change model to identify areas of development and to support specific client needs. It is our intention to constantly test our theory of change model and to continue to adapt it to ensure it is effective for our current business needs.
- To grow our geographical base to support more pockets of deprivation within the Chester region and its borders.
- To sustainably broaden our offer of mental health support in alignment with our priority focus on early intervention to also include preventative measures support in our offer.
- The focus on the impact of poor parental mental ill health will be an important priority and we will work to continue to engage clients in difficult to reach areas such as youth homelessness.
- To work collaboratively with like-minded organisations and individuals to strengthen our service, network and growth.
- To increase our Volunteering opportunities for interested parties including supporting organisations' employees and possible progression pathways for clients.
- To run another residential weekend for families in partnership with the Youth Hostel Association.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee. The governing document is a memorandum and articles of association dated 14 July 2017.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr G Hartley	
Mr P Rossiter	(Resigned 30 June 2025)
Ms EL Price	
Ms C Jones	
Mrs S Taylor	
Ms AV Gill	
Mr A Kerr	
Mrs JM Hinnigan	
Ms C Diggory	(Resigned 8 May 2024)
Ms P Massey	(Resigned 8 May 2024)
Mr A Sieber	
Mr I Minshall	(Appointed 10 July 2024)
Mrs K Ferdenzi	(Appointed 10 July 2024)
Ms CL George	(Appointed 20 May 2025)

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Recruitment of new charity trustees takes place following trustee resignations or the identification of trustee skills gaps, by the Board, based on the charity trustee skills audit. New trustees are identified via recommendation or targeted advertising. Following an initial meeting with the Chair and CEO, if deemed suitable, the CV of the prospective trustee is circulated to the remaining trustees for their vote of approval. Following approval, the new trustee undergoes a DBS check and then undertakes a structured programme of induction and training, including completion of all documentation required by the Charity Commission.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Board is effective and supportive of the staff and has a good mix of skills and experience in local government, legal, business, risk management, education, counselling and charity management. The Board meets quarterly for routine business with the senior management in attendance and other members of staff invited to attend as appropriate. Ad hoc meetings of the Board may be called to address specific matters. The management of the clinical discipline, together with day-to-day management of clients and associated case management matters, is undertaken by Clinical Director. Following the resignation of Philippa Davies, CEO, the Charity took the opportunity to restructure and from January 2025 Debbie Thomas, Operations Director, and Shelagh Hatton, Clinical Director, took over the CEO role jointly on an interim basis.

Further oversight is provided by three subcommittees chaired and led by trustees, covering Finance and Risk, HR and Governance and Professional Standards. These meet 4 times per year with invitees from the management team and report into each Board meeting. All policies are reviewed by the relevant Committees and formally approved by the Board.

None of our Trustees are related or married to each other and we have in place a fixed term limit policy which means Trustees can serve for a maximum of 9 years. This equates to 3 terms of 3 years with Trustees needing to resign and be reappointed by the Board at the end of each term.

Advisors

We are grateful to our Patron David Briggs who provides input and support on a regular basis. The charity has benefitted from skills and donors in a number of different areas facilitated by Cheshire Connect. Support and training has also been provided by Cheshire West Voluntary action for which the charity is very grateful.

Safeguarding

The charity has a Safeguarding Policy which is reviewed annually and updated whenever opportunities for improvements are identified. The policy requires that all the charity's personnel have valid DBS certificates and appropriate safeguarding training. The Clinical Director and Chair of the Board all have level 3 safeguarding certificates.

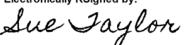
Audit

The Company is exempt from audit under the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011 (accounts and audit) order 2015 as the gross income is less than £1 million. Since our gross income for the year is between £25,000 and £1,000,000 we have engaged an independent examiner of "appropriate skill or ability" to verify our accounts.

Small companies exemption

The annual report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities (Charities SORP) and the Companies Act 2006 as applicable for a small charitable company.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Electronically RSigned by:

ENX 67492365-8910-CACC-1279-EDFC

Mrs S Taylor
Chair/Director

Date: 19 August 2025

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF PLATFORM FOR LIFE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Platform for Life (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the Companies Act 2006.
- 2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the financial statements give a true and fair view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- 4 the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Electronically RSigned by:

ENV 67492365-8910-CACC-1279-EDFC

Mr R Smith FCA

c/o UHY Hacker Young
4th Floor Merchants House
Crook Street
Chester
CH1 2BE
Date: 19 August 2025

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

		Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
	Notes						
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	69,863	266,337	336,200	226,859	119,936	346,795
Charitable activities	4	36,200	-	36,200	35,355	-	35,355
Investments	5	4,206	-	4,206	4,068	-	4,068
Total income		110,269	266,337	376,606	266,282	119,936	386,218
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	6	213,961	242,420	456,381	308,959	63,087	372,046
Total expenditure		213,961	242,420	456,381	308,959	63,087	372,046
Net income/(expenditure) and movement in funds		(103,692)	23,917	(79,775)	(42,677)	56,849	14,172
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		115,776	69,849	185,625	158,453	13,000	171,453
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		12,084	93,766	105,850	115,776	69,849	185,625

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12		756		1,205
Current assets					
Debtors	13	1,158		17,408	
Cash at bank and in hand		116,626		172,679	
		117,784		190,087	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(12,690)		(5,667)	
Net current assets			105,094		184,420
Total assets less current liabilities			105,850		185,625
Net assets			105,850		185,625
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	16	93,766		69,849	
Unrestricted funds		12,084		115,776	
		105,850		185,625	

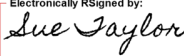
The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 19 August 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Electronically RSigned by:

ENV 67492365-8910-CACC-1279-EDFC

Mrs S Taylor
Chair/Director

Company registration number 10729008 (England and Wales)

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Platform for Life is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Unit 8 Parade Enterprise Centre, The Parade, Blacon, Chester, CH1 5HN.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

In accordance with accounting standards, the economic contribution of general volunteers is not included in the accounts.

1.5 Expenditure

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

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and equipment	20% straight line
Computers	33% straight line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Donations and gifts	25,526	-	25,526	35,139	-	35,139
Grants	34,250	266,337	300,587	160,352	119,936	280,288
Fundraising	10,087	-	10,087	31,368	-	31,368
	<u>69,863</u>	<u>266,337</u>	<u>336,200</u>	<u>226,859</u>	<u>119,936</u>	<u>346,795</u>

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Charitable activities		
Counselling services	36,200	35,355

5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Other income	4,206	4,068

6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Counselling 2025 £	Counselling 2024 £
Direct costs		
Staff costs	258,204	210,129
Other counselling costs	58,904	56,401
	317,108	266,530
Share of support and governance costs (see note 7)		
Support	137,491	103,896
Governance	1,782	1,620
	456,381	372,046
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	213,961	308,959
Restricted funds	242,420	63,087
	456,381	372,046

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

7 Support costs allocated to activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs	105,921	79,195
Depreciation	678	601
Admin	24,547	19,502
Other staff costs	1,977	849
Rent	1,379	1,454
Insurance	2,073	1,765
Telecommunications	834	470
Charges	82	60
Governance costs	1,782	1,620
	<u>139,273</u>	<u>105,516</u>
Analysed between:		
Counselling	<u>139,273</u>	<u>105,516</u>

8 Net movement in funds

	2025 £	2024 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the independent examination of the charity's financial statements	1,782	1,620
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	<u>678</u>	<u>601</u>

9 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
	<u>13</u>	<u>11</u>
Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	332,898	265,499
Social security costs	24,893	18,664
Other pension costs	<u>6,334</u>	<u>5,161</u>
	<u>364,125</u>	<u>289,324</u>

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

10 Employees

(Continued)

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Aggregate compensation	102,298	94,237

Aggregate compensation includes annual gross salary, employer's national insurance contributions and employer's pension contributions.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and equipment £	Computers £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	1,144	1,806	2,950
Additions	-	229	229
At 31 March 2025	1,144	2,035	3,179
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 April 2024	1,144	601	1,745
Depreciation charged in the year	-	678	678
At 31 March 2025	1,144	1,279	2,423
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2025	-	756	756
At 31 March 2024	-	1,205	1,205

13 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	-	6,435
Prepayments and accrued income	1,158	10,973
	1,158	17,408

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Other taxation and social security	5,670	457
Other creditors	71	-
Accruals and deferred income	6,949	5,210
	<u>12,690</u>	<u>5,667</u>

15 Retirement benefit schemes

	2025 £	2024 £
Defined contribution schemes		
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	<u>6,334</u>	<u>5,161</u>

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

16 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	At 31 March 2025 £
Cheshire Community Foundation Bridge Foyer Project	7,286	10,367	(8,843)	8,810
The Pixel Fund	3,297	-	(3,297)	-
Sanctuary Housing	2,500	2,500	(5,000)	-
Cheshire Community Foundation Reframe Project	4,263	15,440	(15,960)	3,743
Steve Morgan Foundation	2,502	31,093	(16,685)	16,910
Nationwide Community Grant	36,696	-	(36,696)	-
Grocers Hall Charity	3,811	-	(3,811)	-
Clarion Futures	9,494	-	(9,494)	-
Global's Make Some Noise	-	29,000	(21,400)	7,600
Cheshire West Mental Health Alliance Funding	-	12,390	(12,390)	-
National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund	-	94,367	(75,774)	18,593
National Lottery Awards for All Fund	-	19,780	(11,844)	7,936
Earl of Chester Fund	-	7,500	(3,660)	3,840
Avenue Services	-	8,000	(3,400)	4,600
Henry Smith Foundation	-	23,400	(10,080)	13,320
James Tudor Foundation	-	10,000	(2,490)	7,510
Cheshire Community Foundation Thriving Families Project	-	2,500	(1,596)	904
	<u>69,849</u>	<u>266,337</u>	<u>(242,420)</u>	<u>93,766</u>

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

16 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	At 31 March 2024 £
Westminster Foundation	5,500	-	(5,500)	-
Severn Trent	7,500	3,000	(10,500)	-
Cheshire Community Foundation - Domestic Violence Project	-	14,750	(10,487)	4,263
The Pixel Fund	-	8,100	(4,803)	3,297
Sanctuary Housing	-	5,000	(2,500)	2,500
Steve Morgan Foundation	-	18,137	(15,635)	2,502
Nationwide Community Grant	-	46,560	(9,864)	36,696
Cheshire Community Foundation - Bridge Foyer Project	-	9,895	(2,609)	7,286
Grocers Hall Charity	-	5,000	(1,189)	3,811
Clarion Futures	-	9,494	-	9,494
	<u>13,000</u>	<u>119,936</u>	<u>(63,087)</u>	<u>69,849</u>

Details of the purpose of each restricted fund can be found in the trustees' annual report.

17 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	At 31 March 2025 £
General funds	<u>115,776</u>	<u>110,269</u>	<u>(213,961)</u>	<u>12,084</u>
Previous year:	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	At 31 March 2024 £
General funds	<u>158,453</u>	<u>266,282</u>	<u>(308,959)</u>	<u>115,776</u>

PLATFORM FOR LIFE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £
At 31 March 2025:			
Tangible assets	756	-	756
Current assets/(liabilities)	11,328	93,766	105,094
	<u>12,084</u>	<u>93,766</u>	<u>105,850</u>
	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
At 31 March 2024:			
Tangible assets	1,205	-	1,205
Current assets/(liabilities)	114,571	69,849	184,420
	<u>115,776</u>	<u>69,849</u>	<u>185,625</u>

19 Contingent assets

The charity has been awarded several multi-year grants which are only recognised in annual accounts in subsequent periods. Each year's grant payment is contingent on the charity meeting specific conditions, such as delivery of agreed annual outcomes. The total amount of income awarded but not yet recognised as at 31 March 2025 is £617,817 from the following funders:

Steve Morgan Foundation
Trusthouse Foundation
National Lottery
Global's Make Some Noise
Henry Smith Foundation
Cheshire Community Foundation

20 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024 - none).