

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE ESSEX

A charitable incorporated organisation

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 MARCH 2024

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1180884

Community Legal Centre Essex

A charitable incorporated organisation

Charity number: 1180884

Trustees' Report for the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

The trustees submit their annual report and the financial accounts of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2024.

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the charity are:

1. The relief of financial hardship by the provision of free legal advice and assistance to persons who through lack of means would otherwise be unable to access such services; and
2. The advancement of the education of the public by increasing knowledge and understanding of the law.

The charity funds lawyers to provide expert advice and assistance.

The charity has funded free legal advice to in the areas of family law, employment and housing to people who could not afford a high street lawyer.

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. All our charitable activities focus on the provision of legal advice to those who cannot afford high street prices and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

Achievements and Performance

During the year to 31 March 2024, the charity received funding from the Access to Justice Foundation for 3 months to assist litigants in person at courts throughout Essex. Through this Help Access Legal Support project over 20 family cases involving children were helped to settle disputes or get long term interim orders. Legal advice was also provided in the courts for civil, housing, employment and other cases, which not only helped the litigants but also the court processes involved. The charity has also funded the provision of pro bono advice on a range of legal matters including family law, housing and employment. The advice is provided remotely by telephone, email or Facebook group.

Financial Review

At the end of March 2024, the charity had a surplus for the year of £42,304 (2023: surplus of £18,976). Income for the year included a donation from Central Law Group CIC, which provides reduced fee legal advice to people who can afford some but not all of full price fees charged by high street firms.

The charity's policy is to hold sufficient reserves to cover 3 months expenditure. Reserves at the year-end were £65,480 (2023: £23,176), which will be used to continue the service in 2024-25.

The financial statements

- Have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the financial statements;
- Comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011, and the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK (the "Charities SORP").

The charity was awarded a grant from the Ministry of Justice's Access to Justice Foundation for the Help Access to Legal Support project which supports litigants in person in courts across Essex.

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is a Foundation Charitable Incorporated Organisation, governed by its constitution. Its only voting members are its trustees.

Trustees are selected on the basis of their skills and experience. New trustees are appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the trustees.

The charity works closely with Citizens Advice Chelmsford and with Central Law Group CIC.

Reference and Administrative details

The charity's name: Community Legal Centre Essex.

Registered charity number: 1180884.


Charity's principal address: Burgess Well House, Coval Lane, Chelmsford, CM1 1FW.

Bankers: Unity Trust Bank, Nine Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HB.

Trustees

Trustees serving since April 2023 have been as follows:

	Appointed	Resigned
Mr R C Mynott (Chair)		
Ms E R Eisenberg		March 2024
Ms M Uddin		November 2023
Mr P R A Wilson		
Mr A Thorpe-Apps		
Mr C Todd	November 2023	

Signed 
Date 29 January 2025

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE ESSEX

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Community Legal Centre Essex

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Community Legal Centre Essex ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

An independent examination does not involve gathering all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently does not cover all the matters that an auditor considers in giving their opinion on the financial statements. The planning and conduct of an audit goes beyond the limited assurance that an independent examination can provide. Consequently I express no opinion as to whether the financial statements present a 'true and fair' view and my report is limited to those specific matters set out in the independent examiner's statement.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

E Oddie

Elaine Oddie OBE MA FCA FCCA

Date: 29 January 2025

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE ESSEX
Financial Statements year ended 31 March 2024

Statement of Financial Activities for year to 31 March 2024

	2024		2024		2023
	£	£	£	£	
Incoming resources (Note 3)					
Income from:					
Donations and legacies		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		88,200	0	88,200	34,523
Charitable activities					
Grants		0	27,461	27,461	54,921
Other trading activities		8,354	0	8,354	4,741
Total		96,554	27,461	124,015	94,185
Resources expended (Note 4)					
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities		54,250	27,461	81,711	75,209
Total		54,250	27,461	81,711	75,209
Net movement in funds		42,304	0	42,304	18,976
Total funds brought forward		23,176	0	23,176	4,200
Total funds carried forward		65,480	0	65,480	23,176

Balance Sheet		2024	2023
Current assets		£	£
Debtors (Note 7)		90,370	7,531
Cash at bank and in hand (Note 9)		15,810	26,421
Total current assets		106,180	33,952
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 8)		-40,700	-10,776
Net current assets		65,480	23,176
Total net assets		65,480	23,176
Funds of the Charity (Note 10)			
Unrestricted funds		25,480	23,176
Designated funds		40,000	0
Restricted Funds		0	0
Total funds		65,480	23,176

Signed by a trustee on behalf of all the trustees



29 January 2025

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland FRS102 effective 1 January 2015 - Charities Sorp (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

1.2 Going concern

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

The charity continues to seek donations and grants. It funds free legal advice only when funds are available to do so.

Note 2 Accounting Policies

2.1 Income

Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Grants

In the case of performance related grants, income must only be recognised to the extent that the charity has provided the specified goods or services as entitlement to the grant only occurs when the performance related conditions are met (5.16 FRS 102 SORP).

2.2 Expenditure and Liabilities

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

2.3 Assets

Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE ESSEX
Financial Statements year ended 31 March 2024

Note 3 Analysis of income

		2024	2024
		Unrestricted	Restricted
		£	£
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	88,200	0
Charitable activities:	Grants	0	27,461
Other trading activities:		8,354	0
TOTAL INCOME	Total	<u>96,554</u>	<u>27,461</u>

		2023	2023
		Unrestricted	Restricted
		£	£
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	34,523	0
Charitable activities:	Grants	0	54,921
Other trading activities:		4,741	0
TOTAL INCOME	Total	<u>39,264</u>	<u>54,921</u>

Note 4 Analysis of Expenditure
Expenditure on charitable activities

	2024	2024
	Unrestricted	Restricted
	£	£
Lawyer and admin costs for HALS project	0	18,943
Office and other project costs	0	8,518
Lawyers' fees for pro bono legal advice and assistance	40,000	0
Legal Case management system and reference material	12,678	0
Other office, admin and support costs	1,572	0
Total expenditure on charitable activities	<u>54,250</u>	<u>27,461</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>54,250</u>	<u>27,461</u>

	2023	2023
	Unrestricted	Restricted
	£	£
Bursaries for supported clients	1,310	0
Lawyers and admin costs of HALS project	0	38,150
Lawyers' fees for pro bono legal advice and assistance	8,000	0
Office and other project costs	0	16,771
Legal Case management system and reference material	9,563	0
Other office, admin and support costs	1,415	0
Total expenditure on charitable activities	<u>20,288</u>	<u>54,921</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>20,288</u>	<u>54,921</u>

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE ESSEX
Financial Statements year ended 31 March 2024

Note 5 Details of certain items of expenditure

	2024	2023
	£	£
Independent examiner's fees	<u>730</u>	<u>660</u>

Note 6 Paid Employees

The charity has no paid employees.

Note 7 Debtors and prepayments

	2024	2023
	£	£
Analysis of debtors		
Other debtors	90,370	7,531
Total	<u>90,370</u>	<u>7,531</u>

Note 8 Creditors and accruals

Analysis of creditors

**Amounts falling due within
one year**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals	40,700	10,776
Total	<u>40,700</u>	<u>10,776</u>

Note 9 Cash at bank and in hand

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash at bank and on hand	<u>15,180</u>	<u>26,421</u>

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE ESSEX
Financial Statements year ended 31 March 2024

Note 10 **Charity funds**

10.1 Details of material funds held and movements during the current reporting period to 31 March 2024

	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure	Transfer between funds	Closing Balance
£	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted Funds					
HALS project	0	27,461	-27,461	0	0
Unrestricted Funds -General	23,176	96,554	-54,250	-40,000	25,480
-Designated	0	0	0	40,000	40,000
	23,176	124,015	-81,711	0	65,480

Community Legal Centre Essex received a Help Accessing Legal Support grant (HALS) from the Ministry of Justice to make free legal advice available in courts in Essex.

Community Legal Centre Essex has unrestricted funds for the provision of free legal advice.

Community Legal Centre Essex has designated funds to continue the provision of free legal advice in courts in Essex.

Note 11. **Transactions with related parties**

None of the trustees has been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with their charity or a related entity in the year to 31 March 2024 or in the previous year to 31 March 2023.

Related Parties	2024	2023
£	£	£
a. Saxon Advice Services Limited		
Donation	0	10,823
b. Central Law Group CIC		
Income		
Donations	88,200	23,700
Other income	8,354	4,741
	96,554	28,441
Expenditure		
Costs of HALS project	26,623	25,651
Bursaries	0	1,310
Fees for legal advice for pro bono cases	0	8,000
Donation for Family Court legal advisers	40,000	0
	66,623	34,961
c. Balances at 31 March with Related Parties	2024	2023
	£	£
Balances due from Central Law Group at year end	90,370	7,531
Balances due to Central Law Group at year end	40,000	10,116

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE ESSEX
Financial Statements year ended 31 March 2024

Statement of Financial Activities for year to 31 March 2024

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Incoming resources (Note 3)					
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