

East Sussex Recovery Alliance

Registered charity number 1179560

Financial Statements

for the period

1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025

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**Hastings Voluntary Action
Jackson Hall
Portland Place
Hastings
East Sussex
TN34 1QN**

East Sussex Recovery Alliance
Organisational Information
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Full name: East Sussex Recovery Alliance

Other names by which the charity is known: ESRA

Registered charity number: 1179560

Principal address: c/o Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 1QN

Trustees: Danielle Mitchell
Gareth Trevitt - Resigned December 2024
Jackie Travis - Resigned December 2024
Martin Connolly
Charlie Dix
Simon Hubbard - Appointed September 2024

Senior Management Team

Jacqui Skilton - Chief Executive
Alison Bissett - Hub Manager - Hastings - Made Redundant December 2024

Bankers HSBC, 4 Robertson Street, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 1HW

Independent examiner

Laura Dawson, Finance Manager of Hastings Voluntary Action, Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings, TN34 1QN.

Governance and management

Charitable Incorporated Organisation - Association Registered 15th August 2018

Charitable Objects

To Promote and protect the physical and mental health of people in recovery or actively seeking recovery from drug and/or alcohol misuse and their families/carers in particular but not exclusively by the provision of counselling, peer led groups, support and activities.

East Sussex Recovery Alliance

for the year ended 31 March 2025
Trustee's Annual Report

Key Achievements in 2024 - 2025

This year has been marked by significant progress and resilience as ESRA adapted to change, deepened client engagement, and strengthened its foundations for the future. Below is a summary of our key achievements over the past 12 months:

1. Increased Access to Recovery Support

- Launched a new weekly drop-in service, offering accessible, informal support to individuals at all stages of recovery.
- Designed and distributed engagement materials with QR codes, enabling easier connection with hard-to-reach individuals and resulting in a measurable increase in first-time contacts.
- Expanded our digital presence by continuing targeted Facebook and Instagram outreach, including a new weekly "drop-in" feature on Wednesdays to improve visibility and encourage community engagement.

2. Demonstrating Impact Through Client Feedback

To evaluate the impact of our work and re-engage following our move from the hub, we conducted a comprehensive six-month review.

A bespoke questionnaire was sent to all active clients (60, excluding 15 new referrals not yet engaged). Each client was contacted personally by a member of staff, either by phone or face-to-face.

We received 40 responses, representing 66% of active clients, most of whom had engaged regularly over the period.

Key Findings:

- 95% rated the support they received from ESRA 9 or 10.
- 91% stated that ESRA was essential or very important to maintaining their recovery
- Over 90% described ESRA as a "lifeline" and "safe space", highlighting the continued value of our trauma-informed, peer-led model.

3. Organisational Adaptation and Resilience

- Responded swiftly to the loss of our hub space by establishing a new outreach model, ensuring no disruption to client delivery.
- Maintained open communication with staff, clients, and partners regarding changes to premises and funding, reinforcing our commitment to transparency and stability.

East Sussex Recovery Alliance end of year Trustee report 2024 - 2025 Cont'd

4. Strengthening Governance and Sustainability

- Launched a trustee recruitment campaign to diversify skills and lived experience on our board, strengthening governance and long-term planning.
- Appointed a new chair.
- Engaged with potential funders, including the lottery, the Lloyds Bank Foundation, People's Postcode Trust, and Hastings Lions among others.
- Closely monitored developments in the new National Lottery Strategy to align future funding applications.

5. Improving Systems and Demonstrating Outcomes

Following on from a review of how we demonstrate impact and communicate the value of our work.

- We have developed some new monitoring tools, including the ESRA journey, which is completed at induction, 3, 6, 9 and 12 months.
- We have developed an exit questionnaire.
- Renewed how we record impact from our SMART courses.

6. Strengthening Communications

- Produced and distributed regular newsletters to keep clients, stakeholders, and partners informed and engaged.
- Continued promotional efforts through social media, posters, and peer-led outreach to maintain ESRA's presence and accessibility in the local recovery landscape.

Challenges

While ESRA has achieved a great deal this year, we have also faced significant challenges that have tested our resilience and highlighted areas requiring ongoing attention and strategic action.

1. Moving out of the hub

We had planned to leave our main hub in March 2025, but the move was brought forward to December 2024. This required us to quickly adjust to a new way of working. We have now secured a new office and two spaces for running activities. This change has not affected the number of people we support, and we're still offering a welcoming and accessible place for clients. People continue to feel supported, and our staff team has adapted well to the transition.

East Sussex Recovery Alliance end of year Trustee report 2024 - 2025 Cont'd

2. Financial Uncertainty and Funding Gaps

The end of key funding from the National Lottery Community Fund left a gap in our core operational budget, although we had an extension so can plan how we reapply.

Despite ongoing applications to trusts and foundations securing long-term, unrestricted funding remains a significant challenge.

Staff time and resources continue to be diverted toward grant writing and short-term fundraising.

3. Staff and Volunteer Capacity

Our small core team continues to carry a high workload, including frontline delivery, administration, impact tracking, and fundraising.

While the lived experience of our staff is a strength, and sustainability is an ongoing concern without increased staffing or capacity-building support.

4. Digital Exclusion and Communication Barriers

While social media engagement has grown, many of our clients remain digitally excluded or face challenges with accessing online updates, particularly around service changes or opportunities.

Reaching these individuals has required intensive, one-to-one communication, which is effective but resource heavy.

5. Governance Development

With changes to the trustee board and the need to strengthen strategic oversight, trustee recruitment has been a priority.

These challenges have reinforced the importance of stable funding, and investment in staff wellbeing and infrastructure. Despite the pressures, ESRA continues to adapt and advocate for those in recovery across Hastings and beyond.

Staff team

The ESRA staff team as of 31.03.25:

Chief Officer – Jacqui Skilton. The Chief Officer is responsible for oversight and planning of all of the day-to-day running of the organisation under the Board of Trustees. Jacqui has a background in management in community settings and working with vulnerable people.

Hastings Staff team:

- Senior support Worker
- Community Engagement and Group Coordinator
- Community Engagement worker

East Sussex Recovery Alliance end of year Trustee report 2024 - 2025 Cont'd

Board of Trustees

Governance responsibility for ESRA lies with the Board of Trustees. Some of these have supported ESRA for many years and bring a wealth of experience to the organisation. They are:

- **Simon Hubbard** – Chair
- **Danielle Mitchell** - Secretary - expertise in the charity sector
- **Martin Connolly** – Treasurer - expertise in finance
- **Charlie Dix** – expertise in project management

The Board of Trustees meets every twelve weeks and also attend some ESRA events. We also hold strategy and planning sessions periodically.

There is a process of trustee induction and training. Additionally, potential and new Trustees are invited and encouraged to spend time at the project getting to know the staff and services.

New Trustees are provided with information and support regarding the following areas:

- Their role and responsibilities as Trustees.
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity, including the Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- The complex funding of ESRA and the current financial position, as set out in the latest published accounts.
- Future business plans and objectives of ESRA.
- We also hold regular strategy and planning sessions to ensure that ESRA is aligned to its charitable aims, with a clear plan for the future.

Our strategic priorities for next year

- To reach a larger and more diverse number of those needing help with addiction.
- To create new services that address gaps in support to those facing addiction.
- To expand and improve education and training to health professionals, community group and local businesses.
- To support the development of an Addiction Partnership locally to ensure continuous improvement and integration of services.
- To improve our governance and good practice.

Our services

ESRA provides a range of recovery-focused, peer-led services for individuals affected by addiction and related challenges in Hastings and the surrounding area. Our support is free, confidential, and centred on creating a safe, inclusive community that promotes long-term recovery.

- Peer-Led Group Work.
- Structured 10-week recovery programs with a focus on self-awareness, motivation, and life planning.
- Regular SMART Recovery groups facilitated by trained staff and volunteers with lived experience.
- Specialist group sessions covering wellbeing, relapse prevention, and next steps planning.

Weekly Drop-In Service

East Sussex Recovery Alliance end of year Trustee report 2024 - 2025 Cont'd

One-to-One Support

- Practical and emotional support delivered by trained staff and volunteers.
- Goal setting, confidence building, and support with housing, benefits, or referrals.

Recovery Planning and Progress Tracking

- At induction clients complete an initial ESRA journey that is reviewed at 3, 6, 9, and 12 months to assess progress in their recovery journey.
- Use of tailored tools and a bespoke database to record and reflect individual journeys.

Community Building and Peer Connection

- A strong sense of community and mutual support is central to ESRA's model.
- Opportunities for peer mentoring, volunteering, and co-producing services with clients.

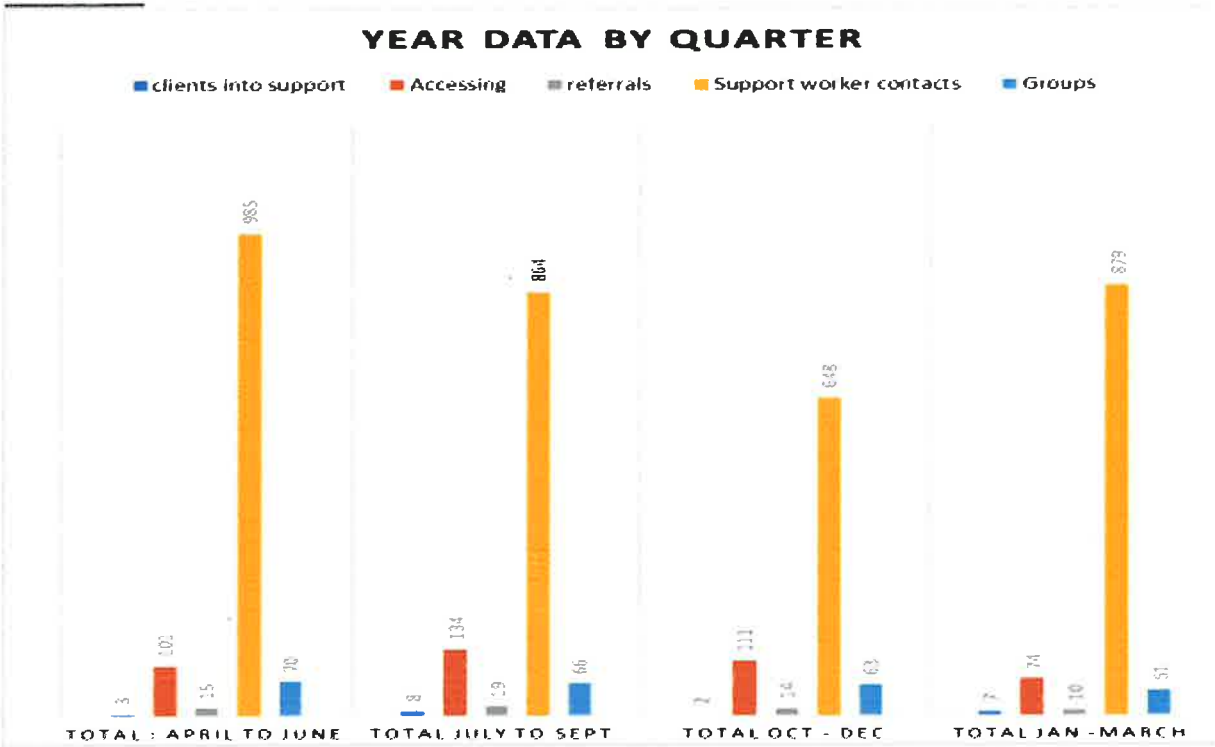
Outreach and Engagement

- Targeted outreach using posters, flyers, and QR code engagement cards to reach harder-to-reach individuals.
- Active presence on Facebook and Instagram, including weekly "drop-in" digital features.

Signposting and Partnership Working

- Close working relationships with local services including mental health teams, housing providers, and social care.
- Help with accessing external treatment, detox, or specialist recovery programmes where needed.
- All services are underpinned by ESRA's trauma-informed, person-centred approach, with a focus on dignity, empowerment, and recovery in the community. A safe and supportive space (Hastings Recovery Hub) that is welcoming, widely known, well positioned and connected to attract the people we are trying to reach.
- From January 2025 we changed our delivery model and deliver from Hastings community information hub.

Impact



Although we made some big changes to how we run our services in December, the number of people we are in contact with has not dropped significantly – even though we are offering fewer group sessions, which explains the lower attendance numbers. We had fewer referrals during the transition, but the ones we have received were well-suited for ESRA.

East Sussex Recovery Alliance

for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Financial review

TREASURER'S REPORT

Funding remains one of our biggest challenges and the management team continue to focus on this as one of their key tasks.

Funding Received:

Isabel Blackman	£5,000
Garfield Weston	£15,000
Hastings Roundtable	£750
Sussex Community Foundation	£8,179
Coop	£10,000
Arnold Clarke Community Fund	£1,000
Chalk Cliff Trust	£5,000
Lottery	£124,870
Donations & Legacies	£2,302
Interest	£2,227
Cafe Income	£3,624
Fund Raising Income	£256

Risk management

The Charity maintains a risk register and conducts regular reviews of major and minor risks faced. Systems and procedures have been established to mitigate these and external risks to contract funding have led to regular reviews of the business plan and publicity and fundraising campaigns to help diversify funding sources.

Internal control risks are managed by the implementation of procedures for the authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients, and visitors.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are required by Company Law to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity including a balance sheet and income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees follow best practice and:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departure disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- Prepare the financial statements on the ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy and at any time, the financial position of the Charity, in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.


The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware: There is no relevant financial information of which ESRA's independent examiner is unaware; and the Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant financial information

The Trustees have established that the Charity independent examiner is aware of that information.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed



Date

4/8/25

Signed

Date

East Sussex Recovery Alliance

Receipts & Payments accounts
for the period

1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

	Current Year			Previous Year
	Restricted funds	Unrestricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
<u>Receipts</u>				
Grants	148,049	21,750	169,799	191,606
Bank Interest	-	2,227	2,227	1,763
Café Income	-	3,624	3,624	3,818
Donations & Legacies	-	2,302	2,302	14,698
Fundraising Income	-	256	256	440
Total Receipts	148,049	30,159	178,208	212,325
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Café Cost	1,331	857	2,188	3,924
Other Direct Costs	900	-	900	5,158
Wages	85,387	35,372	120,759	141,787
Social Security	5,558	(1,590)	3,968	5,957
Pensions	2,198	1,729	3,927	4,863
Other Operating Leases	2,092	6,179	8,271	9,829
Insurance	1,601	-	1,601	1,605
Light & Heat	2,624	388	3,012	10,132
Telephone	838	-	838	822
Postage & Stationary	1,016	385	1,401	2,616
Advertising	893	-	893	30
Sundries	1,806	2,644	4,450	(1,481)
Cleaning & Waste Removal	-	2,150	2,150	1,496
Subscriptions	2,759	1,125	3,884	4,193
Staff Travel Expenses	161	222	383	867
Volunteer Travel Expenses	-	116	116	837
Training	1,462	737	2,199	3,366
Computer Consumables	7,653	-	7,653	8,319
Staff Gifts	-	-	-	40
Repairs and Maintenance	1,279	34	1,313	1,355
Bank charges	8	89	97	102
Accountancy & Legal Fees	60	300	360	3,120
Bookkeeping	2,394	-	2,394	2,748
Volunteer Expenses	85	70	155	-
Total Expenditure	122,105	50,807	172,912	211,685
Net surplus/(deficit)	25,944	(20,648)	5,296	640
Balance brought forward	01/04/24	70,173	23,224	93,397
Balance carried forward	31/03/25	96,117	2,576	98,693

East Sussex Recovery Alliance

Statement of Assets & Liabilities

as at

31 March 2025

	Restricted Income £	Unrestricted Income £	Total £	Previous year Total £
Current assets				
Cash at Bank and in hand	97,294	3,218	100,512	96,460
	97,294	3,218	100,512	96,460
Creditors				
Amounts falling due within one year	1,177	642	1,819	3,063
Net Current Assets	96,117	2,576	98,693	93,397
Represented By:				
Accumulated Fund B/F	70,173	23,224	93,397	92,757
Surplus/(Deficit)	25,944	(20,648)	5,296	640
	96,117	2,576	98,693	93,397

Charity Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which comply with the regulations set out in the Charities Act 1993. The trustees have elected to take advantage of the provisions that apply to small charities and have prepared a Receipts and Payments account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

Approved by the Trustees on 4/8/25 and signed on their behalf by

Simon Hubbard

East Sussex Recovery Alliance
Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts are statements that summarise the movement of cash into and out of the charity during the financial year. In this context "cash" includes cash equivalents, for example, bank accounts where cash can be readily withdrawn to pay for debts as they become due.

2 Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no remuneration in this period.

3 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions during the period.

4 Previous period comparison

The previous period's figures are included to enable the reader of the accounts to make comparisons with the previous year.

5 Glossary of terms

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

6 Staffing Levels as of 31.03.2025

Full Time Equivalent	3.5
Volunteers	11

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the East Sussex Recovery Alliance

I report on the accounts of East Sussex Recovery Alliance
for the twelve month period ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on the previous pages.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees & examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act), and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the supporting documentation presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Acthave not been met; or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Laura Dawson
Finance Manager
Hastings Voluntary Action
Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings, TN34 1QN

Dated: 11/08/2025.