

ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

England & Wales · Charity number 1186714

Details

Other names ACCESS

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2019-12-03

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Access Your Right To Care
86-90 Paul Street
London
EC2A 4NE

Phone 07899090360

Email Kari.gerstheimer@accesscharity.org.uk

Website accesscharity.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED BY REASON OF YOUTH, AGE, ILL HEALTH, DISABILITY OR FINANCIAL HARDSHIP, THROUGHOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM, BY:A) PROVIDING LEGAL AND OTHER ADVISORY REPRESENTATION AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT OTHERWISE OBTAIN THEM THROUGH LACK OF MEANS OR BECAUSE OF ANOTHER VULNERABILITY (INCLUDING COMMUNICATION NEEDS).B) PROVIDING LEGAL EDUCATION TO THOSE WORKING IN THE SOCIAL CARE SECTOR AND THOSE IN RECEIPT OF SOCIAL CARE SO THEY ARE BETTER EQUIPPED TO IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS LEGAL ISSUES SHOULD THEY ARISE.C) RAISING AWARENESS ON TRENDS OF ONGOING UNLAWFUL BEHAVIOUR WHICH IS IDENTIFIED THROUGH ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE'S LEGAL WORK.

Activities: Delivering free legal support in England so we all get the social care we have a right to. Providing access to a network of solicitors and barristers. Filling the gap left by legal aid to ensure access to justice.Working with communities and public bodies to uphold the rule of law. Shaping a future where social care is adequately funded.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Disability, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£2,836,436	£2,402,562	£2,251,997	40
2024-03-31	£2,516,586	£2,001,978	£1,818,123	36
2023-03-31	£1,669,136	£1,523,409	£1,303,515	32
2022-03-31	£1,679,661	£1,161,236	£1,157,788	26
2021-03-31	£1,377,304	£737,941	£639,363	14

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
CHRISTOPHER GEORGE HALE		2019-12-03
David Wood		2024-12-13
Joanne Land		2024-12-13
Jonathon Holmes		2024-12-13
Richard Humphries		2026-03-09
Sarah Rebecca Maguire		2024-07-11
Tracey Samantha Gyateng		2024-07-11

ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

England & Wales - Charity number 1186714

Accounts

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



Year end: 31st March 2025
Charity Registration 1186714

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	1
A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR	2
ABOUT SOCIAL CARE	3
THE CRITICAL ROLE OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE	3
OUR VALUES	4
OUR STRATEGY	6
WE EMPOWER	7
WE ENFORCE.....	9
WE CHALLENGE.....	14
OUR ENABLING PRIORITIES	17
FUNDRAISING REPORT	18
FINANCIAL REPORTING	20
REPORT AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.....	26

A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR

This year marks a significant milestone: in December 2024, Access Social Care celebrated its fifth birthday. It's a moment to reflect on how far we've come, from a passionate, scrappy start-up with a bold vision, to an organisation on the way to becoming a more mature charity with the systems, infrastructure, and practices needed to sustain meaningful impact at scale. We would like to thank our staff, volunteers, funders, members, partners and community stakeholders for the important contribution they have all played in the successes outlined in this report

Our journey has been marked by purpose, persistence, and the trust of our community and supporters. With generous continued support from our founding funder, the Oak Foundation, this year has seen a step change in our growth. This investment is underpinning all our work from accelerating our career pathway work to recruit and retain community care lawyers in the profession; to investment in technology to expand our reach. We have significantly expanded our team, bringing in new talent and capacity to match our ambitions and deepen our work.

Throughout the year, we've celebrated many achievements, each a testament to the commitment of our staff, the strength of our partnerships, and the clarity of our mission. Of particular note is our high-profile government transparency work, and our innovative data work, amplifying the voices of people who draw on social care to drive quality improvement at a local authority level. We've continued to push boundaries and hold ourselves accountable to the values that brought us here, but most importantly, we have continued to ensure the rights of people who need social care are upheld.

This report is both a reflection of the progress we've made and a platform for what comes next. As we look ahead, we remain committed to growing thoughtfully, delivering impact with integrity, and staying close to the people and principles that drive our work.

Finally, as the incoming Chair for Access Social Care, I would like to express deep gratitude to our founding Trustee and outgoing Chair, Chris Hale, whose wise counsel, steady presence, and reflective leadership have guided us through moments of growth, challenge, and transformation. Never seeking the spotlight, but always helping us see the bigger picture, he asked the right questions, held space for different voices, and encouraged us to lead with courage and care. Thank you, Chris and we are so pleased you will be staying on as a trustee until the end of your term.



Sarah Maguire, Access Social Care Chairperson.

ABOUT SOCIAL CARE

Social Care is the support people receive in their own home, a care home or in the community to live in dignity and as independently as possible. When done right, social care should align with the Social Care Future vision, allowing us to “live in the place we call home, with the people and things we love, in communities where we look out for each other, doing the things that matter to us.”

However, the social care sector is grappling with a severe funding crisis, which has far-reaching consequences for those who rely on these services. Local authorities are struggling to meet legal obligations, often denying or delaying essential care. This leaves people without basic needs met and also pushes carers into unsustainable roles.

Social care providers face immense financial pressure from below inflation council uplifts and rising costs, leading to closures and contract hand backs – a largely unreported problem that is leading to people losing their homes and their support. Care workers are leaving the sector for better pay elsewhere, unable to support their families on current salaries.

When local authorities fail to meet their legal duties, the justice system should provide a means to challenge these injustices. Legal aid is intended to ensure everyone can access legal support, regardless of their financial situation. However, community care legal aid cases are often loss leading, one factor in an almost 80% drop in the number of cases taken on by legal aid lawyers since 2010.

Without access to justice, the right to social care becomes meaningless. Public bodies can act unlawfully without repercussions because people cannot afford legal representation. We believe that access to justice is vital for upholding the rule of law and protecting the rights of disabled people, older people, and carers. And when done right, we know that legal advice can play a vital role helping public bodies improve the quality and delivery of social care.

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Access Social Care works to ensure access to justice.

- We reach underserved communities* with experience of health and social care inequalities to raise awareness of rights.
- We use our digital service, AccessAva, to expand our reach through online advice.
- Our membership model sees us partner with social care providers for a rights-led approach.
- And our caseworkers intervene when people are unlawfully denied care.
- ** An underserved community describes a group of people with limited access to health and social care resources, opportunities, or services that are essential for their well-being. These*

communities often face systemic barriers and disparities based on factors like socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity or geographic location.

Beyond individual cases, we drive systemic change through data-driven insights and campaigns. For example, our #govttransparency campaign directly challenges the government's refusal to disclose how adult social care funding is determined. We've taken legal action, achieving landmark victories at the Information Tribunal.

In fighting for this information, we aim to reveal and understand the decision-making that guides social care funding, and how it can be improved. Civil society organisations like ours should be given the opportunity to play a meaningful part in driving improvement of central government decision-making.

OUR VALUES

Trustworthy	Recognised for excellence, we will be the best we can be in everything we do. We will be truthful, independent and outcomes focussed.
Fair	We believe in treating people with kindness and compassion in a way that is right, reasonable, and just.
Fearless	We will do what is right, not what is easy. We will bravely challenge injustice.
Inclusive	Our beneficiaries' voices will influence our thinking and decision making at all levels of our organisation. Collaborative in our thinking, we will work with others to achieve our goals.
Positive	We will be constructive and progressive in our challenge. We will optimistically and dynamically drive for change

Our ambition is to improve the lives of people with social care needs. Our approach is to do this by collaborating with all parts of the system. We know that whilst we positively and constructively challenge public bodies through our casework, we can still work with leaders from public bodies to drive improvements to quality, policy and practice.

Occasionally, in the course of our work with our members - some of whom are social care providers - we come across pockets of poor practice, unlawful behaviours, safeguarding or human rights concerns. When this occurs, we live to our values; we fearlessly do what is right and not what is easy, challenging injustice and driving for change.

REAL-WORLD IMPACT: HOW OUR WORK DROVE POLICY CHANGE

In Gloucestershire, our work has contributed to improved outcomes for people from economically underserved and minoritised communities as well as changes to policy and practice which affect the wider community.

In one example, working with the Council, we adapted the presentation of our data to inform an engagement and consultation approach to revise the charging policy, and to improve council information provision. Our quantitative data indicated charging was the most common issue raised on helplines by Gloucestershire residents enquiring about social care. Our qualitative evidence highlighted problems with information provision and revealed the charging policy meant some with high care needs chose to withdraw due to cost. The revised charging policy reduces financial contributions for those with severe disabilities, resulting in a supplement to their income of up to £30 a week. Our data tells us, since making significant changes to information provision on charging in the local authority area, there has been a dramatic reduction in calls from Gloucestershire residents into national helplines enquiring about charging issues.

We are firm throughout the life of our relationship with our members that we only work with providers who are willing to engage with us, as human rights and specialist community care lawyers at an Executive and Leadership level, to secure continuous improvements to their services. We feel so strongly about this approach, it is built into our contract. To help us with design, delivery and decision making, we work with experts by experience, ensuring our work is informed by the voices of the people our charity exists to serve. Our community partners support this work.

OUR STRATEGY

Our Vision: We all get the social care we need and have a right to.

Our Mission: Partnering with communities to champion social care justice. Improving lives through rights education, legal advice and training, innovation and data insight.

Our Impact Priorities

We empower
Communities use the law early on to get better outcomes

We enforce
People get early legal advice and support when they need it

We drive system change
We use data to challenge, persuade and influence to improve quality, policy and practice locally and nationally

Our Enabling Priorities

We use technology
We innovate and use technology to increase efficiency and impact

We value our people
Our people strategy protects the social care law career pathway and ensures ASC is the best place to work

We generate income
Our diverse income streams grow to support increased impact

WE EMPOWER

ACCESSAVA



Finbar Mulholland, Head of Product, writes:

AccessAva is our digital service that helps people understand their rights and take action when navigating adult social care. Available 24/7, it offers step-by-step guidance and generates legal letters to help users assert their entitlements under the Care Act.

In 2024/25, AccessAva continued to grow in reach and effectiveness, it supported over 4,500 conversations, helping people navigate complex issues and understand their rights. It also enabled users to generate over 700 legal letters, supporting them to explain their situation clearly and request the support they are entitled to.

We expanded our reach through 24 new hosting partners, bringing the total number of organisations offering AccessAva to their communities to over 36. These include national helplines, local advocacy services, and community-based support groups.

To improve the user experience, we introduced a new 'Browse Resources' section, enabling users to access factsheets, templates, and legal guidance more quickly. This change responds directly to user feedback and supports a wider range of use cases, including returning users and professional advisors.

“After decades of asking for help and not receiving applicable help, this app feels like I will not struggle asking ever again because it addresses my problems backed up by law.”

Our plans for AccessAva 2025-2026 are:

- To grow engagement and awareness through a targeted national marketing campaign to ensure more people benefit from AccessAva.
- Improve our letter-writing features to make it faster and easier for users to generate and send high-quality legal letters that help them secure the social care support they are legally entitled to.
- Harness AI technology to enhance the accuracy and reliability of the guidance AccessAva provides, while ensuring it remains accessible, safe, and grounded in expert legal knowledge.

Experience AccessAva by visiting <https://accessava.org.uk>

COMMUNITY HUBS



Jacky Martel, Senior Advice Co-Ordinator writes:

Access to legal support should never be a privilege but with drastic cuts to legal aid and an overstretched social care system, too many people are left without help. In many cases people aren't even aware that they have a legal right to support. Our legal rights hubs provide training, advice, casework and campaign work to empower people with health and social care needs to exercise their legal rights to access social care. They identify and bring together organisations, grassroot initiatives and residents to drive forward helpful local system change through raising awareness of common issues faced by people with lived experience.

In Gloucestershire and Croydon we are working with local partners in Community-Led Hubs to challenge this issue head on. Within the hubs we can help people understand their legal rights and empower them to access support. In many cases the hubs enable us to reach people who aren't currently seeking advice but urgently need support.

For example, this year in Gloucestershire, our work has contributed to improved outcomes for people from economically underserved and minoritised communities as well as changes to policy and practice which affect the wider community.

Working closely with the Council, we adapted the presentation of our data to co-produce a revised charging policy. Our evidence highlighted how the previous policy forced some with high care needs to withdraw due to cost. This impact of the charging policy was otherwise hidden from the council. The result is an improved charging policy that reduces financial contributions for those with severe disabilities which will supplement their income by £30 a week. Our data tells us that since making significant changes to information provision on charging in the local authority area, there has been a significant reduction in calls from Gloucestershire residents into national helplines enquiring about charging issues.

We are also delighted that our work has contributed to:

- Improved outcomes for people from economically underserved and minoritised communities
- Co-production of the CQC self-assessment – particularly in relation to carers information
- Amplifying the voice of Gloucestershire residents in co-production
- A decision to conduct an audit to gain insight into potential safeguarding issues

Next year we are planning to invite people from a variety of sectors together to share the work we have been doing to gather support and momentum to expand our reach in the county.

WE ENFORCE

OUR MEMBERSHIP MODEL



Laura Peters, Legal Director, writes:

ASC links its specialist community care law expertise to social care providers, helplines, community-based organisations, and the people they serve through a membership model.

Members pay subscriptions linked to the level of service they want to commission. Our membership model has 3 main types of activity, and these are aligned with our 3 impact priorities. These are detailed in the illustration below.

Empower

- Legal capability training
- Legal education training
- Online training and resources

WE EMPOWER

We build relationships to increase knowledge of rights and improve legal capability and confidence. Our legal education ensures care and support staff, managers, families, and people with support needs, feel confident using legal language to improve decision making and know how and when to seek advice when things go wrong.

Enforce

- Legal advice and casework
- Pro-bono clinics
- Barristers panel

WE ENFORCE

We ensure more people access legal help to solve problems early on. We know that with just a few letters from us we can transform outcomes and make sure people with social care needs get the care and support they have a right to.

Challenge

- Data analysis and insight
- Strategic casework
- Strategic consultancy
- Influencing

WE CHALLENGE

We achieve system change, working with public body decision makers to improve quality, policy and practice. We collect and analyse data to spot trends and use strategic casework and influencing to persuade and challenge, securing improved decision making and changes to the design and implementation of policy, guidance and regulations.

We updated our membership model this year to give more clarity on what we offer our members. You can read more about what we offer here: Services Overview.

<https://www.accesscharity.org.uk/services-for-organisations>

We welcomed 6 new members over the course of the year.

LEGAL ADVICE AND CASEWORK

This year, our legal team worked on 625 cases in total. Some of the outcomes we achieved for our clients were:

- Arranging a care package for a client who had gone without care and support for some time – due to the delays we were also able to secure £25,000 in compensation.
- Ensuring a client received 2:1 care when they needed it: the clients 2:1 support had been withdrawn because his hours were shared with another resident who had moved out of the accommodation. We drafted letters for our member organisation to send to the Director of Adult Social Care and Monitoring Officer to ensure the hours were re-instated.
- Prevented a client being moved from his home with less than 24 hours' notice: the client had lived in his home for decades and was suddenly informed by the local authority that he would need to move to a different property the following day, causing significant distress. We acted swiftly to point out the client had not been involved in this process and that it was unlawful which stopped the move.

PRO BONO CLINICS



Danielle Zeider, Pro-bono Manager, writes:

We have worked with approximately 46 volunteers from Baker McKenzie; Fieldfisher; Orrick and Slaughter & May. The law firm volunteers have provided ongoing casework on 70 community care matters, including charging, assessment and direct payment cases and 4 welfare benefit appeals.

One highlight was a charging case run by Baker McKenzie. The local authority incorrectly calculated the individual's minimum income guarantee (MIG), which meant he was paying more than he should have for his social care. Although the local authority initially refused to acknowledge its incorrect application of the MIG (Minimum Income Guarantee), a further complaint drafted by a volunteer was submitted in March 2025. As a result, the local authority eventually admitted its mistake and refunded the erroneous charges to the individual. We have since learnt via an article on the BBC website (Southend council refunding £2.3m in overcharged care fees - BBC News) that the local authority has reviewed the charges of over 500 people in the area and will now be refunding approximately £2.3 million in overpaid charges.

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

We have continued to work with 6 student volunteers from the University of York. We also launched a new student clinic with 3 students from the University of Liverpool in February 2025.

Using AccessAva, the students draft letters that go out to local authorities in the name of the client. As well as providing positive outcomes for the individuals who use the clinics, such as getting them their statutory rights to an advocate or a carer assessment, the clinics also increased awareness and interest in community care law amongst student volunteers, thereby contributing to our career pathway work which seeks to encourage more people to consider qualifying into this area of law.

We are hoping to expand the letter completion clinic to student pro bono volunteers at the University of Bristol in September 2025.

CAREER PATHWAY – COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



Caroline Miles, Project Manager writes:

The Access Social Care Career Pathways report 2022, funded by the Legal Education Foundation (LEF), highlighted the difficulties within Community Care law in recent years, particularly within Legal Aid practice.

Across the sector there are significant difficulties with the financial and practical sustainability of the work, with recruitment and retention of junior staff, as well as issues with retaining and recruiting experienced staff as supervisors.

That's why Access Social Care and a Working Group of lawyers have created the Community Care Lawyers Group (CCLG) with the aim of supporting Community Care lawyers and influencing the landscape so that they can stay in their chosen profession. Alongside this, Access Social Care is also tackling the recruitment crisis in Community Care law and encouraging students to work in this exciting and challenging area of law.

2024/25 has been really exciting for our Career Pathway Community of Practice. After 18 months of preparatory co-production we successfully launched our Community of Practice – the Community Care Lawyers Group.

We collaborated with the Legal Action Group (LAG) and Legal Aid Practitioners Association (LAPG) to present our work at their respective annual conferences. Then in November we ran an online launch meeting, attracting enthusiastic engagement and new Working Group members.

- In March 2025 we held a hugely successful inaugural hybrid event, attended by 73 people with input from Andy Slaughter MP; Chris Minnoch (LAPG); a Legal Aid Agency representative; and solicitors and barristers sharing both their expertise and stories of career development within Community Care law.
- We continued to build on our Legal Aid training webinar offer, empowering practitioners to maximise their Legal Aid income by applying for Investigative Representation level funding.
- We worked closely with the Process Efficiency Team (PET) of the Legal Aid Agency. As a direct result of our input PET created their own online training webinar specifically for Community Care contracts. Previously Community Care has always been 'lumped in' with General Civil, Non-family, and Housing. To finally have the LAA recognise that the nuance and complexity of Community Care needs attention in its own right is a massive achievement of which we are extremely proud.

- We met with the Ministry of Justice to raise concerns about the treatment of Community Care within the ROCLA process.
- In January 25 the CCLG brought together a group of members who collaborated brilliantly to submit a response to the Law Commission consultation on Disabled Children's Social Care.
- We developed and now send regular newsletters (now on edition 12) to 170 Community Care practitioners.
- We developed, trialled, and launched an online chat forum to facilitate peer-support, networking and resource sharing between Legal Aid practitioners.

We are now working on developing a committee/ governance model and increasing our range of training and activities to sustain momentum and engagement. We're working towards an exciting future where Legal Aid lawyers have better support to enable them to continue to enforce people's rights to social care.

WE CHALLENGE

GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY ON SOCIAL CARE FUNDING



Hannah Hewish, Legal Manager & Insight Lead writes:

The Health Foundation estimates there is a funding gap of at least £8.4bn per year for adult social care and local councils continue to sound the alarm they lack the resources to meet their legal duties to provide care. Meanwhile central government asserts it is sufficiently funding adult social care. With such a reality gap between these two positions, government transparency has never been more important.

Access Social Care are running a series of legal cases and a Government Transparency Campaign urging the government to share the equalities impact data and the sufficiency calculations they use to make decisions on funding for adult social care.

So far, the Information Commissioner has held in our favour in every case it has heard, stating that it is in the public interest for government to share the information requested, but government has appealed every decision. These cases are heard by the Information Tribunal. On 15th October 2024 the Information Tribunal found in our favour in the first case heard by the Tribunal relating to Equality Impact information. Government sought leave to appeal, and we await the Tribunal's decision.

We are mobilising the sector with a Government Transparency Campaign. In November 2024 more than 60 organisations joined our open letter to Government demanding transparency around social care funding. In March 2025, we conducted a survey to establish what the public thinks about Government Transparency. We found:

- 97% of survey respondents think there is a funding gap in social care
- 98% of survey respondents think the UK Government should explain how it works out how much to spend on social care in England

Our plans for 2025/6 include pursuing further legal action to understand how the government defines "sufficiency" in social care funding. We will continue to raise awareness of this important issue and apply pressure on the Labour Government with a letter writing campaign urging members of the public to write to their local MP, or to Kier Starmer and Rachel Reeves to ask them to reveal how they have calculated sufficiency of funding for adult social care. In addition, we will be writing to Baroness Casey to request that the Casey Commission asks the Government to reveal the information to the Commission that Access Social Care have been denied.

DATA PORTAL



Amit Kohli, Head of Data Insights writes:

This year, our innovative data science programme looked to address the problem of fragmented and inaccessible social care data by bringing isolated datasets from across the UK into one place. We called this our data portal. This project was made possible through funding and collaboration with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

The data portal combines data from a range of sources to start to build a picture about social care provision across England. It uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to digest the data and generate a narrative about each local authority area. Data gathered in Gloucestershire is shared with the Local Authority to improve services for people and has directly influenced policy changes which clearly demonstrates the power of data-driven advocacy. Our aim for the future of the data portal is to repeat that success in other areas using the data gathered to improve policies in every local authority.

This initiative is a great example of how being open with data and using ethical AI practices within public-sector data projects can enable policymakers and local communities to drive genuine, evidence-based improvements.

The data portal is currently in a test phase called 'open beta' and accessible to anyone interested in trying it out. We are actively looking for feedback from users to improve the functionality and usability. One of the scheduled developments for the portal is to include the lived experience of all people accessing the social care system

<https://data.accesscharity.org.uk/>

In addition, we have a short series of events planned in 2025 to demonstrate the portal. We'll use this opportunity to gather insights from attendees that will inform the next iteration of the data portal work.

STATE OF THE NATION (SOTN) REPORT 2024/25

Each year we publish our State of the Nation report, a data collaboration project that spotlights the emerging themes in social care advice provision.

The 2024 State of the Nation report revealed a significant increase in the number of requests for social care advice across nine major advice and helpline organisations. The report painted a desperate picture of the social care system, with the rise in demand for advice far outstripping the available resources.

The nationwide data in this year's report showed a 222% increase in the number of enquiries about social care needs assessments compared to pre-pandemic, as well as a 206% increase in enquiries that required specialist social care legal advice. The report compares data across three-time frames: pre-pandemic 2019-2020; the pandemic year 2021-2022; and finally, the post-pandemic year 2023-2024. The report is clear: vast numbers of people continue to struggle with accessing social care support.

The report also revealed:

- 96% more advocacy queries
- 204% more unpaid carers queries,
- 7 times as many mental capacity queries

STATE OF THE NATION (SOTN) PODCAST

In August 2024 Access Social Care launched its second podcast series dedicated to exploring the state of social care in the UK today. Kari Gerstheimer was joined by a new co-host for this series, Dr Anna Severwright from #SocialCareFuture a people powered movement for positive change to social care.

Anna and Kari invited experts, leaders and change-makers to discuss the highs and lows in the adult social care system, shining a light on a sector that impacts us all.

The podcast was downloaded 629 times this year. The most downloaded episodes of the series were:

1. Launching the State of our Nation Report
2. The Power of Language in Adult Social Care
3. How does Social Care need to change in 2025?

We are currently scoping the next phase of the podcast, with an expected focus on social care leaders and examples of successes around the world.

OUR ENABLING PRIORITIES

PEOPLE STRATEGY



Serena Kashim, People Director, writes:

In 2024-25, we made strong progress in advancing our People Strategy and strengthening our workplace in support of ASC's continued growth.

Following board approval in November 2024, we launched the strategy to provide a clear direction on organisational health and culture. Implementation began in early 2025, aligned with business planning cycles and supported by organisational health KPIs (Key performance indicators) and strategic OKRs (Objectives and Key Results) focused on areas where we expect the greatest change.

A major milestone was our first all-staff survey in March 2025, which achieved a 73% response rate. The results offered a view of life at ASC, with standout strengths including:

- 86% of staff feel proud to work for ASC
- 79% would recommend it as a good place to work
- 90% feel able to maintain a good balance between work and home life
- 96% agree they are treated with fairness and respect by colleagues
- 79% believe ASC places a high priority on employee wellbeing

For context, a score of 79% on the Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) indicates a high level of employee satisfaction and loyalty. Scores in the 50-70 range are often considered excellent, and anything above 80 is typically in the top percentage for most industries. These results reflect a strong organisational culture and validate key People Strategy priorities. They also provide a clear baseline to track our progress, with plans to repeat the survey in March 2026.

In parallel, employee led discussions on unionisation gained momentum. Inspired by conversations across the organisation about building a more democratic and inclusive workplace. A collaborative working group was established to shape a path forward reflecting our values and the wider People Strategy. We piloted salary negotiations with the working group at the end of the financial year which led to an improved outcome for our employees. We are looking forward to collaborating with our new union representatives in 25/26.

Looking ahead, our focus is on embedding our organisational values in a way that feels meaningful and practical. We are developing clear, actionable guidance shaped with input from staff to help translate values into everyday behaviours and practices, ensuring they remain relevant, meaningful and easy to use as the organisation continues to grow.

At the same time, we are partnering with an external consultant to co-design a new working model for our legal team aimed at improving efficiency and aligning service delivery with strategic objectives, including Specialist Quality Mark (SQM) preparedness, legal aid readiness and income generation.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS



Joanne Williams, Director of Partners & Engagement writes:

We secured continuation funding from four key funders and welcomed seven new funders of varying sizes. This strong performance is especially encouraging for our small team, as we achieved an impressive success rate of 25% in our funding applications, a notable feat considering the competitive landscape where many funders report being overwhelmed with requests. Our approach remains meticulous and targeted; we strategically apply for grants that align closely with ASC's mission, ensuring we present ourselves as an ideal fit for the funders' criteria.

In October 2024, we hosted a successful event in London, supported by our patron Jools Holland. This gathering brought together supporters and potential funders for ASC's work, leading to meaningful connections. Notably, Jools leveraged his network, resulting in one anonymous donation and a successful multi-year funding pledge from the Julia Hans Rausing Trust. We are extremely grateful for the support of Jools as well as the support from these donors, which will enable hundreds more people to support from these donors which will mean hundreds more people receive legal support to ensure their rights to social care are upheld.

As we continue to grow, we are actively engaging with our supporters, encouraging them to support ASC's initiatives. This year, we have seen an increase in the number of opted-in individuals, boosted by donations from one person's participation in a challenge event. We aim to encourage this type of donor through our donation platform, Enthuse, where ASC is listed as a selected charity for individuals to designate as their charity of choice.

We are eager to expand our community of opted-in supporters through an upcoming citizen-focused marketing campaign for AccessAva. We believe this campaign will encourage more individuals to support ASC's mission through their contributions.

Looking ahead, we are in the process of recruiting a Trusts & Foundations fundraiser to replace our senior fundraiser of four years, who left ASC in January 2024. Currently, our dedicated part-time team functions as the equivalent of just over one full-time team member focused on securing grants from Trusts & Foundations, and other grant-giving bodies.

Excitingly, we are planning to launch an Ambassador Program in October 2025, with support from our new sponsors, Bevan Brittan LLP. This initiative aims to engage healthcare investors who can contribute through donations, sponsorships, and valuable networking opportunities.

PATRONS AND AMBASSADORS

Patrons

We are extremely grateful for the support of our Patron, Jools Holland, who hosted a fundraising event for us this year, where he wowed us all with his piano skills.

Ambassadors

Angela Boxall, chair of Care England continues to champion our work, and open her networks. We are grateful for her continued support in 2024/2025.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

GOVERNANCE, STRUCTURE & MANAGEMENT



Peter Stimpson, Finance Director, writes:

Governance

We experienced a significant changeover in our Board of Trustees at the beginning of the financial year with several of our Trustees leaving for personal reasons, reaching the end of their term or deciding that the time was right for them to move on from ASC. We are grateful to those outgoing Trustees who ensured a smooth transition to a refreshed Board and to Chris Hale who stepped in to chair the organisation through the transition.

Two new Trustees, Sarah Maguire and Tracey Gyateng, joined on 11th July 2024 and then three more Trustees, Jonathan Holmes, David Wood and Jo Land, joined 13th December 2024. We are delighted with the wide range of skills and experience that the new Trustees have brought to ASC. You can find out more about the skills and experience they bring to the organisation on our [people pages](#), here.

New trustees are usually recruited through an open process although ASC may sometimes use agencies where specific skills cannot be filled. All trustees have a full induction including reviewing key documents and a series of meetings with key staff.

Structure

The charity is incorporated as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) under the name Access Your Right to Care and is governed by its Constitution.

ASC works in partnership with a range of other organisations at a local and national level, including being a member of the Care & Support Alliance and Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG).

Management

The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the overall strategic direction of the charity and for developing policies and plans to support the delivery of our charitable objectives. The Board monitors progress across all areas of activity including legal requirements and financial performance. The Board completed a governance review supported by an independent consultant in March 2025 which recommended a review of existing documentation and the drafting of several new frameworks covering delegation, role descriptions and ways of working. The process is now being moved forward by a task and finish group of Trustees and Executive and will be completed by November 2025.

Strategic decision-making such as objective setting, budget approval and setting risk appetite is done by the Board of Trustees who hold the Executive accountable for delivery. Day to day operations are delegated to the CEO and her team. The team at Access is structured to meet our strategy with our legal team focusing on casework, community work and career pathway alongside specialist teams working on AccessAva, our data work and strategic litigation. These are supported by an administration team.

The charity sets pay for key management personnel by benchmarking roles against market rates for small national charities, with exceptions made where recruitment challenges exist (e.g. legal and tech roles). Salaries are reviewed for internal equity across teams, and adjustments are made to ensure fairness in relation to responsibilities and organisational banding.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

ASC has ended the financial year in a strong financial position having grown its income once again. We have recorded a surplus of £433,874 but this surplus relates to the timing of grant funds received in the year but committed to expenditure in the following year.

Whilst we have been successful in securing some long-term grant funds, we are seeking a significant increase in both the breadth of sources and total income in the next financial year as we seek to deliver for more potential beneficiaries in need.

INCOME

Our total income for the year to 31.3.2025 was £2,836,436, a 13% increase on the prior year (£2,516,586). This increase is predominantly due to the timing of our largest annual grant payment as part of our Oak Foundation grant (£1.5m in 24/25 compared to £1.2m in the prior year) but we have also broadened our funder portfolio with further licensing of AccessAva, and new grants from the Dulverton Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure in the reporting period was £2,402,562, again a significant increase from the prior year (£2,001,978). This increase was driven by increasing staff costs (£248k), these are additional funds that have been invested in supporting our career pathway work and supporting the development of our legal guidance service, AccessAva.

GOING CONCERN

Access Social Care is still a relatively new charity and our experience of the last few years from our incorporation leaves us well-placed to manage the risk that we face. This position is supported by strong liquidity, sufficient reserves for business continuity and development

plans, a good relationship with our key funders and proven ability to retain and secure new services.

We have set out in this report a review of Access Social Care's financial performance, the reserves position and principal risks and uncertainties. Notwithstanding the ongoing pressures on fundraising, our performance to date has been robust in terms of income generation and Access Social Care has remained firmly in control of its service quality and financial performance throughout the operating period.

The 2025/26 budget has been approved by the Access Social Care Board. Our planning processes, including financial projections, take into consideration the current economic climate and its potential impact on the various sources of income and planned expenditure. The trustees therefore have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, "Charities and Public Benefit". Access Social Care's charitable objects are enshrined within its memorandum and articles and as such the trustees ensure that the charity's activities are carried out for the public benefit through its strategic priorities. This is done primarily through the delivery of services aimed at people with a social care needs as well as those who support them. This report allows us to show how our charitable funds are spent and the impact and benefits that has on those using our services, as well as the wider impact on society

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Spend on further development of AccessAva, in this year was £55,354. This amount has been capitalised and does not appear in our expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA). This expenditure supported the development of AccessAva for our rapid rollout programme. This will be the last capitalisation on this asset as it is now a fully-fledged product and the remaining value will be amortised accordingly.

FUNDS ANALYSIS

Reserves are maintained at a level that enables the charity to manage operational financial risks and short-term income volatility. They allow the charity to sustain service delivery, in particular legal casework support to our clients, over the long term, as well as ensuring that financial commitments can be met as they fall due.

Of the charity's £2,251,997 total funds at the end of March 2025, £406,500 are restricted funds that are committed to future expenditure and not available for general purposes.

We hold £1,497,538 in two designated funds; the first (£222,528) covers the amortisation of our intangible asset, AccessAva. These funds result from cash expenditure on development which were not expensed at the point of purchase in the SOFA. Instead, these funds will be used to cover future amortisation costs and therefore will be released to the SOFA in future years.

The second designated fund (£1,275,010) holds the balance of our Oak Foundation funding, this funding is flexible but it is not part of our general funds as it must be spent over a calendar year period.

Our free reserves, or General Funds, are £347,959 (FY24: £261,971). Free reserves are those unrestricted funds which are freely available to the trustees to spend on any of the charity's purposes.

RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have reviewed the Reserves policy this year due to the confirmation of long-term funding. In this new light, the existing policy had become out of date. A new policy has been devised with the following considerations:

- Secured funding sources
- Cash flow
- Fixed costs
- Ensuring our ability to effectively complete or transfer vital services in the event of loss of income
- The Trustees have therefore decided to set a target for reserves this year of retaining six months of essential costs (£385,000) as well as non-negotiable costs required in restructuring. This will ensure provision for supporting services and dealing appropriately with liabilities in the event of a drop in income. This target should be held in cash to ensure that funds are liquid.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Our current free reserves provide more than 5 months of cover, the trustees alongside the Executive team will review strategies to bridge the small remaining gap in the coming year.

RISKS

Access Social Care continually reviews its risk framework, ensuring that it aligns with the organisation's strategic aims and objectives. The Board of Trustees reviews the full register annually and is provided with regular exception reporting flagging where risk scoring has changed, and additional mitigation actions being taken. Independent assurance is provided by an outsourced independent audit function from Godfrey Wilson accountants. Risk management at the operational level is managed by the Executive team, who review risks regularly both within their directorates and as a group.

Principal Risk	Background	Our Mitigation Strategy
Diversifying income streams away from grant funding	We have had incredibly generous support from a wide range of grant funders, but we need to grow other income streams, including commercial ones, to	We have worked hard to grow our partners using AccessAva and we continue to research all available sources of funding from trusts and foundation.

	reduce our reliance on grants in future and to help us grow our impact.	In addition, we will explore new funding and business models such as social investment, sponsorship and advertising if they can support our impact aims and they are right for our charity.
Failure to retain existing members and expand provider memberships	Our membership is made up of care sector organisations. We recognise that this is an extremely challenging time for the sector with many of our members having to make difficult decisions to remain financially viable.	We have strengthened our relationship management work with our partners, and improved communication around the return on investment from our members gain. We have been successful in attracting new organisations into our membership, particularly in Q4 and these will add to our income next year. In addition, we are rolling out a number of alternative models to broaden our offer, allowing different entry points to the benefits ASC can provide.
AccessAva is not being utilised by significant numbers of people seeking social care advice	Ensuring large numbers of people have access to high quality social care advice is an integral part of our mission. We cannot do this all directly and so the success of AccessAva is closely tied to the success of our mission.	We have developed a new strategy for AccessAva, focusing on increasing the breadth of our licencing model (where partners host it on their websites) whilst also developing a microsite which the public can directly access with a marketing plan to help drive them there. We hope to see a significant increase in numbers in the coming year linked to this marketing activity.

ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

REPORT AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

31ST MARCH 2025

Access Your Right To Care

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Charity number	1186714																								
Registered office	86-90 Paul Street London EC21 4NE																								
Trustees	<p>The trustees who served during the period and up to the date of this report were as follows:</p> <table><tr><td>Tracey Gyateng</td><td>(appointed 11 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Christopher Hale</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Jonathon Holmes</td><td>(appointed 13 December 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Rhoda Iranloye</td><td>(resigned 19 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Joanne Land</td><td>(appointed 13 December 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Sarah Maguire</td><td>(appointed 11 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Kevin McGuirk</td><td>(resigned 19 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Linda Redford</td><td>(resigned 5 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Joyce Sarpong</td><td>(resigned 15 May 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Janine Tregelles</td><td>(resigned 5 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Robbie Turner</td><td>(resigned 19 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>David Wood</td><td>(appointed 13 December 2024)</td></tr></table>	Tracey Gyateng	(appointed 11 July 2024)	Christopher Hale		Jonathon Holmes	(appointed 13 December 2024)	Rhoda Iranloye	(resigned 19 July 2024)	Joanne Land	(appointed 13 December 2024)	Sarah Maguire	(appointed 11 July 2024)	Kevin McGuirk	(resigned 19 July 2024)	Linda Redford	(resigned 5 July 2024)	Joyce Sarpong	(resigned 15 May 2024)	Janine Tregelles	(resigned 5 July 2024)	Robbie Turner	(resigned 19 July 2024)	David Wood	(appointed 13 December 2024)
Tracey Gyateng	(appointed 11 July 2024)																								
Christopher Hale																									
Jonathon Holmes	(appointed 13 December 2024)																								
Rhoda Iranloye	(resigned 19 July 2024)																								
Joanne Land	(appointed 13 December 2024)																								
Sarah Maguire	(appointed 11 July 2024)																								
Kevin McGuirk	(resigned 19 July 2024)																								
Linda Redford	(resigned 5 July 2024)																								
Joyce Sarpong	(resigned 15 May 2024)																								
Janine Tregelles	(resigned 5 July 2024)																								
Robbie Turner	(resigned 19 July 2024)																								
David Wood	(appointed 13 December 2024)																								
Chief executive officer	Kari Gerstheimer																								
Senior management team	<table><tr><td>Joanne Williams</td><td>Director of Fundraising & Communications</td></tr><tr><td>Alan Bird</td><td>Chief Technology Officer (resigned January 2025)</td></tr><tr><td>Laura Peters</td><td>Director of Legal Services</td></tr><tr><td>Serena Kashim</td><td>People Director</td></tr><tr><td>Peter Stimpson</td><td>Finance Director</td></tr></table>	Joanne Williams	Director of Fundraising & Communications	Alan Bird	Chief Technology Officer (resigned January 2025)	Laura Peters	Director of Legal Services	Serena Kashim	People Director	Peter Stimpson	Finance Director														
Joanne Williams	Director of Fundraising & Communications																								
Alan Bird	Chief Technology Officer (resigned January 2025)																								
Laura Peters	Director of Legal Services																								
Serena Kashim	People Director																								
Peter Stimpson	Finance Director																								
Bankers	The Co-Operative Bank Business Direct Skelmerdale WN8 6GH																								
Auditors	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD																								

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as auditors to the charity during the period and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 17 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Chris Hale - Trustee

Independent auditors' report

To the trustees of

Access Your Right To Care

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Access Your Right To Care (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 6 to the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Independent auditors' report

To the trustees of

Access Your Right To Care

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out in the trustees' report, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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

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

Independent auditors' report

To the trustees of

Access Your Right To Care

(1) We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, and assessed the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Throughout the audit, we remained alert to possible indications of non-compliance.

(2) We reviewed the charity's policies and procedures in relation to:

- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations, and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risk of fraud, and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- Designing and implementing internal controls to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud.

(3) We inspected the minutes of trustee meetings.

(4) We enquired about any non-routine communication with regulators and reviewed any reports made to them.

(5) We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and assessed their compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(6) We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions or balances that may indicate a risk of material fraud or error.

(7) We assessed the risk of fraud through management override of controls and carried out procedures to address this risk. Our procedures included:

- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries;
- Assessing judgements and accounting estimates for potential bias;
- Reviewing related party transactions; and
- Testing transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. Irregularities that arise due to fraud can be even harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditors' report

To the trustees of

Access Your Right To Care

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Date: 17 September 2025

GODFREY WILSON LIMITED

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

Godfrey Wilson Limited is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	633,132	1,691,224	2,324,356	2,019,919
Charitable activities	4	-	489,139	489,139	488,784
Investments		-	22,941	22,941	7,883
Total income		<u>633,132</u>	<u>2,203,304</u>	<u>2,836,436</u>	<u>2,516,586</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		50,229	254,223	304,452	231,564
Charitable activities		<u>554,391</u>	<u>1,543,719</u>	<u>2,098,110</u>	<u>1,770,414</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>604,620</u>	<u>1,797,942</u>	<u>2,402,562</u>	<u>2,001,978</u>
Net income and net movement in funds	6	28,512	405,362	433,874	514,608
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>377,988</u>	<u>1,440,135</u>	<u>1,818,123</u>	<u>1,303,515</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>406,500</u></u>	<u><u>1,845,497</u></u>	<u><u>2,251,997</u></u>	<u><u>1,818,123</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 14 to the accounts.

Access Your Right To Care

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets				
Intangible fixed assets	9		<u>222,528</u>	<u>334,188</u>
Current assets				
Debtors	10	209,989		182,803
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>2,173,348</u>		<u>1,583,457</u>
		2,383,337		1,766,260
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	11	<u>(353,868)</u>		<u>(282,325)</u>
Net current assets			<u>2,029,469</u>	<u>1,483,935</u>
Net assets	13		<u>2,251,997</u>	<u>1,818,123</u>
Funds	14			
Restricted funds			406,500	377,988
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			1,497,538	1,178,164
General funds			<u>347,959</u>	<u>261,971</u>
Total charity funds			<u>2,251,997</u>	<u>1,818,123</u>

Approved by the trustees on 17 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Chris Hale - Trustee

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
Net movement in funds	433,874	514,608
Adjustments for:		
Amortisation charges	167,014	143,804
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(22,941)	(7,883)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(27,186)	545
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	71,543	19,557
Net cash provided by operating activities	622,304	670,631
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	22,941	7,883
Capitalisation of intangible fixed assets	(55,354)	(80,483)
Net cash used in investing activities	(32,413)	(72,600)
Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period	589,891	598,031
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	1,583,457	985,426
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	2,173,348	1,583,457

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies

a) General information and basis of preparation

Access Your Right To Care is a charitable incorporated organisation registered in England and Wales. The registered office address is 86-90 Paul Street, London, EC21 4NE.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Access Your Right To Care meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

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

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income from subscriptions received in advance is deferred until criteria for income recognition are met.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

As discussed in the trustees' report, the charity benefitted from significant pro bono support in 2024 and 2025, however these have not been recognised in the accounts on the basis that the charity would not have been able to afford these services if not provided for free.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Irrecoverable VAT is allocated as a support cost.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities based on the proportion of direct costs, as follows:

	2025	2024
Raising funds	13%	12%
Charitable activities	87%	88%

i) Intangible fixed assets

Internally generated intangible assets meeting the relevant recognition criteria are initially measured at cost. Intangible fixed assets relate to the costs incurred in developing the charity's ChatBot asset.

Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation process commences upon the completion of each sprint. The amortisation rate in use for ChatBot is 4 years straight line.

j) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

k) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

l) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

m) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

n) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

o) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying 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 if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determining the value of additions to capitalised intangible assets and the associated amortisation policy.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

2. Prior year comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	693,622	1,326,297	2,019,919
Charitable activities	-	488,784	488,784
Investments	-	7,883	7,883
Total income	<u>693,622</u>	<u>1,822,964</u>	<u>2,516,586</u>
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	146,127	85,437	231,564
Charitable activities	<u>724,215</u>	<u>1,046,199</u>	<u>1,770,414</u>
Total expenditure	<u>870,342</u>	<u>1,131,636</u>	<u>2,001,978</u>
Net income / (expenditure)	(176,720)	691,328	514,608
Transfers between funds	<u>(37,457)</u>	<u>37,457</u>	-
Net movement in funds	<u>(214,177)</u>	<u>728,785</u>	<u>514,608</u>

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £
Oak Foundation grant	-	1,500,000	1,500,000
Trusts and foundations	624,880	142,500	767,380
Corporate donations	6,500	46,924	53,424
Individual donations	<u>1,752</u>	<u>1,800</u>	<u>3,552</u>
Total income from donations	<u>633,132</u>	<u>1,691,224</u>	<u>2,324,356</u>
Prior year comparative			
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Oak Foundation grant	-	1,115,000	1,115,000
Trusts and foundations	693,622	168,000	861,622
Corporate donations	-	38,022	38,022
Individual donations	<u>-</u>	<u>5,275</u>	<u>5,275</u>
Total income from donations	<u>693,622</u>	<u>1,326,297</u>	<u>2,019,919</u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

4. Income from charitable activities

	2025	2024
	Total	Total
	£	£
Subscriptions	437,816	448,531
ChatBot licensing	45,425	39,533
Consultancy income	2,565	720
Training income	3,333	-
	<u>489,139</u>	<u>488,784</u>
Total income from charitable activities	489,139	488,784

All income from charitable activities in the current and prior year was unrestricted.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2025 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	193,370	1,279,214	339,285	1,811,869
Consultancy	37,301	124,386	7,530	169,217
Amortisation	-	167,014	-	167,014
IT and telephone costs	-	55,516	39,056	94,572
Other Staff Costs	4,775	20,704	32,853	58,332
Finance and governance	8	318	43,884	44,210
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	28,180	28,180
Office costs	1,233	12,232	2,345	15,810
Workshops	4,860	5,218	3,280	13,358
Sub-total	241,547	1,664,602	496,413	2,402,562
Allocation of support and governance costs	62,905	433,508	(496,413)	-
Total expenditure	304,452	2,098,110	-	2,402,562

Total governance costs were £33,811 (2024: £7,300).

Prior year comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	177,341	1,118,687	277,587	1,573,615
Consultancy	7,150	74,197	24,046	105,393
Amortisation	-	143,804	-	143,804
IT and telephone costs	-	66,963	26,900	93,863
Other staff costs	1,708	14,713	26,432	42,853
Finance and governance	-	4	15,050	15,054
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	9,400	9,400
Office costs	150	6,358	11,488	17,996
Sub-total	186,349	1,424,726	390,903	2,001,978
Allocation of support and governance costs	45,215	345,688	(390,903)	-
Total expenditure	231,564	1,770,414	-	2,001,978

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2025 £	2024 £
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	614	569
Amortisation	167,014	143,804
Auditors' remuneration:		
▪ Statutory audit (ex VAT)	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,150</u>

During the period three trustees were reimbursed for travel expenses, totalling £614 (2024: two trustees were reimbursed £569 for travel expenses).

In common with other charities of our size and nature we use our auditors to assist with the preparation of the financial statements.

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	1,588,190	1,382,938
Social security costs	155,990	130,859
Pension costs	<u>67,689</u>	<u>59,818</u>
	<u>1,811,869</u>	<u>1,573,615</u>

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Number of employees earning in the range of:		
£60,001 - £70,000	3	2
£70,001 - £80,000	3	1
£80,001 - £90,000	2	2
£90,001 - £100,000	-	-
£100,001 - £110,000	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Senior Management Team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the period were £556,185 (2024: £417,154).

Included in salaries and wages are redundancy and termination costs of £25,500, funded in full by unrestricted reserves with no balances outstanding at the year end.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

7. Staff costs and numbers (continued)

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Average head count	<u>40</u>	<u>36</u>

8. Taxation

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

9. Intangible assets

	ChatBot app £
Cost	
At 1 April 2024	612,713
Additions in period	<u>55,354</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>668,067</u>
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2024	278,525
Charge for the period	<u>167,014</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>445,539</u>
Net book value	
At 31 March 2025	<u><u>222,528</u></u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>334,188</u>

Intangible fixed assets relates to the charity's ChatBot app which has now been brought into use, with development concluded as at 31 March 2025. The app will be amortised over 4 years in line with the completion date of each development stage.

10. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	185,989	115,568
Prepayments	12,335	23,070
Accrued income	11,665	44,165
	<u>209,989</u>	<u>182,803</u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	37,026	8,332
Accruals	36,800	55,260
Other taxation and social security	96,343	69,126
Deferred income (see note 12)	183,699	149,607
	<u>353,868</u>	<u>282,325</u>

12. Deferred income

	2025 £	2024 £
At 1 April	149,607	156,442
Deferred during the period	183,699	149,607
Released during the period	<u>(149,607)</u>	<u>(156,442)</u>
At 31 March	<u>183,699</u>	<u>149,607</u>

Deferred income relates to subscription income invoiced in advance.

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	222,528	-	222,528
Current assets	406,500	1,275,010	701,827	2,383,337
Current liabilities	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(353,868)</u>	<u>(353,868)</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2025	<u>406,500</u>	<u>1,497,538</u>	<u>347,959</u>	<u>2,251,997</u>

Prior year comparative

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	334,188	-	334,188
Current assets	382,988	843,976	539,296	1,766,260
Current liabilities	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(277,325)</u>	<u>(282,325)</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2024	<u>377,988</u>	<u>1,178,164</u>	<u>261,971</u>	<u>1,818,123</u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

14. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds					
Public Legal Education	103,618	130,500	(149,118)	-	85,000
ATJF Community Justice Fund	100,000	104,000	(82,000)	-	122,000
Fidelity Fund	50,058	-	(50,058)	-	-
Barings	43,530	-	(43,530)	-	-
Barnwood	39,497	55,380	(47,377)	-	47,500
Rayne Foundation	32,091	35,000	(25,091)	-	42,000
Rangoonwala Foundation	6,412	-	(6,412)	-	-
Wellbeing	2,580	-	(2,580)	-	-
Disrupt	119	80,000	(80,119)	-	-
CareTech	83	50,000	(50,083)	-	-
Julia Rausing Trust	-	100,000	-	-	100,000
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	-	65,000	(65,000)	-	-
FOIA	-	13,252	(3,252)	-	10,000
Total restricted funds	377,988	633,132	(604,620)	-	406,500
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
<i>Oak Foundation</i>	843,976	1,500,000	(1,068,966)	-	1,275,010
<i>ChatBot</i>	334,188	-	(167,014)	55,354	222,528
Total designated funds	<u>1,178,164</u>	<u>1,500,000</u>	<u>(1,235,980)</u>	<u>55,354</u>	<u>1,497,538</u>
General funds	<u>261,971</u>	<u>703,304</u>	<u>(561,962)</u>	<u>(55,354)</u>	347,959
Total unrestricted funds	1,440,135	2,203,304	(1,797,942)	-	1,845,497
Total funds	<u>1,818,123</u>	<u>2,836,436</u>	<u>(2,402,562)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,251,997</u>

Purposes of restricted funds

Public Legal Education

These funds are to increase legal knowledge and legal capability and to improve the career pathway for community care law.

ATJF Community Justice Fund

This fund is designed to support the delivery of free legal advice to marginalised people and communities across England. ASC is using the funding over 5 years to continue, expand and deepen our vital marginalised community hub work.

Fidelity Fund

Supports staff posts aimed at expanding the reach of AccessAva.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

14. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

Barings

Assisting people with learning difficulties to use data and strategic legal tactics to hold public bodies to account.

Barnwood

Our funding from Barnwood Trusts enables our adult social care work in Gloucestershire.

Rayne Foundation

Funds the development of a group of Peer Navigators, carers who are experts by experience and can share their knowledge empathetically with other carers.

Rangoonwala Foundation

Supporting our AccessAva and community hub work.

Wellbeing

This grant is restricted for use only in the context of the Access Social Care team's wellbeing needs. An organisational retreat will be piloted to offer staff a space and time away from work.

Disrupt

Supports staff costs in our Technology and Data teams.

CareTech

Our funding from CareTech is broadening legal information and advice available on our free online chatbot.

Julia Rausing Trust

Supports the expansion of our community care legal support.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Supports the development of AccessAva and our data platform.

FOIA

Funds supporting our work in securing freedom of information requests on adult social care.

Purposes of designated funds

Oak Foundation

This fund is designated for the purpose of supporting Access Social Care's career pathway strategy as well as providing for core administrative costs.

ChatBot

The designated ChatBot fund represents the net book value of the intangible asset and is maintained as a distinct fund to separate it from the charity's general funds.

Transfers between funds

Transfers between funds relate to the designation of the capitalised costs relating to the ChatBot incurred during the year.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

14. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior year comparative	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	Restated At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Oak Foundation	356,273	-	(356,273)	-	-
Fidelity Fund	79,971	184,392	(214,305)	-	50,058
Public Legal Education	51,681	110,500	(58,563)	-	103,618
Barings	31,079	54,000	(41,549)	-	43,530
Barnwood	28,787	52,730	(42,020)	-	39,497
Disrupt	22,929	72,000	(64,810)	(30,000)	119
Rangoonwala Foundation	12,500	25,000	(31,088)	-	6,412
UnLtd	8,864	-	(8,907)	43	-
Digital Framework	81	-	(81)	-	-
ATJF Community Justice Fund	-	100,000	-	-	100,000
CareTech	-	50,000	(42,417)	(7,500)	83
Rayne Foundation	-	35,000	(2,909)	-	32,091
Wellbeing	-	10,000	(7,420)	-	2,580
Total restricted funds	592,165	693,622	(870,342)	(37,457)	377,988
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
<i>ChatBot</i>	397,509	-	(143,804)	80,483	334,188
<i>Oak Foundation</i>	-	1,115,000	(271,024)	-	843,976
Total designated funds	397,509	1,115,000	(414,828)	80,483	1,178,164
General funds	313,841	707,964	(716,808)	(43,026)	261,971
Total unrestricted funds	711,350	1,822,964	(1,131,636)	37,457	1,440,135
Total funds	1,303,515	2,516,586	(2,001,978)	-	1,818,123

Prior year comparatives have been restated to disaggregate funds from their previous groupings into their constituent restricted funds. This restatement purely changes classification, and has no impact on total restricted income, expenditure or carried forward restricted funds.

15. Related party transactions

During the year Sarah Maguire, trustee, was the CEO of Choice Support. During the year the charity received contract income of £34,600 (2024: 35,849). There were no amounts outstanding at the end of either year.

Similarly, during the year Joanne Land, trustee, is the CEO of Avenues Group. During the year the charity invoiced for contract income of £18,698, of which £8,400 was outstanding at the year end (2024: invoiced £9,299, of which £9,299 was outstanding at the year end).

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

15. Related party transactions (continued)

Additionally, Joanne Land is also a trustee of the VODG group. During the year the charity paid for £1,707 (2024: £nil) to attend VODG conferences. There were no amounts outstanding at the year end.

Rhoda Iranloye, a former trustee, is also a Group Director of Regulatory for Dimensions. In the prior year, the charity received contract income of £29,849 from Dimensions.

All transactions were carried out at arms length under standard business terms.

ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

England & Wales - Charity number 1186714

Accounts



ANNUAL REPORT

Year end: 31st March 2024
Charity Registration 1186714



ANNUAL REPORT

3	A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR
4	ABOUT SOCIAL CARE
5	THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE
5	WHAT WE DO AND WHY WE EXIST
6	OUR STRATEGY
7	OUR VALUES & APPROACH
8	OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our membership model• Our community work
12	OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We empower• We enforce• We drive system change
15	OUR ENABLING PRIORITIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We use technology• We value our people• We generate income
19	LOOKING FORWARDS TO 2024/25 AND BEYOND
19	OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES
20	ENABLING PRIORITIES
21	OUR GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT
22	FINANCIAL REVIEW
24	MANAGING RISK
25	FUNDRAISING

26 REPORT AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR



Access Social Care began in 2020, and it's hard to believe that we are now approaching our 5th birthday. Yet with over 400,000 people on a waiting list to have a social care assessment and at least 2.6 million with an unmet social care need, our work has never been more vital.

As we transition from a start-up to a maturing organisation, it is an exciting time for our team of more than 40 employees who are all working tirelessly to fight for the rights of individuals with unmet social care needs. Our extraordinary colleagues often go above and beyond what is reasonable to ensure people with social care needs obtain the right support, and I would like to thank them for the profound difference they make to people's lives, as is illustrated by the case studies described later in this report.

As we enter the next phase of our development, a number of existing Trustees are standing down and we are welcoming new members to the Board. We will continue to add to the Board in the coming months to ensure it meets Access's needs in this next phase. I would like to express a huge thank you to the outgoing Trustees who have played a major part in successfully guiding Access in its formative years, and especially to our former, and founding chair, Jan Tregelles. Her leadership has been inspirational.

Although we are a much bigger team now, we know that the scale of the problem with access to justice is so large that we could never grow fast enough to meet demand without a technological solution to allow us to scale our expertise. In the past year we have continued to develop our online tool, called AccessAva, and seen the contribution it has made to our impact by empowering individuals through our community hubs to access early legal support. Assessments have been secured, as well as access to fair social care charging for adequate social care provision. A further impact has been on local authorities who have been influenced to change their policies and practices. This work was recognised in May 2023 – when ASC won “Best Digital Innovation” at the Third Sector Business Charity Awards (Winners of “Best Digital Innovation” at the Third Sector Business Charity Awards (accesscharity.org.uk)).

This year has also seen the team challenge the government on the funding of social care. The social care sector, including public bodies, charitable and commercial organisations, are all aligned that social care is critically underfunded. The previous Government's position was that social care was adequately funded but refused to reveal their maths. Through a number of FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) requests we are asking the government to reveal crucial data so that we can support the improvement of long-term decision making in social care funding. We have recently appealed to the new administration, the Prime Minister and dept ministers asking for a change in approach, to support the Information Commissioner's view, and disclose this information as soon as possible. We desperately need government transparency and accountability in social care, and so do the many families across the country who rely on it.

We are delighted that our work has been validated by the Oak Foundation's decision to fund us for a further 5 years. We are extraordinarily grateful for this support and that of all our funders and partners without whom our work would not be possible. We look forward to continuing to work with them in the next, exciting, phase of Access Social Care's evolution.

Chris Hale, Chair of the Board of Trustees

ABOUT SOCIAL CARE

Social Care is the support people receive in their own home, a care home or in the community to live in dignity and as independently as possible. When done right, social care should align with the Social Care Future vision, allowing us to live in the place we call home, with the people and things we love, in communities where we look out for each other, doing the things that matter to us.

The social care funding crisis continues to have a devastating impact on the social care sector and ultimately on the lives of people who draw on social care:

Cash-strapped local authorities don't always live up to their legal obligations when it comes to social care. We see people being denied or delayed the social care they need to live their life of choice. We see carers taking on unsustainable or unsafe caring roles. It is deeply shocking that some of our clients need our support to ensure their most basic needs are met – including access to food, shelter and support to be washed and dressed.

Social care providers are struggling to balance their books. Below inflation uplifts from councils, increased energy bills, and the introduction of an unfunded rise in the minimum wage are compounding difficulties for many providers. Most of our member organisations are facing extremely difficult financial decisions: they are handing back contracts, closing services, selling off properties, restructuring, and in some cases using reserves to pay salaries. In a crowded news cycle, this provider market collapse is going largely unreported.

Care workers are affected too, leaving work they love to take positions in the NHS or in retail simply because they cannot support their families on care sector salaries.

We supported our client, Pam* to get the correct package of care in place. Pam was assessed by her local authority as needing care and support but delays at the Local Authority left her without support for two and a half years. This was causing significant distress for Pam and led her to thoughts of taking her own life.

Pam's caseworker worked with her to review her assessment. They agreed that not only was the delay unacceptable, but the assessment of her needs was inaccurate, and she would in fact need more care than the local authority was suggesting. Pam was also going to be charged for her care, and the amount she was being asked to pay was unaffordable.

Over the course of 15 months, we worked hard to get a suitable package of care in place and challenged the amount Pam was being charged. Pam is now receiving 28 and a half hours a week of care, and she is paying £50 per week less towards her care than was originally requested. Not only this, but the local authority agreed to pay £25,000 in compensation for the delay and distress they had caused.

*name has been changed



THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE

When local authorities fail to live up to their legal obligations to meet people's social care needs the legal system should be there to challenge injustice and hold public bodies to account. If people can't afford to pay for a lawyer themselves, the publicly funded legal aid system should be there to ensure everyone can access justice to right wrongs. But all too often, community care legal aid cases are loss-making for legal aid lawyers and since 2010 the number of community care legal cases started by legal aid lawyers has fallen by nearly 80%.

Without access to justice, the right to social care might as well not exist because public bodies can act unlawfully with impunity because people can't access legal support when they need it. Access Social Care believes that access to justice is essential to maintain the rule of law and uphold the rights of disabled people, older people and carers. But not only that, when done right, we know that legal advice can play a vital role helping public bodies improve the quality and delivery of social care.

WHAT WE DO AND WHY WE EXIST

The social care funding crisis leading to people being unlawfully denied their right to social care, combined with the existential risk to access to specialist community care lawyers, means Access Social Care has never been more needed. Our work is focussed on the fault lines of social care, and access to justice for social care issues:

- Our community work is reaching under-served communities with experience of health and social care inequalities, raising awareness of rights and increasing confidence and the capability to use legal language to make sure needs are met.
- Our online advice product, AccessAva, is helping us expand our reach to new communities.
- Our membership model sees us partner with social care providers to drive a rights- led approach in social care provision.
- Our caseworkers are often the last resort for families and individuals denied the social care they have a right to. Our lawyers step in and intervene early on when things go wrong and give hope to clients at the darkest of times.
- With social care seemingly low on the political agenda, the importance of ASC's system change work cannot be overstated. AccessAva is helping us to gather data, which we are combining with data from other sources to improve evidence and data insights. We are sharing this data with public bodies to improve knowledge of where and how improvements can be made. We are running legal cases locally and nationally aimed at driving system- level change.

OUR STRATEGY

Our vision is for people to get the health and social care support they need to live fulfilled lives.

Our mission is for ASC to be the leading specialist health and social care legal advice provider. We collaborate, educate, and challenge to drive system change and ensure rights are met.

Our Impact Priorities

We empower
Communities use the law early on to get better outcomes

We enforce
People get early legal advice and support when they need it

We drive system change
We use data to challenge, persuade and influence to improve quality, policy and practice locally and nationally

Our Enabling Priorities

We use technology
We innovate and use technology to increase efficiency and impact

We value our people
Our people strategy protects the social care law career pathway and ensures ASC is the best place to work

We generate income
Our diverse income streams grow to support increased impact

OUR VALUES & APPROACH

Trustworthy	Recognised for excellence, we will be the best we can be in everything we do. We will be truthful, independent and outcomes focussed.
Fair	We believe in treating people with kindness and compassion in a way that is right, reasonable, and just.
Fearless	We will do what is right, not what is easy. We will bravely challenge injustice.
Inclusive	Our beneficiaries' voices will influence our thinking and decision making at all levels of our organisation. Collaborative in our thinking, we will work with others to achieve our goals.
Positive	We will be constructive and progressive in our challenge. We will optimistically and dynamically drive for change

Our purpose is to improve the lives of people with social care needs. Our approach is to do this by collaborating with all parts of the system. We know that whilst we positively and constructively challenge public bodies through our casework, we can still work with leaders from public bodies to drive improvements to quality, policy and practice.

Occasionally, in the course of our work with our members - some of whom are social care providers - we come across pockets of poor practice, unlawful behaviours, safeguarding or human rights concerns. When this occurs, we live to our values; we fearlessly do what is right and not what is easy, challenging injustice and driving for change. We are firm throughout the life of our relationship with our members that we only work with providers who are willing to engage with us, as human rights and specialist community care lawyers at an Executive and Leadership level, to secure continuous improvements to their services. We feel so strongly about this approach, it is built into our contract.

To help us with design, delivery and decision making, we work with experts by experience, ensuring our work is informed by the voices of the people our charity exists to serve. Our advisory panels and community partners support this work.

OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

OUR MEMBERSHIP MODEL

ASC links its specialist community care law expertise to social care providers, helplines, community-based organisations, and the people they serve through a membership model. Members pay subscriptions linked to the level of service they wish to acquire. Our membership model has 3 main types of activity aligned with our 3 impact priorities

Empower

- Legal capability training
- Legal education training
- Online training and resources

EMPOWER

We build relationships to increase knowledge of rights and improve legal capability and confidence. Our legal education ensures care and support staff, managers, families, and people with support needs, feel confident using legal language to improve decision making and know how and when to seek advice when things go wrong.

Enforce

- Legal advice and casework
- Pro-bono clinics
- Barristers panel

ENFORCE

We ensure more people access legal help to solve problems early on. We know that with just a few letters from us we can transform outcomes and make sure people with social care needs get the care and support they have a right to.

Systems Change

- Data analysis and insight
- Strategic casework
- Strategic consultancy
- Influencing

CHALLENGE

We achieve system change, working with public body decision makers to improve quality, policy and practice. We collect and analyse data to spot trends and use strategic casework and influencing to persuade and challenge, securing improved decision making and changes to the design and implementation of policy, guidance and regulations.

This year we worked with the following member organisations:

Achieve Together
Avenues

Camphill Village Trust

Choice Support

Croydon Mencap

Dimensions

Ealing Consortium

Father Hudson's Care

HFT

Lifeways

MacIntyre

Mencap

National Autistic Society

Norwood

Sense

United Response

Wirral Mencap

OUR COMMUNITY WORK

Our membership model works well for people who are connected to a large social care provider. However, smaller community-based and user-led organisations working with people experiencing intersectionality and multiple barriers to accessing advice and quality social care can struggle to afford our fees.

We know that disabled people, Black, Asian, minority ethnic, and some religious communities, experience worse health and social care outcomes than the general population. Free legal advice has been proven to improve health outcomes, so at Access Social Care we feel it is critical that we work alongside communities that have experienced disadvantage.

We work at the intersections of health and social care to ensure improved flow between social care and health and have adapted to work in a place-based and community-led way. We work with place-based communities and virtual communities of interest to empower their members to exercise their legal rights and access social care.

Our place-based hubs are in Gloucestershire, Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham and Harlesden, where we are connecting our service to Black and Asian communities, a disabled person led organisation, and a family carer led organisation. We partner with Social Care Futures to deliver our community of interest hub for disabled people. We work with secondees in these organisations to share learning about how we use the law to improve outcomes for people with social care needs, and to learn how our partners work in a culturally appropriate way with their networks.

We co-produce legal education programmes and our secondees ripple knowledge out into their communities to improve knowledge of rights and confidence around using the law and legal language. By encouraging communities and community leaders to use our online tool, AccessAva, we are ensuring the quality of advice whilst harvesting data which can then be given back to communities. This helps them see trends in advice-seeking behaviours which may indicate problems with policy and practice in their area. Communities can then use this data to work alongside public body decisions. We have built strong relationships with the public bodies we work with in these communities. This year, Gloucestershire County Council thanked us for our input into their Fairer Contribution consultation, and even made amendments to their CQC self-assessment based on our feedback.

OUR ONLINE PRODUCTS AND PROJECTS

We are a small organisation, but the demand for specialist advice is huge and growing. To complement our human advice and to help us reach further and wider than is currently possible through casework, we invented a revolutionary online solution that is changing the landscape in accessing health and social care.

This year we have rebranded our original 'chatbot' product as AccessAva in response to feedback from our partners to ensure the product meets the needs of our diverse communities.

In 2023/24 we ran a pilot to test licensing AccessAva to partner organisations to expand our impact. Our pilot organisations were:

- Asian People's Disability Alliance
- Ealing Mencap
- Croydon BME Forum
- National Autistic Society

Building on the success of the pilot, we have expanded our AccessAva hosting partnerships in 2023/24 with 2 new organisations who have contracted with us to use AccessAva with their online audiences. They are:

- Choice Support
- Crossroads Care Gloucestershire

We are working with a range of organisations across England, interested in becoming an AccessAva hosting partner. We have further developed the topics covered in the online tool, AccessAva in the following areas:

MAY 2023	JUNE 2023	SEPTEMBER 2023
NHS Continuing Healthcare - letter autocomplete function Carers' rights decision tree and letter downloads	Cost of living content Moving house content	End of life care content Discrimination content Safeguarding content Residential care charges
NOVEMBER 2023	DECEMBER 2023	JAN 2024
Carers' rights - letter autocomplete function	Cuts to care packages content Discrimination - letter autocomplete function	Direct payments module Updated versions of our factsheets and template letters

DATA INSIGHT

The data team at Access Social Care has grown and developed this year. We continue to lead a group of organisations in a collaborative project combining helpline data to shine a spotlight on the emerging themes in social care advice provision. Data insights from this project are published annually in our State of the Nation report. This year we found that overall advice seeking, across all universal social care themes, has increased by 153% post pandemic compared with pre pandemic figures. In addition some areas of social care advice provision have increased significantly in the post pandemic period compared with pre-pandemic levels:

- 96% more advocacy
- 204% more unpaid carers queries
- 206% more provision identifying the need for specialist legal advice
- 7 times as many mental capacity queries

We have ambitious plans for 2024/25 to develop live data platforms to enable civil society and public bodies to monitor social care data in real time.

We are developing, with the support of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, a dedicated Advisor product in 2024. The aim of this is to empower generalist information advisors to give more specialist advice and to give law students a taste of community care law, to raise awareness that this important legal specialism is a career option.

Helping you to do more with less. An award-winning online service, AccessAva provides accessible, accurate, health and social care legal support at the click of a button, directly on your site.

Accessible: Tailored for diverse communities and needs.

Provide immediate, expert legal guidance and support on health and social care issues, directly on your site.

Advanced: Employs award-winning technology to optimise resource use and service delivery.

Available 24/7: Ensures support is always accessible.

Analytics: Provides insights for strategic planning and improvement.

OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES

WE EMPOWER

We have built knowledge and confidence in using the law by:

- Delivering bespoke training sessions to around 50 employees of our member organisations on subjects including dealing with under-funded services, care act assessments and charging for social care.
- Training 411 people through our Hubs. Participants were asked to score how much knowledge they had and how confident they felt in challenging decisions on a scale of 1 to 5. On average, participants reported that their level of knowledge increased from 1.9 to 3.9 and their confidence to challenge decisions increased from 1.5 to 3.7.
- We have trained 31 managers from member organisations and 34 staff from other organisations in using AccessAva.
- 1924 people used AccessAva for legal support in 23/24, the satisfaction rating was 2.3 out of 3 (77% from 246 reviewers).

In Gloucestershire, we co-produced an adapted version of our Care Act training, using examples from within the community and delivered it with translation support in 4 languages.

One woman, Sanvi, who attended the training, cares for her husband who is in an advanced stage of a neurological condition and supports her 3 teenage boys - one of whom is almost 20, autistic and has a severe learning disability. Care staff come in twice a day to support her husband. Her son has not had any support since he finished a special needs college over a year ago. The woman was unsure if he had received a social care assessment. She did know that someone had come out 8 months previously but as she has extremely limited English and her husband, who speaks good English, is too unwell to be involved in any meetings, she was not sure who or why they were there. The person who came out from Adult Social Care spoke no Gujarati and did not use a translation service.

We were able to support Sanvi to write a letter requesting a new assessment for her son using AccessAva - which can translate all its content into an appropriate language. This letter detailed the difficulties he has in achieving the outcomes listed in the Care Act and the need for language support. She also requested a Carer's Assessment as the heavy caring role had taken a burdensome toll on her and she was exhausted. The need for language support and accessible information for her son were also flagged up in the request. Now that Sanvi has been able to fully express the difficulties she and her family are experiencing, the local authority have begun a new assessment process for the whole family, in a language Sanvi can understand so she can fully participate in the assessment process.

WE ENFORCE

Our in-house legal team have worked on 452 legal cases this year, including 360 level 1 / initial advice pieces, 10 level 2 cases, 63 level 3 cases and 19 level 4 / pro bono cases. In a level 1 case, we provide initial advice to our membership organisation who then take their own action based on the advice we have provided. In level 2 cases, we speak directly to the person with care and support needs to provide them with advice. In level 3 cases we carry out casework for the person with care and support needs by taking action on their behalf. Level 4 cases are referred to our legal clinics for advice from our pro bono volunteers.

At Access Social Care, our commitment to providing access to justice drives every aspect of our work.

Recently we were delighted to resolve a pressing case brought to us by our member organisation Dimensions, who support people with learning disabilities and autism.

The case centred around the vital need to secure transportation for a Dimensions client. They were about to lose access to their lease car, which they relied on to visit their family, go to the supermarket, and undertake other activities that are important for their welfare. Despite months of effort by Dimensions' Locality Manager, the Local Authority's inaction left the client facing the imminent loss of the car. The potential consequences were serious. Without access to reliable transportation, their ability to engage in community activities, make trips, and maintain connections with their family would be severely compromised. This not only threatened their wellbeing, but also posed risks to their safety and autonomy.

When Dimensions got in touch with us, we began the process of advocating on behalf of the client. We drafted a letter to the Local Authority outlining their duties under the Care Act and emphasising that their inaction was unlawful. The message was clear: they urgently needed to secure transportation to meet the client's essential needs.

We're pleased to report that the Local Authority conceded and made the application for a car, which was sorted in time for the client. Not only this, but it catalysed a broader change in the Local Authority's approach to these applications and had a wider impact on other Dimensions clients in the area. This shows the power of challenging a Local Authority's inaction or unlawful decisions – it not only secures justice for individual clients but can also drive wider positive change.

Dimensions' Locality Manager said:

"I would like to thank you very much for your help and support. This has been a battle that I have been fighting for a good couple of years and to finally get the outcome we hoped for is great for the person we support."

WE DRIVE SYSTEM CHANGE

Strategic litigation and our social care funding campaign

There is a broad consensus across the social care sector that social care is woefully underfunded by at least £8.3 Billion per year. (The Health Foundation estimate Sept 2023) The last Government asserted social care was adequately funded but refused to publish their maths. As a result of this lack of government transparency, civil society cannot identify biases, gaps or errors in the evidence on which public policy decision making is based. Since 2021, ASC has been making FOI requests against three government departments. Three Government departments have refused to publish the information requested despite the information commissioner finding it was in the public interest to do so.

Social care affects all of us – we will all need social care at some point. When so many are struggling to get the social care they need and have a right to, and when there is such a gap between Government’s position and the wider social care sector’s position, it is not good enough for the government to say how much they are investing in social care without explaining how much is needed.

Access Social Care are now pursuing a strategic legal case against 3 government departments seeking government transparency in this important area of public policy.

Access Social Care is asking DHSC, the Department of Levelling up and the Treasury to share the evidence that was used to decide how to fund adult social care. We hope this landmark legal case will for the first time enable the social care sector to interrogate the quality of the evidence relied upon and identify gaps in evidence to drive up decision-making. This case will continue into 2024/25.



OUR ENABLING PRIORITIES

WE USE TECHNOLOGY

We have grown from 4 to 6 AccessAva partners and hope to increase this number substantially in the coming year.

We plan to develop new products focused on the feedback from users and partners.

Crossroads Care Gloucestershire has partnered with Access Social Care adding AccessAva – a user-friendly facility on their website. Here, individuals seeking answers about social care can quickly ask questions, download factsheets, or generate auto-populated template letters without charge.

The impact of this initiative has been tremendous, empowering carers with increased confidence and professional advice. For instance, one carer shared their experience:

"Crossroads Care Gloucestershire has helped me understand the Care Act, giving me the confidence to request a social care assessment. Although the local authority only acknowledged one of my husband's basic needs, Access Social Care Charity advised on the assessment and is now supporting me to appeal against it. Something that would have been too stressful for us as a family to do alone."

Jessica Hudson, Working Carer Project Manager, Crossroads Care Gloucestershire



WE VALUE OUR PEOPLE

In the past year, we have taken action to improve our organisation's commitment to wellbeing, recognising its importance for our collective progress. This includes hosting reflective practice sessions tailored for our legal team and organising an all staff away day with a focus on wellbeing in the fourth quarter, which also served to strengthen our team's bond.

In 2024/25, we will establish a wellbeing working group. This group will evaluate the success of our current wellbeing initiatives, address challenges, and identify key areas for continued development.

We are simultaneously developing a people strategy that reflects our values and ambitions. Central to this strategy is our commitment to making sure that Access Social Care is a brilliant place to work. This will ensure we can retain talented people to help us deliver our mission and vision across all of our workstreams.

SUPPORTING THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY CARE LAW

In response to the critical national shortfall of community care lawyers, our team is actively developing a comprehensive career pathway initiative. This project is dedicated to enhancing the recruitment process and bolstering the retention rates of specialist lawyers in this vital field. Our aim is to cultivate a robust, and growing, legal community that is well-equipped to meet the growing needs of our society. In order to do this we are:

- Partnering with universities to run community care legal advice clinics. In these clinics, students volunteer their time with us to carry out casework for our clients, under the supervision of our expert staff. This gives the students first-hand experience with community care cases, supporting them to develop skills and increasing their interest in the field. We continue to grow the number of universities we partner with and the number of students volunteering their time.



- Developing online training to support a range of organisations who form part of the community care advice ecosystem including universities, advice agencies, law firms and social care providers. This training will both make sure that a range of organisations are able to provide high-quality advice and information to their beneficiaries, alongside increasing interest and understanding in community care law as a career option.
- Setting up a community of practice for existing community care specialists to access peer support and supervision, training and seminars, and wellbeing initiatives. This will support reduce risk of burnout and reduce the number of lawyers leaving the professions.

Access Social Care, worked in partnership with University of York, to pilot a Letter Writing Clinic where law students support Access Social Care clients to write a letter to their local authority about their social care issues.

The Letter Writing Clinic's first successful outcome has led to a client being repaid a significant sum of money as a result of a missed direct payment from last year. The missed payment has meant the person with social care needs has had to miss out on taking part in activities such as swimming lessons, that are crucial to their wellbeing. The care plan of the person with social care needs is also going to be reviewed to make sure that their needs are being fully met. The outcome was achieved within 2 weeks of the letter being sent! The payment now means the client can re-start the activities that were so beneficial to their wellbeing.

The students involved in this case worked hard to obtain relevant information and write a robust letter citing the law to achieve the positive outcome for the client. Esme Edwards, the student who wrote the letter, explains what motivated her to take part in the clinic and what her experience was like:

"I was really excited when I saw that this opportunity was available as community care law is not an area currently covered by my degree and so allowed me the opportunity to explore an area of law I wouldn't have been able to otherwise. I found it really rewarding to be able to talk to and support the client with their issue, and then see the positive impact our letter had had on their case. I thoroughly enjoyed my time volunteering for this clinic."

Esme Edwards, Student Participant at the Letter Writing Clinic

WE GENERATE INCOME

OUR PRO BONO SUPPORT

ASC's volunteers support the charity in many ways, and the charity benefits greatly from their experience and commitment to the cause.

In 2023/24 we partnered with four law firms to provide legal advice and casework on:

- Care Act assessments
- Welfare benefits appeals
- Social care charging
- One-off letter writing

Around 150 solicitors volunteered their time to provide this advice. Additionally, we received 9 pieces of advice from our Pro Bono panel of barristers and solicitors. These one-off pieces of advice enable our work in other ways such as supporting us with the wording of our contracts or completing research. We would like to extend our thanks for this to Baker MacKenzie, Field Fisher, Orrick and Slaughter and May, Landmark Chambers, 39 Essex Chambers and Doughty Street Chambers.

OUR FUNDERS

We are extraordinarily grateful for financial support without whom our work would not be possible. We have received financial support from generous individual donations, pro bono funders as well as funding organisations to enable us to do the work we do. With thanks to:

- The Baring Foundation
- CareTech Foundation
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- Fidelity UK Foundation
- The Legal Education Foundation
- Rangoonwala Foundation
- Pears Foundation
- Oak Foundation
- Disrupt Foundation
- Barnwood Trust
- Rayne Foundation
- 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- The Access To Justice Foundation
- The Dulverton Trust

In addition to grant funding, ASC also received income from its membership model, individual donors and through licencing Access Ava.

LOOKING FORWARDS TO 2024/25 AND BEYOND

OUR IMPACT PRIORITIES

EMPOWER

Membership Model: We will develop our membership model in 2024/25 so that more social care providers are able to access advice from us in a way that is affordable for them in a difficult time for the social care sector.

Hubs: We will create a new community of interest hub for carers, utilising a network of peer navigators to support new carers through the social care system.

Hubs: We will create a new community of interest hub for carers, utilising a network of peer navigators to support new carers through the social care system.

ENFORCE

Community Care Legal Specialists: We will launch a community of practice for community care legal specialists, enabling them to access peer support, wellbeing activities and expert supervision, to promote retention of lawyers in this field and increasing the availability of legal advice.

We will introduce pro-bono clinics at 2 Universities, allowing students to volunteer on some of our cases. This will increase the level of interest in community care law as a career option and create a pipeline of new community care lawyers.



CHALLENGE

Access Social Care is asking DHSC, the Department of Levelling up and the Treasury to share the evidence that was used to decide how to fund adult social care in a landmark legal case which will for the first time enable the social care sector to interrogate the quality of the evidence relied upon and identify gaps in evidence to drive up decision-making.

We will continue to influence the Legal Aid Agency to make positive changes to the way community care lawyers are paid for the work they do and remove barriers to people accessing legal aid.

Influence the Legal Aid Agency to make positive changes for community care lawyers and remove barriers to people accessing legal aid.

ENABLING PRIORITIES

WE USE TECHNOLOGY

AccessAva: We are aiming to establish 25 AccessAva partnerships by March 2025.

Case Management system: We will implement a new system to enhance the effectiveness and security of the legal team's operations.

Data Protection: We will carry out high-priority improvements based on an external Data Protection audit and form a dedicated working group to maintain top rankings in key protection measures and integrate data protection into the organisational culture at all levels.

We are aiming to establish 25 AccessAva partnerships by March 2025

WE VALUE OUR PEOPLE

New People Strategy: We will support our team with a new People Strategy, and our workforce will be invited to contribute to its development. This strategy will outline our plans to strengthen the recruitment, development and retention of community care experts and the broader organisation.

OUR INCOME

Strategic Fundraising: Our fundraising team will remain dedicated to strategic fundraising, focusing on grant funding trends and strategies to align with and respond to funders' priorities. We will also continue our work to develop and strengthen our impact methodology and framework, continuing the significant progress made on this in the past year.

Communication and Marketing Strategy. We are fully committed to supporting ASC's mission and vision by developing a new communication and marketing strategy. This strategy will be developed in collaboration with our colleagues to better understand our target audience and determine the most effective communication channels. It will also help us identify the internal resources needed to support our work and facilitate external communication. We plan to begin the recruitment process for a new communication and marketing team in the spring of 2025.

Communication and Marketing Strategy. We are fully committed to supporting ASC's mission and vision by developing a new communication and marketing strategy.

OUR GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

As noted in the introduction, as we approach our fifth anniversary later this year, several of our Trustees have reached the end of their term or decided that it was time for them to move on from ASC. As an organisation, we are enormously grateful to our outgoing Trustees for all of their support, guidance and practical assistance throughout their tenures, and for supporting with the transition arrangements.

ASC is now entering a new phase of development, and these changes present an exciting opportunity to renew the ASC Board to guide and support on the next stage of our journey. Two new Trustees joined in July 2024 and a recruitment process will be launched in the Autumn to add to our Trustee numbers

ASC follows the Charity Commission's best practice guidance on recruitment and induction of new trustees. Skills gaps relevant to the strategic objectives of the charity are identified by the Board by way of informal audit (which was conducted in summer 2024). Potential trustees will submit a CV and covering letter and meet the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and one other member of the Executive team. Then the chair and at least one other trustee will conduct an interview to assess the suitability of the candidate. New trustees are offered an induction programme including a set of key documents, meetings with other trustees, training courses relevant to their roles and in-depth discussions with the Executive Team. Opportunities for training are offered to support trustees in their roles. In line with our diversity aims, we will work hard to encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates and under-represented groups. The Articles of Association include terms of office and, with the exception of two of the founding trustees, an initial appointment is made for a 3-year term. Trustees will be eligible for reappointment for one further term of 3 years. One of our founding trustees and our current Chair, Chris Hale, had an initial term of 5 years and was reappointed for a further 3 years in 2024.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the overall strategic direction of the charity and for developing policies and plans to support the delivery of our charitable objectives. The Board monitors progress across all areas of activity including legal requirements and financial performance. The Board began a governance review in April 2024 and the first stage of this is informing the renewal of the Board and will continue to work with the new Board in early 2025 on the next phase of this review.

A CEO is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations, the authority for operational matters including financial management, employment and performance relating to agreed key objectives is delegated to the CEO and other members of the Executive team. Any decisions outside of the strategic direction agreed by the Board, or more than £100,000 outside of the agreed budget, are referred to trustees for approval. Pay and remuneration of the charity's key management personnel is reviewed by the Board each year and any changes made are based on performance, an assessment of the market, the financial position of the organisation and relativity across the team.

If the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is wound up, the Trustees as members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

ASC ended the financial year on 31.3.24 in a strong financial position having grown its income and secured long-term grant funding. We have recorded a surplus of £514,608 but this surplus relates to funds that were received in the year but committed to expenditure in the following year.

INCOME

Our total income for the year was £2,516,586, a significant increase from the prior year (£1,669,136). This increase is predominantly due to the renewal of our partnership with Oak Foundation at a significantly increased funding level (£1.15m per annum vs £386k) but we have also broadened our sources of income with further licensing of Access Ava and the support of new grant funders such as Rayne Foundation and Access to Justice Foundation.

EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure in the reporting period was £2,001,978, again a significant increase from the prior year (£1,523,409). This increase was driven by increasing staff costs (£360k), particularly supporting our legal casework and AccessAva, reflecting both an expansion of our team and inflationary-related increases. Amortisation of Access Ava was also higher this year as funds invested are increasingly released to our income and expenditure statement.

GOING CONCERN

Access Social Care is still a relatively new charity and our experience of the last few years from our incorporation leaves us well-placed to manage the risk that we face. This position is supported by strong liquidity, sufficient reserves for business continuity and development plans, a good relationship with our key funders and proven ability to retain and secure new services.

We have set out in this report a review of

Access Social Care's financial performance, the reserves position and principal risks and uncertainties. Notwithstanding the ongoing pressures on fundraising, our performance to date has been robust in terms of income generation and Access Social Care has remained firmly in control of its service quality and financial performance throughout the operating period.

The 2024/25 budget has been approved by the Access Social Care Board. Our planning processes, including financial projections, take into consideration the current economic climate and its potential impact on the various sources of income and planned expenditure. The trustees therefore have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, "Charities and Public Benefit". Access Social Care's charitable objects are enshrined within its memorandum and articles and as such the trustees ensure that the charity's activities are carried out for the public benefit through its strategic priorities. This is done primarily through the delivery of services aimed at people with a social care needs as well as those who support them. This report

allows us to show how our charitable funds are spent and the impact and benefits that has on those using our services, as well as the wider impact on society

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Spend on further development of AccessAva in this year was £80,483. This amount has been capitalized and does not appear in our expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA). This expenditure supported the pilot programme and included further development of AccessAva to respond to the emerging needs of our pilot partners.

FUNDS ANALYSIS

Reserves are maintained at a level that enables the charity to manage operational financial risks and short-term income volatility. They allow the charity to sustain service delivery, in particular legal casework support to our clients, over the long term, as well as ensuring that financial commitments can be met as they fall due.

Of the charity's £1,818,123 total funds at the end of March 2024, £377,988 are restricted funds that are committed to future expenditure and not available for general purposes.

We hold £1,178,164 in two designated funds; the first (£334,188) covers the amortisation of our intangible asset, Access Ava. These funds result from cash expenditure on development which were not expensed at the point of purchase in the SOFA. Instead, these funds will be used to cover future amortisation costs and therefore will be released to the SOFA in future years.

The second designated fund (£843,976) holds the balance of our Oak Foundation funding.

This funding is flexible, but it is not part of our general funds as it must be spent over a calendar year period.

Our free reserves, or General Funds, are £261,971 (FY23: £313,841). Free reserves are those unrestricted funds which are freely available to the trustees to spend on any of the charity's purposes.

RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have reviewed the Reserves policy this year due to the confirmation of long-term funding. In this new light, the existing policy had become out of date. A new policy has been devised with the following considerations:

- Secured funding sources
- Cash flow
- Fixed costs
- Ensuring our ability to effectively complete or transfer vital services in the event of loss of income

The Trustees have therefore decided to set a target for reserves this year of retaining six months of essential costs (£362,000) as well as non-negotiable costs required in restructuring. This will ensure provision for supporting services and dealing appropriately with liabilities in the event of a drop in income. This target should be held in cash to ensure that funds are liquid.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Our current free reserves provide four months of cover (£261,971) and the trustees alongside the Executive team will review strategies to bridge this gap in the coming year.

MANAGING RISK

Access Social Care continually reviews its risk framework, ensuring that it aligns with the organisation's strategic aims and objectives. The Board of Trustees reviews the full register annually and is provided with regular exception reporting flagging where risk scoring has changed, and additional mitigation actions being taken. Independent assurance is provided by an outsourced independent audit function from Godfrey Wilson accountants. Risk management at the operational level is managed by the Executive team, who review risks regularly both within their directorates and as a group. The table below outlines some of the risks we review and the mitigation strategy for each.

PRINCIPAL RISKS	BACKGROUND	OUR MITIGATION STRATEGY
Diversifying income streams away from grant funding.	We have had incredibly generous support from a wide range of grant funders, but we need to grow other income streams, including commercial ones, to reduce our reliance on grants in future.	We have worked hard to grow our partners using our AccessAva and we continue to research all available sources of funding from trusts and foundation. In addition, we will explore new funding models such as social investment if they can support our impact aims and they are right for our charity.
Membership Income drops below expected levels detailed in the budget e.g. loss of a major partner	Our membership is made up of care sector organisations. We recognise that this is an extremely challenging time for the sector with many of our members having to make difficult decisions to remain financially viable.	We have strengthened our relationship management work with our partners, improved communication around the return on investment our members gain, and we are rolling out a number of alternative models to retain existing partners and attract new ones.
Staff experience burnout or well-being issues due to volume & pace of organisational delivery and change	As a small and growing charity with huge ambitions, there is always a tension between what we want to achieve and what we have capacity for.	We recognise that more work is needed to refine our business plan and agree on a set of priorities which fits our strategy and the capacity of the team. We have recently recruited a People Director who has prioritised a People Strategy to ensure we get the best of our people; this is due for review by the Board in October.

FUNDRAISING

Access Social Care's small fundraising team is line managed by the Director of Partners & Engagement and includes a part-time Senior Fundraiser and part-time Fundraiser, with some support from Admin staff on prospect research. The team relies on input from the CEO, Finance Director, wider Exec and operational teams to provide accurate and relevant content for proposals and reporting. The CEO and/or Executive members sign off applications over the value of £100k.

The Fundraising team had another successful year through grant-giving, which remained the main source of fundraised income. With traditional pipeline fundraising continuing to pose challenges, the team's approach focuses on building long-term strategic partnerships with funders. Via careful stewardship throughout the year, the team, along with support from the CEO, Executive team and other colleagues have maintained excellent relationships with many funders who are now on their second and third grants. We have taken grateful advantage of extended partnership offers from Funder Plus Schemes that have included; small capacity grants, Team Development, meeting room spaces and networking opportunities.

Other areas of Fundraising include

- **Individual Giving** – This area of fundraising is increasing steadily, as the charity's stakeholders continue to grow. We now segment communication to 'opted-in' individuals, with a view to maintaining existing and growing new individual givers. We have received tranches of opted in supporters who have donated to 2 previous Crowd Justice campaigns through their legal crowd funding platform.
- **Major Donors** – ASC has one individual major donor and is supported by one of our Trustees and some external well networked supporters who help us reach new influential audiences.
- **CSR** – ASC benefits from donations by 6 law firms which is in addition to the pro-bono support given through legal clinics to the charity. One of the firms has committed a three-year pledge to supporting the charity.

ASC Fundraising Team regularly monitor fundraising trends through publications, webinars, and peer connections. Whilst the main source of income in Fundraising remains grants, the team have an open and flexible approach to opportunities which suit Access Social care.

REPORT AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as auditors to the charity during the period and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 15 October 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Chris Hale - Trustee

Access Your Right To Care

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Charity number	1186714																		
Registered office	86-90 Paul Street London EC21 4NE																		
Trustees	<p>The trustees who served during the period and up to the date of this report were as follows:</p> <table><tr><td>Tracey Gyateng</td><td>(appointed 11 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Christopher Hale</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Rhoda Iranloye</td><td>(resigned 19 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Sarah Maguire</td><td>(appointed 11 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Kevin McGuirk</td><td>(resigned 19 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Linda Redford</td><td>(resigned 5 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Joyce Sarpong</td><td>(resigned 15 May 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Janine Tregelles</td><td>(resigned 5 July 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Robbie Turner</td><td>(resigned 19 July 2024)</td></tr></table>	Tracey Gyateng	(appointed 11 July 2024)	Christopher Hale		Rhoda Iranloye	(resigned 19 July 2024)	Sarah Maguire	(appointed 11 July 2024)	Kevin McGuirk	(resigned 19 July 2024)	Linda Redford	(resigned 5 July 2024)	Joyce Sarpong	(resigned 15 May 2024)	Janine Tregelles	(resigned 5 July 2024)	Robbie Turner	(resigned 19 July 2024)
Tracey Gyateng	(appointed 11 July 2024)																		
Christopher Hale																			
Rhoda Iranloye	(resigned 19 July 2024)																		
Sarah Maguire	(appointed 11 July 2024)																		
Kevin McGuirk	(resigned 19 July 2024)																		
Linda Redford	(resigned 5 July 2024)																		
Joyce Sarpong	(resigned 15 May 2024)																		
Janine Tregelles	(resigned 5 July 2024)																		
Robbie Turner	(resigned 19 July 2024)																		
Chief executive officer	Kari Gerstheimer																		
Senior management team	<table><tr><td>Joanne Williams</td><td>Director of Fundraising & Communications</td></tr><tr><td>Lainey Gough</td><td>Director of Operations and Impact (resigned May 2023)</td></tr><tr><td>Laura Peters</td><td>Director of Legal Services (appointed January 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Alan Bird</td><td>Chief Technology Officer</td></tr><tr><td>Pauline Gayle</td><td>People Director (resigned October 2023)</td></tr><tr><td>Serena Kashim</td><td>People Director (appointed February 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Peter Stimpson</td><td>Finance Director</td></tr></table>	Joanne Williams	Director of Fundraising & Communications	Lainey Gough	Director of Operations and Impact (resigned May 2023)	Laura Peters	Director of Legal Services (appointed January 2024)	Alan Bird	Chief Technology Officer	Pauline Gayle	People Director (resigned October 2023)	Serena Kashim	People Director (appointed February 2024)	Peter Stimpson	Finance Director				
Joanne Williams	Director of Fundraising & Communications																		
Lainey Gough	Director of Operations and Impact (resigned May 2023)																		
Laura Peters	Director of Legal Services (appointed January 2024)																		
Alan Bird	Chief Technology Officer																		
Pauline Gayle	People Director (resigned October 2023)																		
Serena Kashim	People Director (appointed February 2024)																		
Peter Stimpson	Finance Director																		
Bankers	The Co-Operative Bank Business Direct Skelmerdale WN8 6GH																		
Auditors	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD																		

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Access Your Right To Care

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Access Your Right To Care (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 6 to the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Access Your Right To Care

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out in the trustees' report, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Access Your Right To Care

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

(1) We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, and assessed the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Throughout the audit, we remained alert to possible indications of non-compliance.

(2) We reviewed the charity's policies and procedures in relation to:

- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations, and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risk of fraud, and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- Designing and implementing internal controls to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud.

(3) We inspected the minutes of trustee meetings.

(4) We enquired about any non-routine communication with regulators and reviewed any reports made to them.

(5) We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and assessed their compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(6) We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions or balances that may indicate a risk of material fraud or error.

(7) We assessed the risk of fraud through management override of controls and carried out procedures to address this risk. Our procedures included:

- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries;
- Assessing judgements and accounting estimates for potential bias;
- Reviewing related party transactions; and
- Testing transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. Irregularities that arise due to fraud can be even harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Access Your Right To Care

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Date: 16 October 2024

GODFREY WILSON LIMITED

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

Godfrey Wilson Limited is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	693,622	1,326,297	2,019,919	1,267,251
Charitable activities	4	-	488,784	488,784	400,722
Investments		-	7,883	7,883	1,163
Total income		<u>693,622</u>	<u>1,822,964</u>	<u>2,516,586</u>	<u>1,669,136</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		146,127	85,437	231,564	184,686
Charitable activities		724,215	1,046,199	1,770,414	1,338,723
Total expenditure	5	<u>870,342</u>	<u>1,131,636</u>	<u>2,001,978</u>	<u>1,523,409</u>
Net income / (expenditure)		(176,720)	691,328	514,608	145,727
Transfers between funds		<u>(37,457)</u>	<u>37,457</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds	6	(214,177)	728,785	514,608	145,727
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>592,165</u>	<u>711,350</u>	<u>1,303,515</u>	<u>1,157,788</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>377,988</u></u>	<u><u>1,440,135</u></u>	<u><u>1,818,123</u></u>	<u><u>1,303,515</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 14 to the accounts.

Access Your Right To Care

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets				
Intangible fixed assets	9		<u>334,188</u>	<u>397,509</u>
Current assets				
Debtors	10	182,803		183,348
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>1,583,457</u>		<u>985,426</u>
		1,766,260		1,168,774
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	11	<u>282,325</u>		<u>262,768</u>
Net current assets			<u>1,483,935</u>	<u>906,006</u>
Net assets	13		<u>1,818,123</u>	<u>1,303,515</u>
Funds	14			
Restricted funds			377,988	592,165
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			1,178,164	397,509
General funds			<u>261,971</u>	<u>313,841</u>
Total charity funds			<u>1,818,123</u>	<u>1,303,515</u>

Approved by the trustees on 15 October 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Chris Hale - Trustee

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Net movement in funds	514,608	145,727
Adjustments for:		
Amortisation charges	143,804	86,825
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(7,883)	(1,163)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	545	(64,137)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	19,557	35,109
Net cash provided by operating activities	670,631	202,361
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	7,883	1,163
Purchase of intangible fixed assets	(80,483)	(195,649)
Net cash used in investing activities	(72,600)	(194,486)
Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period	598,031	7,875
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	985,426	977,551
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	1,583,457	985,426

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

Access Your Right To Care is a charitable incorporated organisation registered in England and Wales. The registered office address is 86-90 Paul Street, London, EC21 4NE.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Access Your Right To Care meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

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

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income from subscriptions received in advance is deferred until criteria for income recognition are met.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

As discussed in the trustees' report, the charity benefitted from significant pro bono support in 2023 and 2024, however these have not been recognised in the accounts on the basis that the charity would not have been able to afford these services if not provided for free.

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Irrecoverable VAT is allocated as a support cost.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities based on the proportion of direct costs, as follows:

	2024	2023
Raising funds	12%	12%
Charitable activities	88%	88%

i) Intangible fixed assets

Internally generated intangible assets meeting the relevant recognition criteria are initially measured at cost. Intangible fixed assets relate to the costs incurred in developing the charity's ChatBot asset.

Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation process commences upon the completion of each sprint. The amortisation rate in use for ChatBot is 4 years straight line.

j) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1. Accounting policies (continued)

k) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

l) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

m) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

n) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

o) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying 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 if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determining the value of additions to capitalised intangible assets and the associated amortisation policy.

2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	1,025,746	241,505	1,267,251
Charitable activities	-	400,722	400,722
Investments	-	1,163	1,163
Total income	<u>1,025,746</u>	<u>643,390</u>	<u>1,669,136</u>
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	37,320	147,366	184,686
Charitable activities	611,420	727,303	1,338,723
Total expenditure	<u>648,740</u>	<u>874,669</u>	<u>1,523,409</u>
Net income / (expenditure)	377,006	(231,279)	145,727
Transfers between funds	(176,755)	176,755	-
Net movement in funds	<u>200,251</u>	<u>(54,524)</u>	<u>145,727</u>

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Oak Foundation grant		1,115,000	1,115,000
Trusts and foundations	693,622	168,000	861,622
Corporate donations	-	38,022	38,022
Individual donations	-	5,275	5,275
Total income from donations	<u>693,622</u>	<u>1,326,297</u>	<u>2,019,919</u>

Prior period comparative:

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Oak Foundation grant	457,660	-	457,660
Trusts and foundations	565,680	209,000	774,680
Corporate donations	2,406	25,013	27,419
Individual donations	-	7,492	7,492
Total income from donations	<u>1,025,746</u>	<u>241,505</u>	<u>1,267,251</u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

4. Income from charitable activities

	2024	2023
	Total	Total
	£	£
Consultancy income	720	360
ChatBot licensing	39,533	-
Subscriptions	<u>448,531</u>	<u>400,362</u>
Total income from charitable activities	<u>488,784</u>	<u>400,722</u>

All income from charitable activities in the current and prior year was unrestricted.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	177,341	1,118,687	277,587	1,573,615
Other staff costs	1,708	14,713	26,432	42,853
Consultancy	7,150	74,197	24,046	105,393
IT and telephone costs	-	66,963	26,900	93,863
Office costs	150	6,358	11,488	17,996
Finance and governance	-	4	15,050	15,054
Amortisation	-	143,804	-	143,804
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	9,400	9,400
Sub-total	186,349	1,424,726	390,903	2,001,978
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>45,215</u>	<u>345,688</u>	<u>(390,903)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>231,564</u>	<u>1,770,414</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,001,978</u>

Total governance costs were £7,300 (2023: £13,137).

Prior period comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	133,460	945,493	134,411	1,213,364
Other staff costs	1,371	20,012	29,320	50,703
Consultancy	15,400	24,621	54,781	94,802
IT and telephone costs	-	8,046	27,745	35,791
Office costs	158	5,122	4,042	9,322
Finance and governance	-	-	20,634	20,634
Amortisation	-	86,825	-	86,825
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	11,968	11,968
Sub-total	150,389	1,090,119	282,901	1,523,409
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>34,297</u>	<u>248,604</u>	<u>(282,901)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>184,686</u>	<u>1,338,723</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,523,409</u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2024 £	2023 £
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	569	581
Amortisation	143,804	86,825
Auditors' remuneration:		
▪ Statutory audit (ex VAT)	<u>7,150</u>	<u>6,500</u>

During the period two trustees were reimbursed for travel expenses, totalling £569 (2023: two trustees were reimbursed £581 for travel expenses).

In common with other charities of our size and nature we use our auditors to assist with the preparation of the financial statements.

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	1,382,938	1,008,684
Social security costs	130,859	87,579
Pension costs	59,818	45,440
Freelancers	-	71,661
	<u>1,573,615</u>	<u>1,213,364</u>

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Number of employees earning in the range of:		
£60,000 - £70,000	2	1
£70,000 - £80,000	1	-
£80,000 - £90,000	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Senior Management Team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the period were £417,154 (2023: £383,775).

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Average head count	<u>36</u>	<u>32</u>

8. Taxation

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

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

9. Intangible assets

	ChatBot app £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	532,230
Additions in period	<u>80,483</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>612,713</u>
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2023	134,721
Charge for the period	<u>143,804</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>278,525</u>
Net book value	
At 31 March 2024	<u>334,188</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>397,509</u></u>

Intangible fixed assets relates to the charity's ChatBot app which has now been brought into use, but continues to be developed. The app will be amortised over 4 years as each stage of development is complete.

10. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	115,568	102,926
Prepayments	23,070	8,385
Accrued income	<u>44,165</u>	<u>72,037</u>
	<u>182,803</u>	<u><u>183,348</u></u>

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	8,332	2,065
Accruals	55,260	32,251
Other taxation and social security	69,126	72,010
Deferred income (see note 12)	<u>149,607</u>	<u>156,442</u>
	<u>282,325</u>	<u><u>262,768</u></u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

12. Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 April 2023	156,442	138,760
Deferred during the period	149,607	156,442
Released during the period	<u>(156,442)</u>	<u>(138,760)</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>149,607</u>	<u>156,442</u>

Deferred income relates to subscription income invoiced in advance.

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	334,188	-	334,188
Current assets	382,988	843,976	539,296	1,766,260
Current liabilities	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(277,325)</u>	<u>(282,325)</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2024	<u>377,988</u>	<u>1,178,164</u>	<u>261,971</u>	<u>1,818,123</u>

Prior year comparative

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	397,509	-	397,509
Current assets	602,165	-	566,609	1,168,774
Current liabilities	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(252,768)</u>	<u>(262,768)</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2023	<u>592,165</u>	<u>397,509</u>	<u>313,841</u>	<u>1,303,515</u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

14. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Oak Foundation	356,273	-	(356,273)	-	-
Hub / Casework	68,730	241,730	(95,385)	43	215,118
ChatBot	115,481	331,392	(352,701)	(37,500)	56,672
Public Legal Education	51,681	110,500	(58,563)	-	103,618
Wellbeing	-	10,000	(7,420)	-	2,580
Total restricted funds	592,165	693,622	(870,342)	(37,457)	377,988
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
<i>ChatBot</i>	397,509	-	(143,804)	80,483	334,188
<i>Oak Foundation</i>	-	1,115,000	(271,024)	-	843,976
Total designated funds	397,509	1,115,000	(414,828)	80,483	1,178,164
General funds	313,841	707,964	(716,808)	(43,026)	261,971
Total unrestricted funds	711,350	1,822,964	(1,131,636)	37,457	1,440,135
Total funds	1,303,515	2,516,586	(2,001,978)	-	1,818,123

Purposes of restricted funds

Oak Foundation

This a core grant which has enabled the set up of Access Social Care. The majority of the grant covers the cost of salaries.

Hub / Casework

These funds are to set up the place-based hub in Gloucestershire and Croydon, fund community care casework, strategic casework and strategic data work.

ChatBot

These funds are to develop a legal information chatbot, which will be free at the point of use and available on the Access Social Care website.

Public Legal Education

These funds are to increase legal knowledge and legal capability and to improve the career pathway for community care law.

Wellbeing

This grant is restricted for use only in the context of the Access Social Care team's wellbeing needs. An organisational retreat will be piloted to offer staff a space and time away from work.

14. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of designated funds

ChatBot

The designated ChatBot fund represents the net book value of the intangible asset and is maintained as a distinct fund to separate it from the charity's general funds.

Oak Foundation

This fund is designated for the purpose of supporting Access Social Care's career pathway strategy as well as providing for core administrative costs.

Transfers between funds

Transfers between funds relate to restricted capital expenditure for the ChatBot project and relocating the ChatBot intangible asset to a designated fund. The restriction on the funds has been discharged by the purchase of the asset, as the ongoing use of the asset is not restricted. This restriction has also been discharged from the internal staff time capitalised.

Prior year comparative	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds					
Oak Foundation	273,716	457,660	(375,103)	-	356,273
Hub / Casework	97,272	146,400	(174,942)	-	68,730
ChatBot	20,926	366,686	(95,376)	(176,755)	115,481
Public Legal Education	-	55,000	(3,319)	-	51,681
Total restricted funds	<u>391,914</u>	<u>1,025,746</u>	<u>(648,740)</u>	<u>(176,755)</u>	<u>592,165</u>
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
<i>Programme work</i>	-	215,000	(215,000)	-	-
<i>ChatBot</i>	-	-	-	397,509	397,509
Total designated funds	<u>-</u>	<u>215,000</u>	<u>(215,000)</u>	<u>397,509</u>	<u>397,509</u>
General funds	<u>765,874</u>	<u>428,390</u>	<u>(659,669)</u>	<u>(220,754)</u>	<u>313,841</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>765,874</u>	<u>643,390</u>	<u>(874,669)</u>	<u>176,755</u>	<u>711,350</u>
Total funds	<u><u>1,157,788</u></u>	<u><u>1,669,136</u></u>	<u><u>(1,523,409)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>1,303,515</u></u>

15. Related party transactions

Rhoda Iranloye, a former trustee, is also a Group Director of Regulatory for Dimensions. During the year the charity received contract income of £29,849 (2023: £7,380) from Dimensions. Sarah Maguire, a trustee from July 2024, is also CEO of Choice Support. During the year the charity received contract income of £35,849 from Choice Support. All transactions were carried out at normal business terms.

THANK YOU

A note of thanks to all donors, volunteers and other supporters of ASC. Without you none of our achievements and successes would have been possible. We sincerely hope that you will continue to stand by our side as we continue on our journey, working towards a future where we all get the social care we have a right to.

With best wishes

The Access Social Care Team

ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

England & Wales - Charity number 1186714

Accounts



asc access
social care



Access Social Care

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2022- March 2023

Charity Registration: 1186714

Contents

- [A note from our Chair](#)
- [What we do and why we exist](#)
- [The impact of COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis](#)
- [Our products and services](#)
 - [Our membership model](#)
 - [Our community work](#)
 - [Our Chatbot](#)
- [Our Impact](#)
 - [We empower](#)
 - [We drive system change](#)
 - [We use technology](#)
 - [We value our people](#)
- [Our people](#)
- [Looking forwards to 23/24 and beyond](#)
- [Our governance and management](#)
- [Financial Review](#)
- [Report and Audited Financial Statements](#)

A note from our Chair



Access Social Care started operating at the start of the first pandemic lockdown in April 2020. Now, at the time of writing, the country is gripped by a cost-of-living crisis alongside a social care workforce crisis.

With more than half a million people on a waiting list just to get a social care assessment¹ and 2.6 million people over 50 with an unmet care need², our work has never been more needed.

We continue to rise to the challenge in this uncertain financial climate, transitioning from a start-up to a more established organisation. We have had success growing our impact with our award winning chatbot, by enabling local citizens in our place-based Hubs who need early legal support, to use the chatbot to secure assessments, fair social care charging, and adequate social care provision; and using chatbot data to influence local authorities to change their policies and practices.

Our expertise has protected clients' wellbeing by preventing unlawful reductions in 1:1 support hours which in one case the local authority wanted to halve. We supported the family with legal advice which led to the Council not proceeding with this planned cut.

Too often, barriers to adequate and appropriate social care mean our clients and their loved ones experience unimaginable hardships. Our extraordinary colleagues so often go over and above to ensure people with social care needs get the right support, and I would like to thank them for the profound difference they make to people's lives.

Thanks also to our funders and partners for the support you provide to make our work possible.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Janine Tregelles'.

Janine Tregelles CBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees

¹ Statistic from [ADASS Waiting for Care Report](#)

² Statistic from [Age UK for the Care and Support Alliance](#)

What we do and why we exist

Every day millions of older and disabled people are denied the social care they need. Most local authorities can't meet the growing demand for care, and none are confident they can meet their legal duties in the future. This affects all of us; we will all need social care at some point in our lives either for ourselves or a loved one.

We all have a right to hold public bodies to account, but most of us cannot afford lawyers so rely on legal aid. The 92% drop in legal aid cases since 2010 means that we have nowhere to turn.

Without access to justice, our rights do not exist. The rule of law is broken.

ASC is a specialist health and social care rights advice organisation. We work with communities to increase knowledge of the law and our rights. We collaborate with social services whilst ensuring legal obligations are met. With a 98% success rate, our teams of lawyers ensure fair access to justice when things go wrong. We are working towards a future where social care is adequately funded and we all get the support we need.

Our strategy

Our vision is for people to get the health and social care support they need to live fulfilled lives.

Our mission is for ASC to be the leading specialist health and social care legal advice provider. We collaborate, educate and challenge to drive system change and ensure rights are met.

IMPACT PRIORITIES

We Empower
Communities use the law early on to get better outcomes

We Enforce
People get early legal advice and support when they need it

We drive SystemChange
We use data to challenge persuade and influence to improve quality, policy and practice locally and nationally

ENABLING PRIORITIES

We use Technology
We innovate and use technology to increase efficiency and impact

We value our People
Our People strategy protects the social care law career pathway and ensures ASC is the best place to work

We generate Income
Our diverse income streams grow to support increased impact

Our values

At ASC, we are...

Trustworthy

- Recognised for excellence, we will be the best we can be in everything we do. We will be truthful, independent and outcomes focussed.

Fair

- We believe in treating people with kindness and compassion in a way that is right, reasonable, and just.

Fearless

- We will do what is right, not what is easy. We will bravely challenge injustice.

Inclusive

- Our beneficiaries' voices will influence our thinking and decision making at all levels of our organisation. Collaborative in our thinking, we will work with others to achieve our goals.

Positive

- We will be constructive and progressive in our challenge. We will optimistically and dynamically drive for change

Our approach – managing conflict and living to our values

Our purpose is to improve the lives of people with social care needs. Our approach is to do this by collaborating with all parts of the system. We know that whilst we positively and constructively challenge public bodies through our casework, we can still work with leaders from public bodies to drive improvements to policy and practice.

Occasionally in the course of our work with our members - some of whom are social care providers - we come across pockets of poor practice, unlawful behaviours, safeguarding or human rights concerns. When this occurs, we live to our values; we fearlessly do what is right not what is easy, challenging injustice and driving for change. We are firm throughout the life of our relationship with our members that we only work with providers who are willing to engage with us, as human rights and specialist community care lawyers at an Executive and Leadership level, to secure continuous improvements to their services. We feel so strongly about this approach it is built into our contract.

To help us with design, delivery and decision making we work with experts by experience, ensuring our work is informed by the voices of the people our charity exists to serve. Our advisory panels and community partners support with this work.

About social care

We all know someone who relies on social care to live in dignity, to make life choices, or to live safely in their own home, in a care home, or in the community. That might be a parent or a grandparent with dementia, a child or a sibling with a learning disability, or a friend with a mental health issue. By the time we are of pension age, half of us will be disabled. We will all need social care at some point, either for ourselves or for a loved one.

If done well, social care can change lives for the better. But every day millions of older and disabled people are denied the social care they need and have a right to. Most local authorities can't meet growing demand: 94% say they don't have the funding or workforce to meet their legal duties to provide care³.

Sometimes the problem is no support – We helped a 90-year-old with dementia who needed prompting to ensure she remembered to wash, dress and feed herself. Because she was physically able the authorities said she didn't need any help. She was left hungry in soiled clothing.

Sometimes it's the wrong support - Like the 18 year who had to give up her degree because she was trapped in hospital for 18 months when all she needed to go home was an accessible bathroom.

Sometimes the support comes too late – We helped a 15-year-old who just needed a few hours of help a week but instead ended up in an inpatient mental health unit, over-medicated and restrained, hundreds of miles away from his mum and dad.

The impact of COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis

Pre-pandemic, social care was already on a financial knife edge. The pandemic caused demand for social care to increase. The cost-of-living crisis is now pushing cash strapped local authorities - and the people that rely on them for support - to the precipice.

Local authorities are sounding the alarm that 430,000 people are on waiting lists just to get a social care assessment.⁴ And a helpline data project led by us here at ASC has shown that there was a 400% increase in carers calling helplines during the pandemic. As we emerged from lockdown, call volumes remained around twice as high as pre-pandemic levels⁵. This new wave of advice seekers comprises of people already in the system who have been holding back new referrals due to lockdown, as well as a whole new group of people entering crisis.

The demand for social care advice is unprecedented. But while legal interventions can save lives, **71% of the population of England and Wales do not have access to a community care legal aid provider**⁶. Access Social Care needs to expand to meet the demand from new people requiring our support.



³ Statistic from [ADASS Spring Survey 2023](#)

⁴ Statistic from [ADASS Waiting for Care Report](#)

⁵ Statistic from our [State of the Nation report 2022](#)

⁶ Statistic from [data analysed by The Law Society](#)

Our products and services

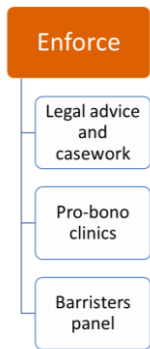
Our membership model

ASC links its specialist community care law expertise to social care providers, helplines, community-based organisations, and the people they serve through a membership model. Members pay subscriptions linked to the level of service they wish to acquire. Our membership model has 3 main types of activity aligned with our 3 impact priorities:



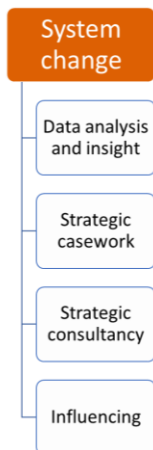
Empower

We build relationships to increase knowledge of rights and improve legal capability and confidence. Our legal education ensures care and support staff, managers, families, and people with support needs, feel confident using legal language to improve decision making and know how and when to seek advice when things go wrong.



Enforce

We ensure more people access legal help to solve problems early on. We know that with just a few letters from us, we can transform outcomes and make sure people with social care needs get the care and support they have a right to.



Challenge

We achieve system change, working with public body decision makers to improve quality, policy and practice. We collect and analyse data to spot trends and use strategic casework and influencing to persuade and challenge, securing improved decision making and changes to the design and implementation of policy, guidance, and regulations.

This year we worked with the following member organisations:

Achieve Together, Avenues, Camphill Village Trust, Choice Support, Croydon Mencap, Dimensions, Discovery, Ealing Consortium, Father Hudson's Care, HFT, Lifeways, MacIntyre, Mencap, Norwood, Sense, United Response, and Wirral Mencap.

Our community work

Our membership model works well for people who are connected to a large social care provider. However, smaller community-based and user-led organisations working with people experiencing intersectionality and multiple barriers to accessing advice and quality social care can struggle to afford our fees.

We know that disabled people, Black, Asian, minority ethnic, and some religious communities, experience worse health and social care outcomes than the general population. Free legal advice has been proven to improve health outcomes⁷, so at Access Social Care we feel it is critical that we work alongside communities that have experienced disadvantage.



We work at the intersections of health and social care to ensure improved flow between social care and health, and have adapted to work in a place-based and community-led way. In 2023 we have linked to social care experts by experience through our partner Social Care Futures. In Gloucestershire, Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham and Harlesden, we are connecting our service to Black and Asian communities, a disabled person led organisation, and a family carer led organisation. We are also connecting to community groups working in some of the most economically deprived postcodes. Gloucestershire is our flagship community hub. Our partnerships with Barnwood Trust, Friendship Café, and Inclusion Gloucestershire in particular have led to learning and networks that have supported the growth of our work in the county as well as informed work in other hubs.

Learning from our partnership in Croydon Social Prescribers, we have expanded our secondee programme in 2022/23. We are seconding employees from our partners Social Care Futures, Black Thrive and Friendship Café into Access Social Care. We work with secondees to share learning about how we use the law to improve outcomes for people with social care needs, and to learn how our partners work in a culturally appropriate way with their networks.



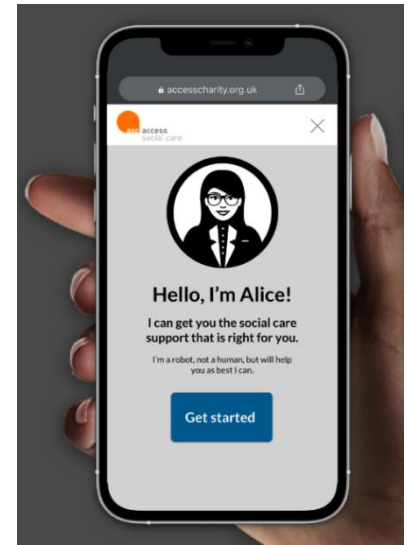
We co-produce legal education programmes and our secondees ripple knowledge out into their communities to improve knowledge of rights and confidence around using the law and legal language. By encouraging communities and community leaders to use our chatbot we are ensuring the quality of advice whilst harvesting data which can then be given back to communities. This helps them see trends in advice seeking behaviours which may indicate problems with policy and practice in their area. Communities can then use this data to work alongside public body decision makers to improve quality.

⁷ See [Professor Dame Hazel Genn's article on the health benefits of free legal advice.](#)

Our chatbot

We are a small organisation, but the demand for specialist advice is huge and growing. To complement our human advice and to help us reach more people, we have invented a legal information chatbot designed to support care workers, unpaid carers and people with social care needs.

Available 24/7 via our website, the chatbot answers legal questions and helps advice seekers draft personalised legal letters to send to public bodies, ensuring rights are met. Importantly, the chatbot also harvests thematic and demographic data which we use to inform evidence-based influencing work and strategic casework.



Content currently available on the chatbot includes:

- Getting care and support, including: getting an assessment, eligibility, and getting care after a hospital stay.
- Problems with care and support, including: delays in getting a care plan, cuts to care and support, dealing with inadequate care and support, and problems with direct payments.
- Charging, including: problems with charging and disability related expenses
- Continuing Healthcare, including: assessments, eligibility, and dealing with Continuing Healthcare problems.
- Carers' rights, including: getting support as a carer, getting alternative support in place when a carer cannot provide care, and ending a caring role.

This year we secured funding to grow our in-house tech team to help us transition towards becoming a product developer. We are excited that the team have transitioned to an agile working pattern, enabling us to rapidly respond to the needs of chatbot users, customers and the needs of our organisation.

Over the past year we successfully developed a software as a service platform and licensed the chatbot to 4 partner organisations so they could host the chatbot on their websites. This work means that the chatbot will be available to more people.



We are proud that this work carried out together with our digital partner Springbok Ai in 2022/23 was recently awarded the "[Best Digital Innovation](#)" category at the Third Sector Business Charity Awards.

Our impact

We empower

- We have built knowledge and confidence in using the law by:
 - Training 540 staff at member organisations through 66 training sessions, with participants reporting a 35% increase in confidence and knowledge.
 - Running 7 Rights Champions update sessions, reporting on new legal developments, allowing Rights Champions to share best practice, and more.
 - Delivering 35 training sessions through our Hubs, with participants reporting on average a 32% increase in knowledge and 28% increase in confidence to challenge.
- We have promoted the use of our legal advice chatbot to:
540 staff from member organisations; 41 staff from pilot organisations; 25 stakeholders from pilot organisations; 5 staff from funder organisations; and 383 people through our Hubs. At one of these training sessions, which was for parents of disabled young people aged 17-25, none had been given any information about adult social care processes. Following the training course one parent said "useful knowledge, and knowledge is power".
- While data gathering was interrupted by the development of our new platform, we are able to estimate from previous data sets that the number of chatbot conversations was approximately 1,850 on the ASC chatbot. Chatbot users report that using personalised legal letters from the chatbot has helped secure social care assessments, lawful social care charging and appropriate social care support.

For example:

M was referred to us by an NHS Social Prescribing Link Worker from Croydon North Primary Care Network. She has been diagnosed with Functional Chronic Pain and cannot walk without support. M lives on the second floor with 5 flights of stairs and there is no lift, so she is unable to leave her home. She needs help with cooking, cleaning, shopping and showering, relying on friends and her mum. She received 6 weeks of support from the British Red Cross, and was placed on a long waiting list for Croydon Adult Support.

M's case still hadn't progressed until the Social Prescriber, who had been recently been trained on the Care Act and our free Legal Chatbot by our Senior Advice Co-ordinator Jennine Bailey, referred her to our free legal clinic. Our legal volunteer completed a letter to Croydon Council with M within a week, which was sent to adult social services. After two weeks, M informed us that she had had an assessment, and was waiting to hear back from Croydon Council. Social Services have now done the assessment, after which the panel offered M 9 hours of social care support. She was then given advice by the volunteer regarding how she could address her accommodation issues.

M was really happy with the support provided by Access Social Care. She felt "very grateful with the letter that was completed as it sped the whole process up with Social Services". M contacted us again to follow-up on the letter and was really happy with the advice she received.

We enforce

- Our in-house legal team have worked on 505 legal cases this year, including 355 level 1 / initial advice pieces, 27 level 2 cases, 74 level 3 cases and 49 level 4 / pro bono cases.⁸
- Our pro-bono clinics worked on 49 cases.

For example:



Paul

Paul may be smiling because he's happy in what he regards as his second home, St Catherine's. Staff at St Catherine's may be smiling because, with the help of ASC, we know that we can now afford to continue to provide the level of care he needs in order for him to be happy and content. As CEO of Father Hudson's Care, the organisation to which St Catherine's belongs, I too am smiling because I now know that this service has a future, and that other adults with complex needs and their families will be able to come to us knowing that their family member can live here for decades, safely and well cared for.

There is no doubt in my mind that becoming involved with ASC has been one of the most important contributions to the sustainability of our services for adults with complex needs. By working with the individual and their family it has been possible to challenge the extremely low fees that some Local Authorities have been paying for many years.

Whilst we have challenged this in the past ourselves, and on occasion successfully, in a number of instances our challenges have not brought about the necessary funding changes for those already in our care. What ASC have brought is a very professional, rational and balanced approach, underpinned by the Care Act. They have also empowered our Care Managers and families to understand the Care Act much better, and enhanced their ability to use the authority of this Act for the benefit of the individual and their families.

Paul's care had been underpaid for many years. Through the work of the family's ASC-assigned representative, Julie Hinnigan, the Local Authority finally agreed to double this amount going forward and to also provide a certain amount of back pay. I have to say that the Local Authority when approached in this way did react fairly, and reasonably quickly. This has not been and still is not our experience generally, but it needs to become the norm. If it does not then charities like ours will find the whole situation unsustainable. Our aim is not to make a profit - our aim is to have sufficient funding to provide the care and the quality of care that is needed. It was necessary for us to engage ASC on behalf of the families because it is known by the parties involved that as a charity Father Hudson's Care would neither reduce the care needed by Paul so that it matched the fee that was being provided, nor would it make someone leave St Catherine's who had been with us for many years and for whom this was their second home.

I mention ASC's support for adults with complex needs, but I have to add that their guidance regarding Local Authority support for our residents and would-be residents in our Care Home for older people, many of whom have dementia, has been an unexpected but very beneficial additional support.

- Andrew Quinn, CEO of Father Hudson's Care

⁸ This includes cases opened within the financial year, and cases already open on 01.04.22 with continued work into the year.



Lucy's grandson

“My daughter who has autism spent fifteen wasted years in hospital. The support from Access Social Care charity was instrumental in her discharge with a full support package. We are so very grateful for their advice, and legal and family support. My daughter for the last two years has lived successfully in the community, and in March 2023 fulfilled her dream when she gave birth to a beautiful baby boy.”

- Lucy was a client we supported, funded by our partner Mencap.

We drive system change

- Our work in Gloucestershire has contributed to a change of policy around the advice provided to people with social care needs seeking an assessment. Healthwatch Gloucestershire has chosen the social care assessment process as their next survey topic as a result of our training.
- Our work on the community care law career pathway has contributed towards proposed Legal Aid Agency changes in the supervisory requirements for community care legal aid. We hope that this will lead to more legal aid providers being able to hold a community care law contract.
- ASC are working to increase transparency about how spending decisions are made on social care within central government and how equalities information is gathered, collected and analysed. We are continuing to work with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as they investigate His Majesty's Treasury and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. We hope that this will lead to the social care sector being able to engage more with the decision making process which will in turn lead to better decision making and more transparency in central government.
- Too many social care providers are not adequately funded to meet the needs of the people living in their services. The combined impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the social care workforce crisis has compounded this issue, leaving many social care providers with little choice but to hand back contracts. For people who have lived for years with the same social care provider and staff team, this can be devastating. Working with our member organisations we have been providing training and supporting social care providers to take an individualised approach to securing fee uplifts, ensuring people with social care needs receive appropriate support and are able to stay in their homes.

- We have collaborated with national press to raise awareness on cases we have worked on and the wider issues they represent, including articles about our Transforming Care work in the [Daily Mail](#) and [The Times](#).
- This year we launched the [State of Our Nation podcast](#), inviting experts, leaders and change-makers to raise awareness of the highs and lows in the adult social care system. We launched 6 episodes this year.

We use technology

Our chatbot project is going from strength to strength. While data gathering was interrupted by the development of our new platform, we are able to estimate from previous data sets that the number of chatbot conversations this year was approximately 1,850 on the ASC chatbot.

We have now recruited a tech team to support ASC's transition to becoming a product developer. We have also partnered with Asian People Disability Association, BME Forum Croydon, Ealing Mencap and the National Autistic Society to licence our chatbot so that it appears on our partners' websites. We also have two further partners joining soon that have signed our partnership agreement – Choice Support and Crossroads Care Gloucestershire. Licensing the chatbot ensures that more people will access the technology to learn about and to secure their rights to social care.



“The chatbot function is a very effective tool for our website users, and this now enables a lot more people to get social care advice quickly and clearly once they navigate the process online. We are happy to be part of this exciting new project and very pleased to be working with Miriam, Fin and their team at Access Social Care to enable APDA to be reaching and helping more people in our community.”

- Zeenat Jeewa, CEO of Asian People's Disability Alliance

We value our people

- Recognising the national shortage of community care lawyers, we started working on a career pathway project to look at improving recruitment and retention of specialist lawyers working in the field.
- [Episode 6 of our State of Our Nation podcast](#) discussed the social care workforce crisis with Kirstie Jones (Group People Director at Saludem Care) and Christoph Marr (Managing Director at Marr Procurement), raising awareness of recruitment and retention issues in the sector.

Our people

Our Staff

The last quarter of 2022/23 was a challenging time for our staff team, with an unprecedented number of Access Social Care employees experiencing significant and difficult life events. We have worked hard to support the wellbeing of our teams throughout this time, piloting team counselling and employee wellbeing funds. We have grown our staff team in 2022/23 to 35 people, but with a significant proportion of part time staff. We are proud that our staff tell us in staff surveys that we live to our values, while taking on feedback and making continuous improvements as we grow to ensure that ASC continues to be the best place to work.



Our volunteers

ASC volunteers support the charity's work in many ways, and the charity benefits greatly from their experience and commitment to the cause. The trustees are grateful for the dedicated efforts of the volunteers who are involved in:

- The development of the chatbot
- The provision of legal advice
- The provision of legal education

At least 200 people provided voluntary service to the charity in our first accounting period.

We are also grateful to our team of Rights Champions and experts by experience who provide consultancy to develop our work and spread the word about the use of the law in their communities.

Our funders

We are grateful to our many funders who have partnered with us to increase our impact:

- Oak Foundation
- Barnwood Trust
- Esmee Fairbairn
- Pears Foundation
- AB Charitable trust
- Unltd
- Access to Justice Foundation
- Legal Education Foundation
- Caretech Foundation
- Disrupt Foundation
- Fidelity Foundation
- Rangoonwala Foundation
- Britford Trust
- Renishaw Foundation
- Dulverton
- Benita Rayne Family Trust
- Baring Foundation
- The Barratt Foundation
- David Solomons
- The Grace Trust
- Garfield Weston

Our pro-bono partners

We would like to extend our thanks to our pro-bono partners:

- Baker McKenzie, Fieldfisher, Slaughter and May, Orrick have all supported us with clinics. Shearman and Sterling and Allen and Overy have supported us with one-off support on cases.
- Travers Smith, Fieldfisher, Anthony Collins and Baker Mckenzie have supported us with corporate advice.
- Pears Foundation, Doughty Street Chambers, 39 Essex Chambers, Browne Jacobsen, Mencap and Fieldfisher have provided us with free use of their rooms.

Looking forwards to 23/24 and beyond

Career Pathway Project



Community care specialist lawyers underpin all of our workstreams. The national shortage of community care lawyers is affecting our ability to grow and reach more people. We want to build out a career pathway project over the next 5 years to prevent the extinction of community care law, improving awareness of community care law as a possible career and improving recruitment and retention both within Access Social Care and across the wider sector. We hope this will enable us to continue to grow our membership and expand the provision of specialist community care advice.

Chatbot project



We will complete our chatbot licensing pilot in 23/24 and will look to expand our chatbot partners, hosting the chatbot on more websites, reaching more people and gathering more data about problems with access to social care. We will pilot working with university pro-bono clinics to encourage use of the chatbot.

Measurement, Evaluation and Improvement



We have been building relationships with the Health and Social Equity Collective at Kings College London. This partnership has led to the recruitment of two Master's students to evaluate the impact of our work, and we are seeking funding for a post doctorate researcher to work alongside our frontline teams to measure, evaluate, learn and iteratively improve our work with communities to reduce health and social care inequalities.

Our governance and management

ASC follows the Charity Commission's best practice guidance on recruitment and induction of new trustees. Skills gaps relevant to the strategic objectives of the charity are identified by the Board by way of informal audit (last conducted in Spring 2023). These are addressed through the recruitment of new trustees. Potential trustees submit a CV and covering letter, and meet the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and one other member of the Executive team. Then the chair of trustees and two other trustees conduct an interview to assess suitability of the candidate. New trustees are offered an induction programme including a set of key documents, meetings with other trustees, and discussions with staff. Opportunities for training are offered to support trustees in their roles. In line with our diversity aims, we are working hard to encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates and guarantee interviews for people from under-represented groups. We have a Governance Toolkit, including an induction checklist for new Trustees.

The Articles of Association include terms of office and, with the exception of two of the founding trustees, an initial appointment is made for a 3-year term. Trustees will be eligible for reappointment for one further term of 3 years. The two founding trustees are appointed as follows and will be eligible for a further term of 3 years:

- Janine Tregelles CBE – 5 years
- Chris Hale – 4 years

The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the overall strategic direction of the charity and for developing policies and plans to support the delivery of charitable objectives. The Board monitors progress across all areas of activity including legal requirements and financial performance. The Board has agreed to carry out a full Governance Review to ensure excellence across all governance matters. Work on the Governance Review is on track and ongoing.

If the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is wound up, the Trustees as members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. A CEO is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations, the authority for operational matters including financial management, employment and performance relating to agreed key objectives is delegated to the CEO and other members of the Executive team. Any decisions outside of the strategic direction agreed by the Board, or more than £100,000 outside of the agreed budget, are referred to trustees for approval. Pay and remuneration of the charity's key management personnel is reviewed by the board each year and any changes made are based on performance, an assessment of the market, the financial position of the organisation and relativity across the team.

Organisations providing professional advice to the charity during the reporting period are as follows:

- Central England Law Centre, Oakwood House, St Patricks Road Entrance, Coventry CV1 2HL
- Davies Accounting, Rose Tree Cottage, Ross-on-Wye HR9 7QX
- Godfrey Wilson, 5th Floor, Mariner House, 62 Prince Street, Bristol, BS1 4QD
- Unltd – Business consultancy, 123 Whitecross Street, Islington, London, EC1Y 8JJ
- BLJ – PR and Communications, 15 & 17, Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0BD
- Travers Smith - legal advice, 10 Snow Hill, London EC1A 2AL
- Anthony Collins - legal advice, 134 Edmund St, Birmingham B3 2ES
- Baker Mckenzie - legal advice, 100 New Bridge St, London EC4V 6JA
- Fieldfisher– Legal advice Riverbank House, 2 Swan Lane, London, EC4R 3TT
- The Co-Operative Bank, 118-120 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3-3B

Financial Review

Going Concern Statement

ASC is still a relatively new charity and our experience of the last few years from our incorporation leaves us well-placed to manage the risk that we face. This position is supported by strong liquidity, sufficient reserves for business continuity and development plans, a good relationship with our key funders and proven ability to retain and secure new services.

We have set out in this report a review of ASC's financial performance, the reserves position, and principal risks and uncertainties. Notwithstanding the ongoing pressures on fundraising, our performance to date has been robust in terms of income generation and ASC has remained firmly in control of its service quality and financial performance throughout the operating period.

As we have grown as an organisation, we have developed our financial management, budgeting and reporting processes to ensure that controls are robust and information is up to date and supports decision making. We have appointed a new Head of Finance to take this work to the next level as we seek to grow further.

The 2023/24 budget has been approved by the ASC Board. Our planning processes, including financial projections, take into consideration the current economic climate and its potential impact on the various sources of income and planned expenditure. The trustees therefore have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

Statement of Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, "Charities and Public Benefit". ASC's charitable objects are enshrined within its memorandum and articles, and as such the trustees ensure that the charity's activities are carried out for the public benefit through its strategic priorities. This is done primarily through the delivery of services aimed at people with social care needs as well as those who support them. This report allows us to show how our charitable funds are spent and the impact and benefits that this has on those using our services, as well as the wider impact on society.

Income

Our total income for the year to 31.3.2023 was £1,669k. Although this was flat when compared with last year (y/e 31.3.22 £1,679k), the prior year figure was inflated by a very late receipt of grant

funding (£410k) which was utilised in the current financial period. After accounting for this, our income has increased both in size and diversity with a range of new funding partners supporting us.

Our largest funder remains Oak Foundation (£457k, FY22: £845k) but we have also secured significant (>£100k) support from Disrupt Foundation, Fidelity Fund and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. In addition to these trusts and foundations, income from our memberships exceeded £400k (FY22: £320k).

Expenditure

Total expenditure in the reporting period was £1,523k, a 31% increase on the prior year (£1,161k). The majority of our expenditure is on staff and this area was responsible for vast majority of the increase, from £903k to £1,213k reflecting an investment in professionalising the organisation bringing key skills into HR and particularly to boost the development of our chatbot as well as an increase in our frontline legal team. In addition, we spent £87k in amortising our chatbot.

Capital Expenditure

Spend on further development of the chatbot this year was £195,649 – this amount has been capitalised and does not appear in our expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA). Towards the end of the reporting year we launched a pilot programme, building the chatbot into partner websites to support testing. This process will lead to further development in the coming year which we will continue to capitalise until development is substantially complete.

Funds Analysis

Reserves are maintained at a level that enables the charity to manage operational financial risks and short-term income volatility. They allow the charity to sustain service delivery, in particular legal casework support to our clients, over the long term, as well as ensuring that financial commitments can be met as they fall due.

Of the charity's £1,303k total funds at the end of March 2023, £592k are restricted funds that are committed to future expenditure and not available for general purposes.

We hold £397k in designated funds to cover the amortisation of our intangible asset, the chatbot. These funds result from cash expenditure on development which were not expensed at the point of purchase in the SOFA. Instead these funds will be used to cover future amortisation costs and therefore will be released to the SOFA in future years.

Our free reserves are £314k (FY22: £477k). Free reserves are those unrestricted funds which are freely available to the trustees to spend on any of the charity's purposes. However, they exclude amounts which, if spent, would adversely affect the charity's ability to deliver its aims. Reserves do not therefore include property, funds which are set aside for programmes specifically to further our charitable objectives, or amounts set aside for essential costs.

Reserves Policy

The trustees have set a target for reserves based upon an analysis of the potential financial impacts of significant risks identified through the charity's risk management processes, as well as the need to

continue to provide legal services to our clients. Our reserves as at 31.3.23 are £314k, this does not yet meet our target reserves of £745k (6 months operating costs).

We recognise that 6 months is generous provision, but we consider it necessary because there is a national shortage of community care lawyers and the legal casework we conduct could not be referred out. We therefore need to have enough reserves to enable us to close off our casework in an orderly fashion, to protect the interests of our clients should ASC be required to wind up operations.

From the outset, the Trustees have set a conservative reserves policy recognising that ASC is a charity in its infancy and that our sources of funding can fluctuate. We recognise that we have more to do to meet the policy. Our budget for next year includes further growth and we will balance the need to deliver on our strategic objectives with increasing our reserves.

Risks

ASC continually reviews its risk framework, ensuring that it aligns with the organisation’s strategic aims and objectives. The board of trustees reviews strategic risks on a quarterly basis. Independent assurance is provided by an outsourced independent audit function from Godfrey Wilson accountants. Risk management at the operational level is managed by the executive directors and departmental Heads, who review risks regularly both within their directorates and as a group.

Principal Risk	Background	Our Mitigation Strategy
Not being successful in raising new income as ASC expands	The ongoing cost of living crisis which has affected organisations as well as individuals and the continuing lack of funding for social care make the job of fundraising incredibly challenging.	We have recruited a Head of Business Development to drive our membership and chatbot income. We continue to research all available sources of funding from trusts and foundations. In addition, we will explore new funding models such as social investment to see if they can support our impact aims and they are right for our charity.
Failure to recruit, retain and develop key staff leading to delivery and operational issues	There are very few specialists remaining in community care but there is also a wider issue in finding talented individuals across other departments as a small organisation	We are working on a career pathway for community care specialists, partnering with universities to build a healthy pipeline. We have recruited an HR professional who will support our recruitment, retention and wellbeing programmes.
Ensuring that we comply with our organisational duties on safeguarding	It is incredibly important to us that we have high standards in this area and we have undertaken a safeguarding deep dive in partnership with our board over the last 6 months	Safeguarding policy redrafted. We have established a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and we will monitor and report on our practice as we go forward, offering support to our team to ensure they have everything they need.

Fundraising

ASC continues to operate with a small fundraising team supported and managed by the Director of Partners & Engagement and includes a part-time Senior Fundraiser and Prospect Researcher and a full-time Junior Fundraiser. The team relies on input from the CEO and operational teams to provide accurate and relevant content for proposals and reporting. CEO and/or Exec members sign off applications over the value of £100k.

Grant giving has remained the main source of income for fundraising, although the landscape for fundraising with Trusts and Foundations is proving challenging. A combination of factors such as: economic climate, strategy re-focus on marginalised and racialised communities, funder partnering or closing their application process to seek out charities that funders choose to support, as well as funders reporting being overwhelmed with applications, has proven difficult for traditional pipeline fundraising in this area. Grant giving at ASC has been successful to date, however pipeline conversion ratios dipped this year and are showing little or no opportunity to continue to grow beyond the status quo. The team has strengthened its approach to maintaining and retention of grants and cultivating relationships with grant givers who are invested in supporting the work of the charity. The team managed 15 live grants, requiring reporting, finances, cultivation, and stewardship, as well as continuing to research and apply to funds that align closely with ASC's vision, mission, and values.

Other areas of Fundraising include:

- **Individual Giving** – This is an area that is slowly on the rise at ASC. As the charity's stakeholders and brand awareness begin to grow, the team has started to maximise opportunities for engagement with stakeholders and segment communication to 'opted-in' individuals, with a view to maintaining existing and growing new individual givers.
- **Major Donors** – ASC are supported by a small Development Board to help grow our networks with influential, well-networked, and/or wealthy individuals that have an interest in supporting our work. ASC currently has one major donor, supporting the charity's work in wellbeing for the Legal Team.

What's next?

ASC's Fundraising Team are committed to monitoring fundraising trends through publications, webinars, and peer connections. There are some areas for opportunity that the team has been scoping this year, with planned in activity to begin to support over the coming year, including; Individual Giving and Legacy fundraising. Both will take time to build but are a worthy investment of staff time to support an opportunity for a new source of income. Our main focus for the team remains on grant fundraising.

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as auditors to the charity during the period and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 10 October 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Janine Tregelles

Janine Tregelles - Chair

Access Your Right To Care

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Charity number	1186714
Registered office	Coventry Law Centre Ltd Oakwood House Cheylesmore Coventry CV1 2HL
Trustees	<p>The trustees who served during the period and up to the date of this report were as follows:</p> <p>Christopher Hale Rhoda Iranloye appointed 12 July 2022 Kevin McGuirk Rebecca Mills resigned 3 May 2022 Linda Redford Joyce Sarpong appointed 12 July 2022 Janine Tregelles Robbie Turner appointed 12 July 2022</p>
Chief executive officer	Kari Gerstheimer
Senior management team	<p>Joanne Williams Director of Fundraising & Communications Lainey Gough Director of Operations and Impact (resigned May 2023)</p> <p>Catriona Filmer Head of Legal (resigned December 2022) Miriam Valencia Head of Operations Hannah Hewish Legal Strategy Manager Anna Gaughan Head of Community (resigned December 2022)</p> <p>Alan Bird Chief Technology Officer (appointed November 2022)</p> <p>Pauline Gayle People Director (appointed September 2022)</p> <p>Peter Stimpson Head of Finance (appointed April 2023)</p>
Bankers	The Co-Operative Bank Business Direct Skelmerdale WN8 6GH
Auditors	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Access Your Right To Care

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Access Your Right To Care (the 'charity') for the period ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Access Your Right To Care

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- sufficient accounting records have not been kept;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit.

Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out in the trustees' report, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Access Your Right To Care

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

(1) We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, and assessed the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Throughout the audit, we remained alert to possible indications of non-compliance.

(2) We reviewed the charity's policies and procedures in relation to:

- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations, and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risk of fraud, and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- Designing and implementing internal controls to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud.

(3) We inspected the minutes of trustee meetings.

(4) We enquired about any non-routine communication with regulators and reviewed any reports made to them.

(5) We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and assessed their compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(6) We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions or balances that may indicate a risk of material fraud or error.

(7) We assessed the risk of fraud through management override of controls and carried out procedures to address this risk. Our procedures included:

- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries;
- Assessing judgements and accounting estimates for potential bias;
- Reviewing related party transactions; and
- Testing transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. Irregularities that arise due to fraud can be even harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Access Your Right To Care

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and the regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Date: 12 October 2023

GODFREY WILSON LIMITED

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	1,025,746	241,505	1,267,251	1,357,264
Charitable activities	4	-	400,722	400,722	322,291
Investments		-	1,163	1,163	106
Total income		<u>1,025,746</u>	<u>643,390</u>	<u>1,669,136</u>	<u>1,679,661</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		37,320	147,366	184,686	135,800
Charitable activities		<u>611,420</u>	<u>727,303</u>	<u>1,338,723</u>	<u>1,025,436</u>
Total expenditure	6	<u>648,740</u>	<u>874,669</u>	<u>1,523,409</u>	<u>1,161,236</u>
Net income / (expenditure)		377,006	(231,279)	145,727	518,425
Transfers between funds		<u>(176,755)</u>	<u>176,755</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds	7	200,251	(54,524)	145,727	518,425
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>391,914</u>	<u>765,874</u>	<u>1,157,788</u>	<u>639,363</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>592,165</u></u>	<u><u>711,350</u></u>	<u><u>1,303,515</u></u>	<u><u>1,157,788</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 15 to the accounts.

Access Your Right To Care

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets				
Intangible assets	10		<u>397,509</u>	<u>288,685</u>
Current assets				
Debtors	11	183,348		119,211
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>985,426</u>		<u>977,551</u>
		1,168,774		1,096,762
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	12	<u>262,768</u>		<u>227,659</u>
Net current assets			<u>906,006</u>	<u>869,103</u>
Net assets	14		<u><u>1,303,515</u></u>	<u><u>1,157,788</u></u>
Funds	15			
Restricted funds			592,165	391,914
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			397,509	-
General funds			<u>313,841</u>	<u>765,874</u>
Total charity funds			<u><u>1,303,515</u></u>	<u><u>1,157,788</u></u>

Approved by the trustees on 10 October 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Janine Tregelles

Janine Tregelles - Chair

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Net movement in funds	145,727	518,425
Adjustments for:		
Amortisation charges	86,825	47,896
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(1,163)	(106)
Loss / (profit) on the sale of fixed assets	-	7,397
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(64,137)	(7,472)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	35,109	56,783
Net cash provided by operating activities	202,361	622,923
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	1,163	106
Purchase of intangible fixed assets	(195,649)	(193,072)
Net cash used in investing activities	(194,486)	(192,966)
Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period	7,875	429,957
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	977,551	547,594
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	985,426	977,551

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Access Your Right To Care meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

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

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income from subscriptions received in advance is deferred until criteria for income recognition are met.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

As discussed in the trustees' report, the charity benefitted from significant pro bono support in 2021 and 2022, however these have not been recognised in the accounts on the basis that the charity would not have been able to afford these services if not provided for free.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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

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

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities based on the proportion of direct costs, as follows:

	2023	2022
Raising funds	12%	12%
Charitable activities	88%	88%

i) Intangible fixed assets

Internally generated intangible assets meeting the relevant recognition criteria are initially measured at cost. Intangible fixed assets relate to the costs incurred in developing the charity's ChatBot asset.

Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation process commences upon the completion of each sprint. The amortisation rate in use for ChatBot is 4 years straight line.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

j) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

k) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

l) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

m) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

n) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

o) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying 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 if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determining the value of additions to capitalised intangible assets and the associated amortisation policy.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	1,056,547	300,717	1,357,264
Charitable activities	-	322,291	322,291
Investments	-	106	106
Total income	<u>1,056,547</u>	<u>623,114</u>	<u>1,679,661</u>
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	33,203	102,597	135,800
Charitable activities	<u>701,131</u>	<u>324,305</u>	<u>1,025,436</u>
Total expenditure	<u>734,334</u>	<u>426,902</u>	<u>1,161,236</u>
Net income	322,213	196,212	518,425
Transfers between funds	<u>(163,073)</u>	<u>163,073</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds	<u>159,140</u>	<u>359,285</u>	<u>518,425</u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Oak Foundation grant	457,660	-	457,660
Trusts and foundations	565,680	209,000	774,680
Corporate donations	2,406	25,013	27,419
Individual donations	-	7,492	7,492
Total income from donations	1,025,746	241,505	1,267,251

Prior period comparative:

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Oak Foundation grant	844,946	-	844,946
Trusts and foundations	208,934	247,979	456,913
Corporate donations	-	39,018	39,018
Individual donations	2,667	7,825	10,492
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	-	97	97
Kickstart Scheme	-	5,798	5,798
Total income from donations	1,056,547	300,717	1,357,264

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Consultancy income	-	360	360	1,887
Subscriptions	-	400,362	400,362	320,404
Total income from charitable activities	-	400,722	400,722	322,291

All income from charitable activities in the prior year was unrestricted.

5. Government grants

In the prior year the charity received government grant funding under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Kickstart Scheme. In the period ending 31 March 2023 the total amount received was £Nil (2022: £5,895). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

6. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	133,460	945,493	134,411	1,213,364
Other staff costs	1,371	19,472	22,463	43,306
Workshops	-	540	6,857	7,397
Consultancy	15,400	24,621	54,781	94,802
IT and telephone costs	-	8,046	27,745	35,791
Office costs	158	5,122	4,042	9,322
Finance and governance	-	-	20,634	20,634
Amortisation	-	86,825	-	86,825
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	11,968	11,968
Sub-total	150,389	1,090,119	282,901	1,523,409
Allocation of support and governance costs	34,297	248,604	(282,901)	-
Total expenditure	184,686	1,338,723	-	1,523,409

Total governance costs were £13,137 (2022: £13,718).

Prior period comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2022 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	102,908	693,933	106,274	903,115
Other staff costs	225	14,007	15,081	29,313
Evaluation	-	17,125	-	17,125
Workshops	-	8,318	-	8,318
Consultancy	10,700	64,690	5,350	80,740
IT and telephone costs	-	11,966	17,892	29,858
Office costs	12	1,720	2,513	4,245
Finance and governance	-	-	19,336	19,336
Amortisation	-	47,896	-	47,896
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	13,893	13,893
Loss on disposal	-	-	7,397	7,397
Sub-total	113,845	859,655	187,736	1,161,236
Allocation of support and governance costs	21,955	165,781	(187,736)	-
Total expenditure	135,800	1,025,436	-	1,161,236

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

7. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	581	Nil
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	Nil	7,397
Amortisation	86,825	47,896
Auditors' remuneration:		
▪ Statutory audit (ex VAT)	6,500	5,400
▪ Other services (ex VAT)	Nil	7,083
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

During the period 2 trustees were reimbursed for travel expenses, totalling £581 (2022: no trustee expenses reimbursed).

8. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries and wages	1,008,684	781,049
Social security costs	87,579	71,219
Pension costs	45,440	36,165
Freelancers	71,661	14,682
	<u>1,213,364</u>	<u>903,115</u>

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Number of employees earning in the range of:		
£60,000 - £70,000	1	1
£80,000 - £90,000	1	1
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Senior Management Team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the period were £329,807 (2022: £380,797).

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Average head count	<u>32</u>	<u>26</u>

9. Taxation

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

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

10. Intangible fixed assets

	ChatBot app £
Cost	
At 1 April 2022	336,581
Additions in period	<u>195,649</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>532,230</u>
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2022	47,896
Charge for the period	<u>86,825</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>134,721</u>
Net book value	
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>397,509</u></u>
At 31 March 2022	<u><u>288,685</u></u>

Intangible fixed assets relates to the charity's ChatBot app which has now been brought into use, but continues to be developed. The app will be amortised over 4 years as each stage of development is complete.

11. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	102,926	112,478
Prepayments	8,385	6,733
Accrued income	<u>72,037</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u><u>183,348</u></u>	<u><u>119,211</u></u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

12. Creditors: amounts due within 1 year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	2,065	19,166
Accruals	32,251	22,228
Other taxation and social security	72,010	47,505
Deferred income (see note 13)	<u>156,442</u>	<u>138,760</u>
	<u><u>262,768</u></u>	<u><u>227,659</u></u>

13. Deferred income

	2023 £	2022 £
At 1 April 2022	138,760	118,892
Deferred during the period	156,442	138,760
Released during the period	<u>(138,760)</u>	<u>(118,892)</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>156,442</u></u>	<u><u>138,760</u></u>

Deferred income relates to subscription income invoiced in advance.

14. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	397,509	397,509
Current assets	602,165	566,609	1,168,774
Current liabilities	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>(252,768)</u>	<u>(262,768)</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2023	<u><u>592,165</u></u>	<u><u>711,350</u></u>	<u><u>1,303,515</u></u>

Prior year comparative

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	288,685	288,685
Current assets	391,914	704,848	1,096,762
Current liabilities	<u>-</u>	<u>(227,659)</u>	<u>(227,659)</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2022	<u><u>391,914</u></u>	<u><u>765,874</u></u>	<u><u>1,157,788</u></u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

15. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds					
Oak Foundation	273,716	457,660	(375,103)	-	356,273
Hub / Casework	97,272	146,400	(174,942)	-	68,730
ChatBot	20,926	366,686	(95,376)	(176,755)	115,481
Public Legal Education	-	55,000	(3,319)	-	51,681
Total restricted funds	391,914	1,025,746	(648,740)	(176,755)	592,165
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
<i>Programme work</i>	-	215,000	(215,000)	-	-
<i>ChatBot</i>	-	-	-	397,509	397,509
Total designated funds	-	215,000	(215,000)	397,509	397,509
General funds	765,874	428,390	(659,669)	(220,754)	313,841
Total unrestricted funds	765,874	643,390	(874,669)	176,755	711,350
Total funds	1,157,788	1,669,136	(1,523,409)	-	1,303,515

Purposes of restricted funds

Oak Foundation

This is a core grant which has enabled the set up of Access Social Care. The majority of the grant covers the cost of salaries.

Hub / Casework

These funds are to set up the place-based hub in Gloucestershire and Croydon, fund community care casework, strategic casework and strategic data work.

ChatBot

These funds are to develop a legal information chatbot, which will be free at the point of use and available on the Access Social Care website.

Public Legal Education

These funds are to increase legal knowledge and legal capability and to improve the career pathway for community care law.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of designated funds

Programme work

Grant income which was internally designated for programme work. This has been fully expended in 2023.

ChatBot

The designated ChatBot fund represents the net book value of the intangible asset and is maintained as a distinct fund to separate it from the charity's general funds.

Transfers between funds

Transfers between funds relate to restricted capital expenditure for the ChatBot project and relocating the ChatBot intangible asset to a designated fund. The restriction on the funds has been discharged by the purchase of the asset, as the ongoing use of the asset is not restricted. This restriction has also been discharged from the internal staff time capitalised.

Prior year comparative	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds					
Oak Foundation	3,650	844,946	(574,880)	-	273,716
Hub / Casework	54,870	123,334	(72,842)	(8,090)	97,272
ChatBot	174,254	70,667	(69,012)	(154,983)	20,926
Public Legal Education	-	17,600	(17,600)	-	-
Total restricted funds	232,774	1,056,547	(734,334)	(163,073)	391,914
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	24,605	-	-	(24,605)	-
General funds	381,984	623,114	(426,902)	187,678	765,874
Total unrestricted funds	406,589	623,114	(426,902)	163,073	765,874
Total funds	639,363	1,679,661	(1,161,236)	-	1,157,788

16. Related party transactions

Rhoda Iranloye, a trustee, is also a Group Director of Regulatory for Dimensions. During the year the charity received contract income of £7,380 (2022: £nil) from Dimensions. All transactions were carried out at arms length.

ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

England & Wales - Charity number 1186714

Accounts



ANNUAL REPORT

Charity Registration 1186714 | March 2022



CONTENTS

WELCOME

A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR & CEO	4
INTRODUCTION	5
THE ACCESS SOCIAL CARE APPROACH	7
THE ASC APPROACH IN PRACTICE	8

LOOK INSIDE

MEMBERSHIPS	10
COMMUNITY HUBS	11
CHANGING THE SYSTEM IN OUR COMMUNITY HUBS	12
WE'RE GROWING UP	13
OUR INNOVATIONS	14
NEW SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES	15
FUNDING AND PRO-BONO RELATIONSHIPS	16

THE PRESENT

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE	18
IMPACT TARGETS	18
A YEAR IN REVIEW	19
LEGAL EDUCATION	22
LEGAL ADVICE AND INFORMATION	24
CASE STUDY: KIRSTY MCARTHUR	25
SYSTEM CHANGE	26
INCOME GENERATION	29
OUR CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS	30
COVID CONCERNS & SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE PRESSURES	30
OUR TEAMS	31

THE FUTURE

A STRATEGY REFRESH - OUR PLANS FOR 22/23 & BEYOND	33
MORE EMPOWERING	34
MORE ENFORCING	35
MORE SYSTEM CHANGE	36
OUR ENABLING PRIORITIES	37

THE FINANCIAL REPORT AND LEGAL INFORMATION

GOING CONCERN	39
CURRENT POSITION & CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	40
MANAGING RISK	41
FUNDRAISING	44
CHARITY INFORMATION	46
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND DELEGATED ARRANGEMENTS	47
VOLUNTEERS	48
TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT	49
INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT	50
FINANCIAL INFORMATION	54
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	57

THANK YOU

WELCOME

A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR & CEO



Our second year of operation has been a year of remarkable growth for Access Social Care. As the impact of the pandemic has deepened, and the social care workforce and funding crisis have increased, our services have never been more needed. Determined to reach out to more people, we are proud to say that over the last year we have expanded into communities that need us the most.

The incredible dedication of our staff and volunteers, and the generous support of our funders and partners, has led to us launching our legal information chatbot, starting a new community hub in Croydon, increasing our membership, and doubling the size of our staff team. All whilst maintaining our 98% success rate with our legal cases.

As we enter our third year of operation, we are refreshing our strategy and preparing for our next phase of growth. As described in this report, the foundations are set. We are ready to use these as a springboard for the future. In this next phase of our development, we will focus on capacity building to support growth at the scale we need to realise our vision of a future where people with social care needs get the support they need to live a fulfilled life of dignity.

In this report, we set out and celebrate how we have worked towards our charitable aims and purpose. Alongside the facts and figures are the human stories. We hope that you will enjoy reading about the difference we have made to our clients. It is our clients and the people across the country with social care needs that spur us on to be the best we can be.

JANINE TREGELLES CBE, CHAIRPERSON & KARI GERSTHEIMER, CEO

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE ISSUE WE ARE TRYING TO FIX?

Disability can feel a long way away from our reality, but 1 in 5 working age people are disabled. And by the time we're pension age it's likely that half of us will be disabled. We live in the world's 5th largest economy. We assume our society has a safety net that's there for us, but that's not the reality. Everyday millions of older and disabled people are denied the social care they need. Most local authorities can't meet the growing demand for care, none are confident they can meet their legal duties in the future. This affects all of us, we will all need social care at some point.

- **Sometimes the problem is no support** – we helped a 90-year-old with dementia, she needed prompting to ensure she remembered to wash, dress and feed herself but because she was physically able the authorities said she didn't need any help. She was left hungry in soiled clothing.
- **Sometimes it's the wrong support** - like the 18 year who had to give up her degree because she was trapped in hospital for 18 months when all she needed to go home was an accessible bathroom.
- **Sometimes the support comes too late** - like the 15-year-old we helped who just needed a few hours of support a week but instead ended up in an inpatient mental health unit, over medicated and restrained, hundreds of miles away from his mum and dad.

The cases we work on are so harrowing that we fundraise for counselling for our lawyers.

There are laws that guarantee us our basic rights and a dignified life. We all have a right to hold public bodies to account.

But most of us don't know our rights. Most of us cannot afford lawyers, so rely on legal aid. And at a time of crisis, most of us are too overwhelmed to challenge the system. People often ask us why they didn't know about this issue. We tell them it's because it is hidden behind front doors or hospital doors. It's invisible until it happens to you.

The 92% drop in legal aid cases since 2010 means we have nowhere to turn. Without access to justice, our rights do not exist. The rule of law is broken.

Source [legalaidstatisticstool](#) | [Tableau Public](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

The number of legal aid funded community care cases has reduced by 77% since 2010. ¹

DID YOU KNOW?

The numbers of carers calling helplines has increased by nearly 400% during the pandemic.¹

In an Association of Directors of Adult Services report² issued in January 2022, 43% of councils admitted re-prioritising support to those most at risk and essential activities only.

13% report moving to 'life and limb' care only – e.g. help limited to helping to eat, hydration, toileting, and changing continence laundry in at least some of their area for at least some of the time.

11% admit leaving people with dementia / learning disabilities / mental ill health isolated or alone for longer periods.



¹ Access Social Care, State of the Nation Report May 2021 – data combined from 5 national helpline/advice organisations.

² <https://www.adass.org.uk/adass-winter-contingencies-survey>

THE ACCESS SOCIAL CARE APPROACH

LEGAL EXPERTS CREATING A SOCIAL CARE JUSTICE MOVEMENT

Access Social Care provides free legal advice and information for people with social care needs, helping achieve a better quality of life.

We work with communities to increase knowledge of the law and our rights. We highlight the gap left by cuts to Legal Aid and provide advice for those who can't afford it. With a 98% success rate, our network of lawyers and barristers ensure fair access to justice when things go wrong. We collaborate with social services whilst ensuring legal obligations are met. We are working towards a future where social care is adequately funded, and we all get the support we need.

We Empower

Educating individuals and organisations on how to use the law effectively, and increasing their confidence to use the law and work with legal professionals

We Enforce

Providing early legal help required to hold public bodies to account

We Challenge

Collecting data and implementing strategic approaches to bring about real change within the social care sector

THE ASC APPROACH IN PRACTICE

We Empower

Legal Capability Training – building confidence in the use of legal language to secure better outcomes and avoid conflict

We Enforce

Referrals, Advice, Casework – early legal help to solve problems early on

We Challenge

Thematic Data and Evidence Capture

Influencing Work & Strategic Casework to help change the system

LOOK INSIDE

MEMBERSHIPS

NEW MEMBERSHIPS

We link our legal expertise to other organisations through a membership model.

Our current members are social care providers and charities with helplines, who join our network so that their beneficiaries can access our service. In this reporting period our charitable members are:

Mencap	Wirral Mencap	Age UK Gloucestershire
Dimensions	Croydon Mencap	Inclusion Gloucestershire
Choice Support	Milestones	Ealing Consortium (a group of advice providing organisations in Ealing).
United Response	Camphill Village Trust	
MacIntyre	HfT	
Discovery	Independent Age	
Barnet Mencap	Allsorts Gos	

We have also started working with 2 commercial partners:

Achieve Together & Lifeways

Partnerships, networks and constellations are core to our work. Partners on our flagship data sharing partnership are:

Age UK	Independent Age	Mencap
Carers UK	RNIB	

WHAT OUR MEMBERS SAY ABOUT US

"Access Social Care was a lifeline during the pandemic. I don't know how we would have managed without the regular updates on changes to guidance and regulations"

Access Social Care is an active member of the Care and Support Alliance, the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group, Advice UK, and we are represented on the Administrative Justice Council Advice Panel, Social Care Futures and Fair Pay for Care Campaign

COMMUNITY HUBS

Our membership model works well for people who are connected to large social care providers, however, smaller community based, and user-led organisations, working with people experiencing intersectionality and multiple barriers to accessing advice, care and support cannot afford our membership fees. We are particularly interested in reaching Black, Asian, minority ethnic (BAME), and some religious communities because we know that these communities experience worse health and social care outcomes than the general population.

Academic research indicates that free legal advice improves health outcomes ⁴. Our hypothesis is that by increasing legal confidence and capability amongst under-served communities; and by providing legal support when things go wrong, we will reduce health and social care inequalities.

In 2020 we started a place-based pilot in Gloucestershire in partnership with the [Barnwood Trust](#). Barnwood subsidise our fees enabling us to connect our service to Black and Asian communities, a disabled person led, and a family carer led organisation as well as to community groups working in the most deprived postcodes in Gloucestershire. This project is on-going and in 2021 our senior advice coordinator has reached more than 80 organisations, and trained and held workshops with more than 80 people.

In 2021 we launched our second hub in Croydon, and laid the ground work for a hub in Southwark and Lambeth. We started piloting seconding an employee from a Black-led organization called Croydon Social Prescribers into ASC to learn about the law. Our secondee works with us to plan how to ripple that learning back out into their community. By supporting communities to use our [chatbot](#) we are gathering intelligence and data, which is given back to communities so that they can then work collaboratively with local [Integrated Care Systems](#) (ICS) and use this data to support improving quality of care and address local inequalities.

We have been scoping a third hub in the North which we aim to launch in 2022.

⁴ See Professor Dame Hazel Genn's article on the health benefits of free legal advice: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10071343/1/Genn_WhenLawisGoodforHealth.pdf



Citizen led
legal education
networks
powering local
change

CHANGING THE SYSTEM IN OUR COMMUNITY HUBS

Too often, using the law can be associated with conflict. But we believe that by taking a rights based approach, using the law positively and early on, local citizens can encourage public bodies to act lawfully, ultimately improving first instance decision making and securing better social care outcomes.



WE'RE GROWING UP

In our second year we've been growing again. In 2022 we recruited new staff members to add to our expertise and experience allowing us to provide our members and beneficiaries with a first-class service.

Team increased from 22 to 29

Further matured and developed our legal team through the appointment of 6 lawyers (3 caseworkers and 3 managers) 3 of whom are public law experts.

Expanded our fundraising team to support organisational growth

Recruited a finance manager to help with budgeting



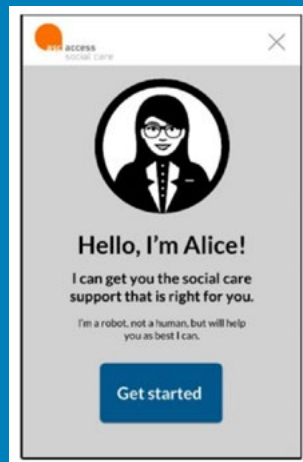
OUR INNOVATIONS

A LEGAL CHATBOT PROVIDING SOCIAL CARE GUIDANCE

When our legal advisors can't be there, our legal chatbot is the next best thing. Our legal chatbot is an on-line legal robot providing social care guidance:

THE ASC CHATBOT

- Simulates conversation with social care advice seekers
- Gives accurate and timely legal information
- Helps prevent legal issues from arising
- Free at the point of use
- Available 24/7
- Accessible via desktop or mobile devices
- Gathers thematic and geographical data to help us understand advice demand and trends of unlawful public body decision making



SAERA TOLD US:

"I am a social prescriber, I wrote to the local authority to ask for an assessment for two of the patients I am supporting. I have been waiting for over 6 months for an assessment from social care – I was really worried because there was a real safeguarding risk. I used your chatbot and the local authority responded to the letter to arrange an assessment on the same day!"

In 2021 we secured funding from Comic Relief and Paul Hamlyn to develop the hand-off from the chatbot to our legal team as well as an automated letter completion function. We are excited that chatbot users can now personalise legal letters within the chatbot ready to send off to public bodies.

We have been training trusted intermediaries including advocates and social prescribers (GP link workers) to use the chatbot to help people with social care needs secure better outcomes.

In 2022 our aim will be to start piloting the chatbot on the websites of other organisations.

NEW SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Whilst delivering impact, as a new charity we continued to work hard to develop our systems and processes.

We worked with a consultant from Cranfield Trust to develop financial modelling and budgeting systems to support with financial management and forecasting

We have developed our legal team systems and processes; and built capacity within the team. We have not yet secured an external kitemark due to legal team capacity, however, we are confident that our quality monitoring is of a high standard and in line with the AQS requirements. We have identified where some systems require attention to improve efficiency and we are working to rectify this

We conducted a governance review. We are confident that our Board are performing well and are excelling in some areas. The Trustees have committed to prioritising Equality Diversity and Inclusion as our main development area as we move into 22/23

We appointed a Board level and an operational safeguarding lead and developed our safeguarding policies and procedures

We commissioned an independent review of our “empower” priority. We are delighted that academics Professor Lisa Vanhala and Doctor Jacqui Kinghan concluded that we are building confidence and supporting more people to acquire new legal capability skills in order to obtain better outcomes for people with social care needs. We were especially pleased that the report found that our interventions can work to improve relationships between our member organisations and public bodies by using the law and rights based approaches as a framework to solve problems

FUNDING AND PRO-BONO RELATIONSHIPS

We would like to say a huge thank you to our funders and supporters. Without you, our work would not be possible! In this reporting period, we have benefitted from the kind support of:

Oak Foundation, Baring Foundation, Barnwood Trust, Pears, The Allen and Overy Foundation, AB Charitable Trust, Dulverton, Esmee Fairbairn, Garfield Weston, The Legal Education Foundation, Comic Relief and Paul Hamlyn and The Matrix Foundation.

We have benefitted from pro-bono and in-kind support from:

Unltd, Travers Smith, Fieldfisher, Baker McKenzie, Slaughter and May, Orrick, Herrington and Sutcliffe, Shearman and Sterling, Allen and Overy; as well as 39 Essex, Doughty Street and Landmark Chambers.



THE PRESENT

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE



EMPOWER



ENFORCE



CHALLENGE



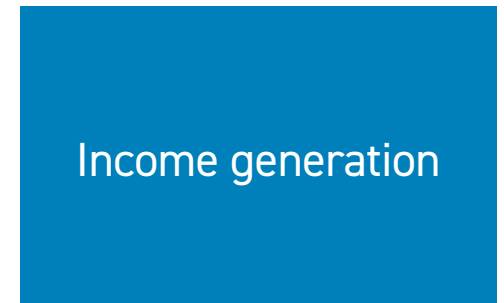
EMPOWER



ENFORCE



CHALLENGE



A YEAR IN REVIEW

Priority Area	What we said we would do	Did we achieve it?
WE EMPOWER	<p>Development of online resources – Video resources developed by Dec 2022</p> <p>Rights Champions Project</p> <p>Have 10 rights champions by Dec 21</p> <p>L and D working groups to agree action plan to achieve culture change</p>	<p>On track</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>
WE ENFORCE	<p>CHATBOT</p> <p>Content generation</p> <p>Input 500 set questions, test with user groups, train team to add more data</p> <p>Letter autocompletion feature and handoff feature</p> <p>Testing</p> <p>Detailed testing with people with social care needs and people from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background.</p> <p>Licensing</p> <p>Initial report on income generation options for the chatbot</p> <p>Pro-bono</p> <p>Run 10 cases through a new clinic</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>

<p>WE ENFORCE</p>	<p>Grow No. of barristers on panel Grow barristers panel – 1 new barrister by Dec 20 Maintain barrister panel pick up rate at 90%</p> <p>Membership growth – commercial and charitable providers and helpline organization</p> <p>Grow our Hub model - Set up one hub each year</p> <p>Casework Success rate Maintain casework success rate at 90%</p> <p>Maximise use of legal aid: Increase options for referrals, collect data to evidence gaps in legal aid, use data to show gaps and model solutions</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>N – continued to have problems with knock on effect from Covid and barristers doing more paid work. We are in the process of a review.</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y – success rate maintained at 98%</p> <p>Y</p>
<p>WE CHALLENGE AND PERSUADE</p>	<p>Increase sector wide legal literacy: through advisory panel</p> <p>Helplines group data collaboration Helplines group data modelled , analysed State of the Nation report issued Working with members on strategic cases</p> <p>Sector wide collaboration with EHRC/legal aid lawyers Shared learning on emerging themes and trends – EHRC, legal aid lawyers, pro bono counsel by Dec 21</p>	<p>Y - at least quarterly panel meetings taking place</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>

WE CHALLENGE AND PERSUADE	<p>National thematic work 5 casework outcomes will evidence successful influencing of public authorities by Dec 22</p> <p>Develop our strategic casework practice</p> <p>Run strategic cases; learn from CELC and EHRC</p> <p>Increase Digital and traditional media presence</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>
ORGANISATIONAL SET UP	<p>Governance review</p> <p>Development of financial systems, financial modelling to review sustainability of each cost centre</p> <p>Media 1 x article/month</p> <p>AQS Submission for desk assessment by April 21</p>	<p>On track</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>N - Delayed desk assessment due to legal team capacity</p>
INCOME GENERATION	<p>New provider members - 4 per annum</p> <p>New helpline members - 1 per annum</p> <p>Hub - 1 per annum</p> <p>Fundraised income</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Exceeded overall fundraising target although fell short of targets for chatbot due to size of team and struggle to identify tech funders</p>

LEGAL EDUCATION

TOO OFTEN PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THEIR RIGHTS OR HOW TO ENFORCE THEM

We increase confidence in the law and lawyers. Providing legal education so people know how and when to use the law. We know that by using the law positively and early on we can help avoid conflict and secure better outcomes.

We have:

- Delivered 64 training sessions, increasing legal capability for 340 care managers across nine different organisations
- Held five information sessions for Rights Champions – ambassadors for Access Social Care's work from within our member organisations
- Held workshops and provided training for family carers. We provided 6 workshops on social care issues in Gloucestershire attended by 32 people
- Trained social prescribers and local activists in Croydon and Gloucestershire on the Care Act and how to use the chatbot to uphold the rights of community members
- Told over 80 organisations in Gloucestershire about our work and trained over 50 people
- Co-designed training videos with our staff and Rights Champions, to increase the accessibility of our training and to make sure that people are equipped to uphold the rights of community members
- In consultation with our advisory panel, we have conducted a complete review of our launch training for member organisations, streamlining the session to increase uptake among managers

WE'VE BEEN
EMPOWERING
and CREATING
CULTURE CHANGE

LEGAL EDUCATION

I have been working as a Coordinator for Croydon Social Prescribers for over 5 years, as part of their local strategic Social Prescribing programme. Social Prescribers are GP practitioners who support patients with any non-clinical intervention by either referring/signposting to local support or providing an advocacy service.

Over the last 5 years Croydon Social Prescribers have also been supporting and training Social Prescribers across SW London. During this time, we have seen first-hand how Local Authorities frequently and at times intentionally, act unlawfully around adult social care.

In addition to this already concerning situation, the Croydon Local Authority is in extreme debt and ... we are now seeing a worrying increase in challenges with patients not receiving the social care rights they are entitled to.

Thankfully during my short time working with Access Social Care, Social Prescribers have already seen a massive impact on patients obtaining the social care rights they are entitled to, after receiving training and access to case workers. We are now supporting local Rights Champions from local BAME communities to increase awareness and create cultural change in communities that are frequently disadvantaged.

Jennine Bailey – Social Prescribing Coordinator, Unconscious Bias Trainer and Senior Advice Coordinator



LEGAL ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Problems with access to justice mean that too often people have nowhere to turn when their right to social care is not upheld. We are growing our service to right wrongs, so that people with social care needs get accurate advice and the support they have a right to.

This year we have overturned numerous unlawful charging decisions for individuals who in some cases were being left destitute by the local authority due to the amount they were being forced to pay. We secured a safeguarding investigation for an individual who was inappropriately restrained; achieved the discharge of an individual who was detained in an ATU for more than 5 years; and prevented a number of individuals being unlawfully moved from their supported living provision.

We have also successfully overturned decisions to reassess individuals for continuing health care; ensured advocates have been appointed for clients who need support for their voices to be heard; and obtained legal aid for individuals on a wide range of issues from housing to mental health.

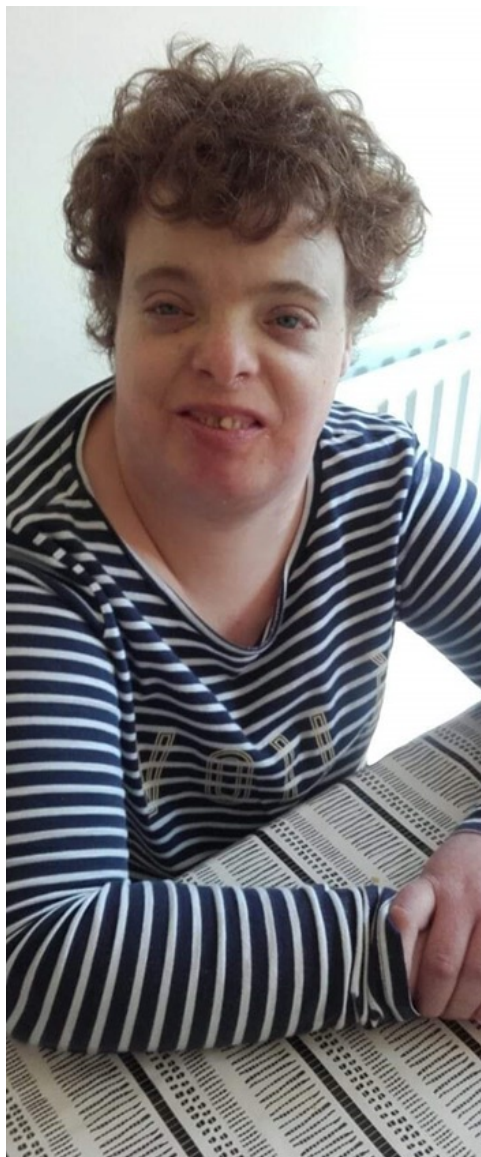
We have been providing early legal help to hold public bodies to account:

- We have provided 529 one – off pieces of advice and worked on 101 cases.
- We have maintained our 98% casework success rate.
- We have relaunched our pro bono clinics embedding them as part our strategic casework at a local authority level. We have been delighted to be joined by one new law firm and one new chambers during this relaunch.
- This year we developed an innovative letter completion feature for our chatbot. In conversation with the user, the chatbot gathers relevant information and completes a bespoke legal letter, which reminds the local authority of their statutory duties under the Care Act.



WE'VE BEEN
ENFORCING

CASE STUDY: KIRSTY MCARTHUR



THIS CASE WAS FUNDED BY ONE OF OUR MEMBER ORGANISATIONS, THE ROYAL MENCAP SOCIETY.

Kirsty has a severe learning disability. When we were first in contact with Julie (Kirsty's Mum), Kirsty lived at home. Devon County Council were trying to secure a residential placement for Kirsty. A respite provider who knew Kirsty well offered her a supported living placement, but the local authority identified a cheaper care home placement which was unsuitable and would not have met Kirsty's needs appropriately.

The local authority panel decided that the cheaper care home placement was suitable. However, the costings for the cheaper placement did not reflect the amount of support which Kirsty would need and it was clear that Kirsty's quality of life would be much better in the supported living accommodation.

Having tried unsuccessfully to resolve the matter, in May 2020, we sent a judicial review pre-action letter. The local authority agreed to complete a new needs assessment and make a new decision. Following the new assessment, the local authority continued to assert that the care home would meet Kirsty's needs.

We continued to support Julie and Kirsty and sent a further judicial review pre-action letter in March 2021. We notified the local authority that we were referring Kirsty's case out to legal aid solicitors as their decision making appeared to still be unlawful. The local authority agreed to increase Kirsty's personal budget from £1982.74 per week to £2369.85 per week to cover the cost of the preferred placement. A move into the supported living accommodation was approved.

We are pleased to hear that Kirsty is doing well in her own home and wish her all the very best for the future. Kirsty's Mum, Julie, describes the support from Access Social Care as "life-changing".

SUPPORTED BY SENIOR LEGAL CASEWORKER JULIE HINNIGAN

SYSTEM CHANGE

WE CONTINUE TO BE AT THE VANGUARD OF CAPTURING AND ANALYSING SOCIAL CARE DATA.

- Our monthly reports continue to assist us to identify referral and subject matter patterns as well as emerging trends in unlawful behaviour.
- Our innovative helpline data sharing project continues to grow with national organisations Mencap, Age UK, Independent Age, Carers UK and RNIB all participating to share their advice demand data. We published our inaugural State of the Nation report in May 2021 demonstrating a shocking nearly 400% increase in calls from carers into helplines during the pandemic.
- We submitted evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights on human rights breaches in social care and were a lead organisation to the Equality and Human Rights Commission recent social care inquiry.



WE HAVE USED OUR EVIDENCE AND DATA TO RESPOND TO A RANGE OF INQUIRIES AND CONSULTATIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR

- We challenged the Ministry of Justice's short consultation deadline to legal aid and whilst unsuccessful in extending the deadline, got coverage in national press for our attempts. We submitted a response to the judicial review consultation on behalf of 8 member organisations to highlight the particular access to justice issues for those in receipt of social care.
- We submitted a response to the Bill of Rights consultation, highlighting the deep concern we have for individuals who have suffered serious breaches of their human rights to be able to challenge such decisions in the future.
- We submitted a response to the Comprehensive Spending Review, highlighting the flaws in central government assumptions in reaching settlement decisions for local authority spend. We continue to develop this work by convening a taskforce to look at the shortfalls in adult social care funding at a deeper level.
- We provided both oral and written evidence to the Covid – 19 inquiry as to its terms of reference, highlighting concerns that much of the social care sector had been forgotten with its focus on care homes.

WE ARE WORKING ACROSS A RANGE OF SOCIAL CARE AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE THEMES:

- We continue to support those detained in assessment and treatment units and are working with Mencap and the National Autistic Society to drive change for those who continue to be detained.
- At a local authority level, we are working to challenge unlawful assessment and charging processes providing them with evidence from the cases we have worked on.
- We collected data on the problems with establishing and maintaining a career pathway in Community Care and have worked with the legal aid sector to create solutions.

WE'VE BEEN
CHALLENGING

WE CHALLENGE THE SYSTEM AND INFLUENCE VIA OUR WORK IN THE MEDIA – STRIVING TO HOLD PUBLIC BODIES TO ACCOUNT AND BRING ABOUT SYSTEM CHANGE.

Our CEO, Kari Gerstheimer’s reputation as a social care commentator has grown, with regular op-eds, social care news commentary and regularly being invited to talk on the likes of LBC and Talk Radio.

We have had coverage, featured or commented on 112 media placements this year covering: National; print, online and broadcast media, central and local government outreach and legal trade and legal blogs.

WE’VE BEEN
CHALLENGING

Some examples of national radio:-

- [LBC, Shelagh Fogarty](#)
- [Times Radio, Early Morning Breakfast](#)
- [Talk Radio, 2:15](#)

Some examples of national news:

- [BBC News](#)
- [Sky News](#)
- [GB News with Arlene Foster](#)

Some examples of national press:

- [Daily Mirror ‘Vaccine mandate for care workers will push crumbling system to breaking point’](#)
- [Independent](#)

• [Daily Mail](#)

Other examples:

- [Bloomberg podcast](#)
- [Law Gazette](#)
- [Birmingham Mail](#)

INCOME GENERATION

We have been fortunate to benefit from a start-up grant from the Oak Foundation, but we know that we need to make sure that we are a sustainable organisation going forwards. We have worked hard to diversify and increase our income streams over the past year.

- We have continued to generate income from our membership fees which covers the cost of our legal team.
- Chatbot - We are working towards generating income from our chatbot technology.
- Grant givers – we have nurtured our existing relationships and built new ones.
- We now have a small and growing Fundraising Team, able to remain on target for KPIs to reach Trusts & Foundations during the next financial year. We now have 1 x senior and 1 x junior Philanthropy fundraiser and benefit from the support of a prospect researcher to help us reach our target KPIs from Trust & Foundation applications.
- We have created a Development Board to assist with our Major Donor Fundraising and we hope to grow the board in size during the next financial year.
- Our individual donations have exceeded target and we endeavour to keep in touch with this small growing group of ex clients and general public who engage with ASC's work.



OUR CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS

Our successes haven't been without their challenges. World events from the continued pressure of the pandemic, to cost of living rises continue to impact upon our staff and the people who need us the most. However, quickly adapting and creating solutions means we have been able to minimise impact and disruption.

The social care workforce have continued to be under incredible strain, managing pandemic related crises in their own services.

Overwhelmed by information and focussed on keeping people alive and safe, managers within our member organisations have not always found the time to call us to ask for advice. We also heard from staff that workforce pressures meant that making referrals to Access Social Care is difficult because they were focussing on meeting basic needs and didn't feel able to be more aspirational in the support they were offering.

Service managers struggled to attend our training due to pandemic pressures, and issues with recruitment and retention meant that ensuring new managers know about our service was challenging. When staff were booked on training, they often could not attend as the need to cover services to provide support took priority.

To address these pressures we:

- Revised our launch training for managers to reduce the commitment from attending three separate sessions to one session.
- Developed short explainer videos for the members' area of our website to enable managers to learn at a time convenient to them.
- Increased our availability to enable referrals to take place.
- Found other ways to meet our members needs e.g. by producing resources for them or in production with them.

COVID
CONCERNS &
SOCIAL CARE
WORKFORCE
PRESSURES



OUR TEAMS

COVID-19 MEANT CONTINUED PRESSURES OF ISOLATION AND HEALTH CONCERNS FOR OUR STAFF

- We are delighted that we have secured funding to roll out a professional team counselling programme in partnership with Doctors in Distress to support legal team wellbeing in the face of ever-increasing trauma and pressure associated with an often harrowing caseload that needs urgent action taken
- We have setup a wellbeing working group which consists of 8 members of the team across all departments, who produce an annual calendar of events. Each month provides staff a different focus to support individual wellbeing, creating a supportive environment and regular communications to staff with reminders about work life balance, and healthy techniques to avoid stress and the physical impact of working from home
- We have continued to offer flexible hours and supported staff to prioritise to safeguard our impact
- We have supported staff to arrange face to face team and one to one meetings when it was safe to do so. This was regularly cited as a wellbeing priority. We have more provided more opportunities for staff to work together and with people from other teams which has been not only an effective way to problem solve but has also brought some light relief from the 'day job.' As a remote team we have taken the time to celebrate life events and seasonal celebrations in video calls with team members
- We have instigated a system of recognition that highlights achievements and value-driven work



THE FUTURE

A STRATEGY REFRESH - OUR PLANS FOR 22/23 & BEYOND

We have learnt a lot in the first two years of operation. As we end our second reporting period we have conducted a strategy refresh to reflect our revised impact and enabling priorities:

Vision: People get the health and social care support they need to live fulfilled lives.

Mission: ASC will be the leading specialist health and social care advice provider. We will collaborate, educate and challenge to drive system change and ensure rights are met.

Empower

Communities use the law early on to get better outcomes

Enforce

People get early legal advice and support when they need it

System change

We use data to challenge, persuade and influence to improve quality, policy and practice locally and nationally

Technology

We innovate and use technology to increase efficiency and impact

People

Our people strategy protects the social care law career pathway and ensures ASC is the best place to work

Income generation

Our diverse income streams grow to support increased impact

MORE EMPOWERING

We know that managers in our member organisations and community partners feel more confident and better equipped to use the law to uphold the rights of the people they support when they have attended our legal education sessions. We also know that workforce issues mean it is increasingly difficult for managers to attend regular training. We want to make it as easy as possible for managers to take on legal knowledge, develop confidence in using the law, and know how to take action. We will:

Offer a flexible approach to training delivery for new member organisations, co-designing training roll outs in ways that work for their existing practice; ensure that new managers receive an introduction to Access Social Care as part of their induction programme; and offer refresher training opportunities to managers of organisations in their second year of membership

Provide workshops on the issues that matter to communities

Improve the reach of our communications in consultation with member and partner organisations through disseminating information in ways that accord with their internal practices and networks

Develop our online offer and have at least 100 minutes of short explainer videos with quizzes to check learning by the end of the year

Make it easier for managers to contact us and for cases to be discussed

In 22/23 we will continue to reach more people through the development of our legal chatbot. We will build partnerships with community organisations to encourage use of the chatbot. New grants secured will allow next level development with new functionality and content. In 22/23 we will pilot licensing the product to other organisations to increase our impact

Measure the impact of our training through surveys and semi-structured interviews and learn from these to continuously improve what we offer

MORE ENFORCING

We will continue to grow our membership – focussing on charitable and commercial providers

We will ensure that our advice continues to be relevant to our members and community partners piloting co-produced advice toolkits and other resources addressing common problems

We will continue to grow and develop our pro- bono clinics and Barristers panel. The new clinic model provides support to individuals on failure to assess and charging, the issues most frequently reported through our Helplines data

We will continue to grow our national network of community hubs. Each hub will be co-designed and co-produced with the communities it serves. We will collaborate with more organisations to reach into communities to understand the issues of critical importance to them

By working on more cases, we will develop a body of evidence to demonstrate to Local Government and the Social Care Ombudsman the systemic issues with decision making and information sharing in assessments and charging

We will gather learning and insight from our casework with all of our members so that we can assist them in understanding the different approaches that appear to work in different local authority areas

MORE SYSTEM CHANGE

Over the past year we gathered qualitative and quantitative data about social care and advice provision. When the data helped us identify concerns we ran individual cases to deepen our understanding of the issues and develop an evidence base.

In 21/22 we used this evidence to respond to consultations. Over the next year we will use this evidence base as a springboard for strategic casework on specific themes. We anticipate quality of assessments, assessment delays and assessments refusals to be strong themes alongside charging and cost of living. We will continue to develop our work in using the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman as an alternative remedy in obtaining systemic change at a local authority level. We will continue to support those detained in assessment and treatment units, looking for ways to work with our external partners in discharging individuals and preventing the admission of those at risk.

We will continue to grow our Hub model, particularly in the North of England where we hope to collaborate with some local authorities, supporting with a citizen led approach to improving social care in their local areas. Initial discussions are taking place with the ten Adult Social Care Directors across Greater Manchester as well as engaging with the Greater Manchester Director of Adult Social Care Transformation and the Northwest Directors of Adult Social Care Forum.

We will continue to build our networks. We will reach out to other national social care and health umbrella groups including National Care Forum, Care England, Healthwatch England and NHS England, to highlight our work at their national conferences in 2023 enabling us to use these routes to reach a wider audience. We will target national organisations as well as establish direct links with regionally/locally based Black and Minority and Ethnic (BAME) communities to support our ambition to be more culturally inclusive.

As an organisation bridging the gap between social care and access to justice, we will continue to provide evidence at central government level both to committees and to consultations to highlight the risk of rights being eroded. We will lead the charge in tackling the crisis in adult social care funding by leading a taskforce that will focus on the challenge of funding those with unmet needs.

OUR ENABLING PRIORITIES

PEOPLE

- We will develop a People strategy to ensure that we recruit and retain the best people; and to ensure that we protect our culture and values as we grow.
- We will develop a community care law pathway strategy to prevent the extinction of community care law as a specialist career pathway for social justice lawyers. We will continue to focus on the needs of the legal team and recruit expertise to the team where we can. We will continue to invest in learning, development and career progression of our staff.
- Working with formal and informal community leaders we are building relationships and trust, co-creating a framework which ensures parity of esteem, and responds effectively to cultural ethnic and hyper local sensitivities. We want Access Social Care to be an organisation that celebrates difference, where all employees, clients and partners feel equally valued.
- We recognize that we need to do more ensure greater diversity at Board level and this will be a particular focus as we move into 22/23. As an organisation we are standing shoulder to shoulder with Black and Asian led organisations and disabled person and carer led organisations to reach underserved communities within our community hubs to tackle health and social care inequalities. It is critical that we have people with experience of the communities we serve on our Board.

TECHNOLOGY

- We will make the best use of technology to support our growth.
- We will introduce new systems and processes to increase efficiency.
- We will expand our use of technology and data to increase our impact.

INCOME GENERATION

- We will continue to increase revenue from our membership subscriptions.
- We will start to make the organisational transition towards becoming a product developer, piloting and testing the chatbot with prospective commercial partners.
- We will continue to diversify our fundraised income from Trusts and Foundations and Philanthropy. We will pilot event and regional fundraising.

THE FINANCIAL REPORT AND LEGAL INFORMATION

GOING CONCERN

As a start-up charity, Access Social Care is well placed to manage the business risks we face. This position is supported by strong liquidity, sufficient reserves for business continuity and development plans, a good relationship with our key funders and proven ability to retain and secure new services.

We have set out in this report a review of Access Social Care's financial performance, the reserves position and principal risks and uncertainties. Notwithstanding the ongoing pandemic related pressures, the performance to date has been robust in terms of income generation. Whilst the pandemic has continued to present operational challenges, Access Social Care has remained firmly in control of its service quality and financial performance throughout the operating period.

When we launched in 2020, we had no reserves. We have worked hard to continue to accrue reserves in this operating period so that at the end of our start up grant (in December 2023) we are in a strong and stable financial position. We have accrued £477,189 of reserves to date. As set out in our reserves policy, we are working towards having 6 months operating costs to ensure business continuity and the ability to continue providing casework for our clients in the event of financial disruption. Access Social Care has maintained its cash and reserves at levels which provide a good degree of financial protection against a continuation of the pandemic through FY 22/23.

As a new charity Access Social Care is still developing financial management processes.

We have carried out a range of cashflow projections and financial modelling exercises over the past year, supported in particular by the Cranfield Trust. We appointed our new financial lead, Sara King in March 2022 who has helped us to develop department budgets and strengthen our financial management systems.

The 2022/23 budget has been approved by the Access Social Care Board. Our planning processes, including financial projections, take into consideration the current economic climate and its potential impact on the various sources of income and planned expenditure. The trustees therefore have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, "Charities and Public Benefit". Access Social Care's charitable objects are enshrined within its memorandum and articles and as such the trustees ensure that the charity's activities are carried out for the public benefit through its strategic priorities. This is done primarily through the delivery of services aimed at people with a social care needs as well as those who support them. This report allows us to show how our charitable funds are spent and the impact and benefits that has on those using our services, as well as the wider impact on society.

CURRENT POSITION & CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

TOTAL INCOME

Our total income for our second reporting period (April 21 – March 22) was £1,679,661 against a budget of £1,383,434. The main reason for income being overbudget was timing on receipt of the Oak grant for charitable activities that will take place in 2022/23.

The largest part of our income comes from our start up grant from the Oak Foundation. This income in was £844,946 in the operating period. Income from other grants and donations was £512,318.

We have grown our membership subscription income to £320,404.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure in the reporting period was £1,161,236. Our main areas of spend are staff, consultancy for system change and chatbot.

Spend on further development of the chatbot this year was £193,072. As the chatbot is now being used by our team and in the hubs we have started to depreciate the asset. Work will continue to further enhance the Chatbot capabilities during the next financial year.

Our risk management processes help identify where we might need reserves, and our financial management policies then determine how our resources are managed and how investment decisions are made. Annually, our board of trustees considers what resources will be required to meet Access Social Care's objectives and obligations and what the risks are that might threaten the desired outcomes.

RESERVES POLICY FOR THE CHARITY

Reserves are maintained at a level that enables the charity to manage operational financial risks and short-term income volatility. They allow the charity to sustain service delivery, in particular legal casework support to our clients, over the long term, as well as ensuring that financial commitments can be met as they fall due.

Of the charity's £1,157,788 total funds at the end of March 2022, £391,914 are restricted funds and not available for general purposes.

The remaining £765,874 of total funds are unrestricted, and of these we identify £477,189 as "free reserves". Reserves are those unrestricted funds which are freely available to the trustees to spend on any of the charity's purposes. However, they exclude amounts which, if spent, would adversely affect the charity's ability to deliver its aims. Reserves do not therefore include property, funds which are set aside for programmes specifically to further our charitable objectives, or amounts set aside for essential costs.

RESERVES 31 MARCH 2022

The trustees have set a target for reserves based upon an analysis of the potential financial impacts of significant risks identified through the charity's risk management processes, as well as the need to continue to provide legal services to our clients. Reserves of £477,189 do not yet achieve our target reserves of £745,372. Our policy is to retain 6 months operating costs. We recognise that this is generous, but we consider it necessary because there is a national shortage of community care lawyers and the legal casework we conduct could not be referred out. We therefore need to have enough reserves to enable us to close off our casework in an orderly fashion, to protect the interests of our clients. As our budget for next year includes continued growth we need to further increase our reserves.

MANAGING RISK

RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL FOR THE CHARITY

Access Social Care continually reviews its risk framework, ensuring that it aligns with the organisation's strategic aims and objectives. The board of trustees reviews strategic risks on a quarterly basis. Independent assurance is provided by an outsourced independent audit function from Godfrey Wilson accountants. Risk management at the operational level is managed by the executive directors and departmental Heads, who review risks regularly both within their directorates and as a group.

PRINCIPAL RISKS FOR ACCESS SOCIAL CARE	HOW WE MITIGATE THE RISKS	OVERALL RISK LEVEL AFTER MITIGATION
Need to increase fundraised, membership and chatbot income and bank reserves over next 2 years	Expanding organizational capacity to support the diversification of income streams across a range of commercial and fundraising activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership subscriptions • Development of the chatbot as a commercial product • Trusts and foundations • Major donors and the set up a of a development board • Exploration of research grants and public body commissioning 	Likelihood 3x impact - 5 = 15
Need to deliver on current contracts to a range of grant makers including Oak	Business plan, Gantt, monitoring evaluation, accountability and KPI systems in place. Financial monitoring work progressing well. Communication plans in place.	Likelihood - 1 x Impact - 5 = 5
Need to deliver own contracts to partner agencies	We have implemented recruitment, training and retention plans. We have strengthened the expertise in the legal team.	Likelihood - 2 x Impact - 5 = 10
Maintain and develop social care expertise to deliver excellent legal advice	Successful recruitment of managers and caseworkers with relevant expertise. We need to retain these staff members. 2022 plans to develop a people and career pathway strategy.	Likelihood - 2 x Impact - 5 = 10

Retention of key staff	<p>HR processes in place. Note dedicated HR role will be required when staff head count is 40-50.</p> <p>L and D and pay costs built into budget.</p>	Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 5 =10
People and Culture	<p>We conducted a staff survey and responded to staff needs.</p> <p>We are delivering coaching for the legal team.</p> <p>We have developed a framework for challenging conversations to support some team members with communicating challenge in a positive way in line with our values.</p> <p>We are addressing concerns raised around our IT systems to improve efficiency.</p>	Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 5 =10
Define and agree service model	<p>Advisory board meetings with network partners set up to seek on-going advice on fees and model.</p> <p>Seeking commercial org. members as a result of financial modelling work.</p> <p>Hub model pilot live and seeking funding for roll out in other areas.</p> <p>Address concerns around IT systems – CMS project.</p>	Likelihood – 1 x Impact - 5 =5
Develop and enshrine effective governance arrangements and board oversight	<p>Agreed requirements and timeline with board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance review document complete, review ongoing 	Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 4 =8
Put in place effective staff and volunteer policies and procedures	<p>Handbook complete.</p> <p>Plan to review reserves policy with the Board in 2022.</p>	Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 4 =8
Develop and implement organisational systems and IT	<p>We know that we need a more sophisticated case management system. Scoping work for this is ongoing, plans to implement new system in 2022.</p>	Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 3 =6

<p>Failure to protect clients from harm caused by staff or corporate negligence.</p>	<p>Working towards AQS – senior legal manager has supported this work. The new legal team structure will enable the Head of legal role to focus on quality and the internal operational needs of the legal team.</p> <p>Barristers panel and external consultancy (Karen Ashton) assisting with the quality of advice.</p> <p>Professional indemnity insurance in place.</p>	<p>Likelihood – 1 x Impact - 5 =5</p>
<p>Ensure Compliance with regulatory bodies i.e. Charity commissioner, ICO, Fundraising Regulator</p>	<p>First independent audit completed in 2021.</p> <p>SRA compliance advice from Slaughter and May, we are now registered with SRA and we are making other organisational changes in line with recommendations.</p>	<p>Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 4 =8</p>
<p>Enshrine effective internal and external communication strategies and identify and mitigate reputational risk</p>	<p>Contracted with external communications agency.</p> <p>Policies and procedures agreed.</p>	<p>Likelihood – 2x Impact - 5 =10</p>
<p>Covid-19 impacts delivery.</p>	<p>Covid Impact mitigation plans agreed.</p> <p>Actions being taken to support team.</p>	<p>Likelihood 5 Impact 4= 20</p>

FUNDRAISING

Access Social Care now has a small and growing fundraising team, with one executive member of staff committed to supporting fundraising and the CEO supporting and signing off applications of more than £100k.

The team is made up of one senior and one junior philanthropy fundraiser as well as a prospect researcher to assist in growing a pipeline of qualified grant giving bodies, in order that the team hit their KPI target to remit the fundraising budget for the year. The team also work with a part time contractor to support the target number of lower value Trusts & Foundations, which frees up the small staff team to work on and explore other areas of Fundraising disciplines with a view to expanding the work which relies on Fundraised income in future years.

This year we have launched a Development Board to help grow our Major Donor income. The board is Chaired by our Trustee Chris Hale and currently has two other members. We have recruited an experienced fundraising consultant who has extensive high value fundraising experience as well as specific experience in setting up and working with successful Development Boards, she will help us in the set-up phase of the Development Board. We will be hosting a launch event in May 22, with a view to engaging with prospective high value givers and board members. We aim to grow the board to around 6-8 people by the end of 22/23. The board will meet each quarter and we will set specific targets around how each member will help ASC reach new high value audiences and achieving its major donor income targets.

We have exceeded our income target for individual donations this year, with many donors being ex-clients, and the team are looking at compelling ways in which they can engage with those of this group who opt in to our communications. We are setting up a process to ask ex-clients, following case closures, to opt in to further communication from the charity whereby we can engage with this group about our work, fundraising efforts and regular donation asks.



We are keeping an eye on the changing landscape of Charity of the Year partnerships. Some of the law firms we have spoken to have described a desire to move away from the CSR 'tick box' and have expressed how younger employees are wanting to see more impact for CSR. This might be an interesting area of fundraising for ASC and one which we might test with the law firms that we work with.

Access Social Care's compelling 'ask' continues to stand us in good stead with grant giving bodies, particularly with our growing hub model and many funders wanting to support the communities with which they reside in. Our strength continues to grow in high value 'relationship' based grant givers whose interest is in longer term system change as opposed to service models with more of a 'sticking plaster' impact and no long-term change. Our national model, hubs and chatbot gather critical and powerful data that demonstrates to funders the impact of collaboration and a strengths-based approach.

ACCESS is committed to ensuring that fundraising activities are carried out in an ethical manner.

The Access Social Care policy on donations and fundraising applies to the Board, casual, permanent and contract staff and volunteers. It lays out clear processes and guidelines, with a clear position on fundraising practice and the standards expected in raising funds from the community. Building on the work that Access Social Care has already produced on fundraising policies and ethical activity, Access is committed to continuing this work and will start the process of registering with the likes of the Fundraising Regulator and the Chartered Institute of Fundraising in 22/23.

The Fundraising Regulator badge demonstrates that a charity has committed to fundraise in a way that is legal, open, honest, and respectful. Displaying the badge on ASC's website and material provides confidence to donors in a charity's methods of fundraising. In addition, we are looking at potential membership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising. The CIF works closely with the Fundraising Regulator. Members sign up to support a fundraising code of practice, which champions excellent fundraising and inspires people and organisations to give and makes donors feel good about giving.



CHARITY INFORMATION

CHARITY DETAILS

Charity number: **1186714**
 Registered office: **Coventry Law Centre, Oakwood House,
 Cheylesmore, Coventry, England, CV1 2HL**

THE TRUSTEES WHO SERVED DURING THE PERIOD AND UP TO THE DATE OF THIS REPORT WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Jan Tregelles	Chair of the Board
Rhoda Iranloye	Appointed 12 July 2022
Christopher Hale	Trustee
Rebecca Mills	Resigned 3 May 2022
Linda Redford	Trustee
Kevin McGuirk	Appointed 25 May 2021
Joyce Sarpong	Appointed 12 July 2022
Robbie Turner	Appointed 12 July 2022

CEO AND FOUNDER Kari Gerstheimer

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Joanne Williams	Director of Partnerships and Engagement
Lainey Gough	Director of Operations and Impact
Catriona Filmer	Head of Legal
Anna Gaughan	Director of Policy and Collaboration
Miriam Valencia	Head of Operations
Hannah Hewish	Legal Strategy Manager
Sara King	Finance lead
Sian Simon	Executive assistant to the Board and CEO

ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL ADVICE TO THE CHARITY DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Central England Law Centre,
 Oakwood House,
 St Patricks Road Entrance,
 Coventry,
 CV1 2HL

COMMUNICATIONS AND PR
 CONSULTANCY
 BLJ
 15 & 17 Grosvenor Gardens,
 London,
 SW1W 0BD

AUDITORS

Godfrey Wilson Limited,
 5th Floor, Mariner House,
 62 Prince Street,
 Bristol,
 BS1 4QD

LEGAL ADVICE

Fieldfisher
 Riverbank House,
 2 Swan Lane, London,
 EC4R 3TT

FINANCE CONSULTANCY

Cranfield Trust
 1 Bell St,
 Romsey,
 SO51 8GY

BANKERS

The Co-Operative Bank,
 118-120 Colmore Row,
 Birmingham,
 B3 3BD

The Charity is constituted as a CIO and does not currently have any subsidiary undertakings. Details of governing document (e.g. memorandum & articles of association, trust deed, etc.) can be found on our website: <https://www.accesscharity.org.uk/governance>

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND DELEGATED ARRANGEMENTS

Access Social Care follows Charity Commission best practice guidance on recruitment and induction of new trustees. Skills gaps relevant to the strategic objectives of the charity are identified on the board by way of informal audit (last conducted in Summer 2022). These are addressed through the recruitment of new trustees. Potential trustees submit a CV and covering letter, and meet the CEO and one other member of the Executive team. The Chair of trustees and two other trustees then conduct and interview to assess suitability of the candidate. New trustees are offered an induction programme including a set of key documents, meetings with other trustees, visits to the charity office and discussions with staff. Opportunities for training are offered to support trustees in their roles.

In line with our Diversity aims, we are working hard to encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates and guarantee interviews for people from under-represented groups. We have a Governance Toolkit including an induction checklist for new trustees.

The Articles of Association include terms of office for trustees, with the exception of two of the founding trustees, an initial appointment is made for a 3-year term and trustees will be eligible for reappointment for one further term of 3 years. The two founding trustees are appointed as follows and will be eligible for a further term of 3 years:

Janine Tregelles – 5 years

Chris Hale – 4 years

The board of trustees is responsible for determining the overall strategic direction of the charity and for developing policies and plans to support the delivery of charitable objects. The board monitors progress across all areas of activity including legal requirements and financial performance. Governance review work is on track and on-going. If the CIO is wound up, the trustees as members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

A Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations, the authority for operational matters including financial management, employment and performance relating to agreed key objectives is delegated to the CEO and other members of the Executive team. Any decisions outside of the strategic direction agreed by the board or more than £100,000 outside of the agreed budget are referred to trustees for approval.

Pay and remuneration of the charity's key management personnel is reviewed by the board each year and any changes made are based on performance, an assessment of the market, the financial position of the organisation and relativity across the team.

VOLUNTEERS

At least 150 people provided voluntary service to the charity in 2021/22.

Access Social Care volunteers support the charity's work in many ways and the charity benefits greatly from their experience and commitment to the cause. The trustees are grateful for the dedicated efforts of the volunteers who are involved in:

- The development of the chatbot
- The provision of legal advice
- The provision of legal education

We are also grateful to our team of Rights Ambassadors who help spread the word about the use of the law in their communities.



TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the year. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- **select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;**
- **observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;**
- **make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;**
- **state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and**
- **prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.**

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

AUDITORS. Godfrey Wilson Limited were reappointed as auditors to the charity during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 27 September 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Janine Tregelles

JANINE TREGELLES - CHAIR

TO THE MEMBERS OF ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of Access Your Right To Care (the 'charity') for the period ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

BASIS FOR OPINION

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

CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue. Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

OTHER INFORMATION

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- sufficient accounting records have not been kept;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out in the trustees' report, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

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

(1) We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, and assessed the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Throughout the audit, we remained alert to possible indications of non-compliance.

(2) We reviewed the charity's policies and procedures in relation to:

- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations, and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risk of fraud, and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- Designing and implementing internal controls to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud.

(3) We inspected the minutes of trustee meetings.

(4) We enquired about any non-routine communication with regulators and reviewed any reports made to them.

(5) We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and assessed their compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(6) We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions or balances that may indicate a risk of material fraud or error.

(7) We assessed the risk of fraud through management override of controls and carried out procedures to address this risk. Our procedures included:

- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries;
- Assessing judgements and accounting estimates for potential bias;
- Reviewing related party transactions; and
- Testing transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. Irregularities that arise due to fraud can be even harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

USE OF OUR REPORT

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and the regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Date: 29 September 2022

Godfrey Wilson Limited

GODFREY WILSON LIMITED

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES For the year ended 31 March 2022

				2022	16 months 2021
	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £	Total £
INCOME FROM:					
Donations	3	1,056,547	300,717	1,357,264	1,145,580
Charitable activities	4	-	322,291	322,291	231,711
Investments		-	106	106	13
TOTAL INCOME		<u>1,056,547</u>	<u>623,114</u>	<u>1,679,661</u>	<u>1,377,304</u>
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Raising funds		33,203	102,597	135,800	88,426
Charitable activities		701,131	324,305	1,025,436	649,515
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	6	<u>734,334</u>	<u>426,902</u>	<u>1,161,236</u>	<u>737,941</u>
NET INCOME		322,213	196,212	518,425	639,363
Transfers between funds		<u>(163,073)</u>	<u>163,073</u>	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	7	159,140	359,285	518,425	639,363
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>232,774</u>	<u>406,589</u>	<u>639,363</u>	-
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>391,914</u></u>	<u><u>765,874</u></u>	<u><u>1,157,788</u></u>	<u><u>639,363</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in notes to the accounts.

BALANCE SHEET As at 31 March 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	2021 £
FIXED ASSETS				
Tangible assets	10		-	7,397
Intangible assets	11		288,685	143,509
			288,685	150,906
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	12	119,211		111,739
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>977,551</u>		<u>547,594</u>
		1,096,762		659,333
LIABILITIES				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	13	<u>227,659</u>		<u>170,876</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			869,103	488,457
NET ASSETS	15		1,157,788	639,363
FUNDS				
Restricted funds	16		391,914	232,774
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			-	24,605
General funds			765,874	381,984
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS			1,157,788	639,363

Janine Tregelles

Approved by the trustees on 27 September 2022 and signed on their behalf by Janine Tregelles - Chair

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS For the year ended 31 March 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	518,425	639,363
Adjustments for:		
Amortisation charges	47,896	-
Depreciation charges	-	2,835
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(106)	(13)
Loss / (profit) on the sale of fixed assets	7,397	-
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(7,472)	(111,739)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	56,783	170,876
	<u>622,923</u>	<u>701,322</u>
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	106	13
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	-	(10,232)
Purchase of intangible fixed assets	<u>(193,072)</u>	<u>(143,509)</u>
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES	<u>(192,966)</u>	<u>(153,728)</u>
INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE PERIOD	429,957	547,594
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	<u>547,594</u>	<u>-</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE PERIOD	<u>977,551</u>	<u>547,594</u>

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

A) BASIS OF PREPARATION

- The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).
- Access Your Right To Care meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

B) GOING CONCERN BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

- The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

C) INCOME

- Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.
- Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.
- Income from subscriptions received in advance is deferred until criteria for income recognition are met.

D) DONATED SERVICES AND FACILITIES

- Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.
- On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONT)

- As discussed in the trustees' report, the charity benefitted from significant pro bono support in 2021 and 2022, however these have not been recognised in the accounts on the basis that the charity would not have been able to afford these services if not provided for free.
- E) INTEREST RECEIVABLE
- Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.
- F) FUNDS ACCOUNTING
- Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.
- G) EXPENDITURE AND IRRECOVERABLE VAT
- Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.
 - Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.
- H) ALLOCATION OF SUPPORT AND GOVERNANCE COSTS
- Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities based on the proportion of direct costs, as follows:

	2022	2021
Raising funds	12%	12%
Charitable activities	88%	88%

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONT)

I) TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Computer equipment **3 years straight line**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £5,000.

J) INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

- Internally generated intangible assets meeting the relevant recognition criteria are initially measured at cost. Intangible fixed assets relate to the costs incurred in developing the charity's ChatBot asset.
- Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation rate in use for ChatBot is 4 years straight line.

K) DEBTORS

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

L) CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

M) CREDITORS

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONT)

N) FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

O) PENSION COSTS

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

P) ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND KEY JUDGEMENTS

- In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying 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 if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.
- The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determining the value of additions to capitalised intangible assets and the associated amortisation policy.

2. PRIOR PERIOD COMPARATIVES: STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	16 months 2021		
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
INCOME FROM:			
Donations and legacies	1,059,150	86,430	1,145,580
Charitable activities	-	231,711	231,711
Investments	-	13	13
	<u>1,059,150</u>	<u>318,154</u>	<u>1,377,304</u>
TOTAL INCOME			
EXPENDITURE ON:			
Raising funds	88,426	-	88,426
Charitable activities	606,941	42,574	649,515
	<u>695,367</u>	<u>42,574</u>	<u>737,941</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			
NET INCOME	<u>363,783</u>	<u>275,580</u>	<u>639,363</u>
Transfers between funds	<u>(131,009)</u>	<u>131,009</u>	<u>-</u>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	<u><u>232,774</u></u>	<u><u>406,589</u></u>	<u><u>639,363</u></u>

3. INCOME FROM DONATIONS

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2022 Total
	£	£	£
Oak Foundation grant	844,946	-	844,946
Trusts and foundations	208,934	247,979	456,913
Corporate donations	-	39,018	39,018
Individual donations	2,667	7,825	10,492
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	-	97	97
Kickstart Scheme	-	5,798	5,798
	<u>1,056,547</u>	<u>300,717</u>	<u>1,357,264</u>
TOTAL INCOME FROM DONATIONS			
			16 months
	Restricted	Unrestricted	2021
	£	£	
PRIOR PERIOD COMPARATIVE:			
INCOME FROM:			
Oak Foundation grant	757,091	-	757,091
Trusts and foundations	302,059	38,233	340,292
Corporate donations	-	45,500	45,500
Individual donations	-	1,772	1,772
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	-	925	925
	<u>1,059,150</u>	<u>86,430</u>	<u>1,145,580</u>
TOTAL INCOME FROM DONATIONS			

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

			2022	16 months
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Consultancy income	-	1,887	1,887	6,533
Subscriptions	-	320,404	320,404	225,178
TOTAL INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	-	322,291	322,291	231,711

All income from charitable activities in the prior year was unrestricted.

5. GOVERNMENT GRANTS

The charity received government grant funding under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Kickstart Scheme in the period ending 31 March 2022. The total amount received was £5,895 (2021: £925). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

6. TOTAL EXPENDITURE

	Raising funds	Charitable activities	Support and governance costs	2022 TOTAL
	£	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE:				
Staff costs (note 8)	102,908	693,933	106,274	903,115
Other staff costs	225	14,007	15,081	29,313
Evaluation	-	17,125	-	17,125
Workshops	-	8,318	-	8,318
Consultancy	10,700	64,690	5,350	80,740
IT and telephone costs	-	11,966	17,892	29,858
Office costs	12	1,720	2,513	4,245
Finance and governance	-	-	19,336	19,336
Depreciation and amortisation	-	47,896	-	47,896
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	13,893	13,893
Loss on disposal	-	-	7,397	7,397
Sub-total	<u>113,845</u>	<u>859,655</u>	<u>187,736</u>	<u>1,161,236</u>
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>21,955</u>	<u>165,781</u>	<u>(187,736)</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u><u>135,800</u></u>	<u><u>1,025,436</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>1,161,236</u></u>

Total governance costs were £13,718 (2021: £4,950).

6. TOTAL EXPENDITURE (CONT)

PRIOR PERIOD COMPARATIVE

	Raising funds	Charitable activities	Support and governance costs	16 MONTHS 2021 TOTAL
	£	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE:				
Staff costs (note 8)	70,903	473,392	66,150	610,445
Other staff costs	-	2,136	13,601	15,737
Evaluation	-	6,875	-	6,875
Consultancy	-	34,238	-	34,238
IT and telephone costs	-	2,767	39,560	42,327
Office costs	-	1,397	4,145	5,542
Finance and governance	-	-	17,569	17,569
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-	2,835	2,835
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	2,373	2,373
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Sub-total	70,903	520,805	146,233	737,941
Allocation of support and governance costs	17,523	128,710	(146,233)	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>88,426</u>	<u>649,515</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>737,941</u>

7. NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	2022	16 months 2021
	£	£
This is stated after charging:		
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	Nil	199
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	7,397	-
Auditors' remuneration:		
• Statutory audit (ex VAT)	5,400	4,950
• Other services (ex VAT)	7,083	2,280

During the period no trustees were reimbursed for expenses (2021: 1 trustee reimbursed £199 for travel expense).

8. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

	2022	16 months 2021
STAFF COSTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:		
Salaries and wages	781,049	545,888
Social security costs	71,219	38,761
Pension costs	36,165	25,508
Freelancers	<u>14,682</u>	<u>288</u>
	<u>903,115</u>	<u>610,445</u>

	2022	2021
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES EARNING IN THE RANGE OF:	No.	No.
£70,000 - £80,000	1	1
£80,000 - £90,000	1	1

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Senior Management Team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the period were £380,797 (2021: £353,625).

	2022	2021
AVERAGE HEAD COUNT:	No.	No.
	26	14

9. TAXATION

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

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	IT equipment
COST	£
At 1 April 2021	10,232
Disposals in period	<u>(10,232)</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2021	2,835
On disposal	<u>(2,835)</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
AT 31 MARCH 2022	<u>-</u>
AT 31 MARCH 2021	<u><u>7,397</u></u>

11. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	ChatBot app £
COST	
At 1 April 2021	143,509
Additions in period	<u>193,072</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>336,581</u>
AMORTISATION	
At 1 April 2021	-
Charge for the period	<u>47,896</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>47,896</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2022	<u><u>288,685</u></u>
At 31 March 2021	<u><u>143,509</u></u>

Intangible fixed assets relates to the charity's ChatBot app which has now been brought into use, but continues to be developed. The app will be amortised over 4 years as each stage of development is complete.

12. DEBTORS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade debtors	112,478	93,920
Prepayments	6,733	3,195
Accrued income	-	1,600
Other debtors	-	13,024
	<u>119,211</u>	<u>111,739</u>

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS DUE WITHIN 1 YEAR

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	19,166	9,391
Accruals	22,228	14,881
Other taxation and social security	47,505	27,712
Deferred income (see note 14)	138,760	118,892
	<u>227,659</u>	<u>170,876</u>

14. DEFERRED INCOME

	2022	2021
	£	£
At 1 April 2021	118,892	-
Deferred during the period	138,760	118,892
Released during the period	(118,892)	-
At 31 March 2022	<u>138,760</u>	<u>118,892</u>

Deferred income relates to subscription income invoiced in advance.

15. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	288,685	288,685
Current assets	391,914	-	704,848	1,096,762
Current liabilities	-	-	(227,659)	(227,659)
NET ASSETS AT 31 MARCH 2022	<u>391,914</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>765,874</u>	<u>1,157,788</u>

PRIOR YEAR COMPARATIVE

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	7,397	7,397
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	143,509	143,509
Current assets	282,774	24,605	351,954	659,333
Current liabilities	(50,000)	-	(120,876)	(170,876)
NET ASSETS AT 31 MARCH 2021	<u>232,774</u>	<u>24,605</u>	<u>381,984</u>	<u>639,363</u>

16. MOVEMENT OF FUNDS

	At 1 April 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	At 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
RESTRICTED FUNDS					
Oak Foundation	3,650	844,946	(574,880)	-	273,716
Hub / Casework	54,870	123,334	(72,842)	(8,090)	97,272
ChatBot	174,254	70,667	(69,012)	(154,983)	20,926
Public Legal Education	-	17,600	(17,600)	-	-
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS	232,774	1,056,547	(734,334)	(163,073)	391,914
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS					
Designated funds	24,605	-	-	(24,605)	-
General funds	381,984	623,114	(426,902)	187,678	765,874
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	406,589	623,114	(426,902)	163,073	765,874
TOTAL FUNDS	639,363	1,679,661	(1,161,236)	-	1,157,788

PURPOSES OF RESTRICTED FUNDS

- **OAK FOUNDATION**

This a core grant which has enabled the set up of Access Social Care. The majority of the grant covers the cost of salaries.

- **HUB / CASEWORK**

These funds are to set up the place-based hub in Gloucestershire and Croydon, fund community care casework, strategic casework and strategic data work.

- **CHATBOT**

These funds are to develop a legal information chatbot, which will be free at the point of use and available on the Access Social Care website.

- **PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION**

These funds are to increase legal knowledge and legal capability and to improve the career pathway for community care law.

PURPOSES OF DESIGNATED FUNDS

Designated funds represented grant income which was internally designated for programme work, mainly on the ChatBot project. This has been fully expended in 2022.

TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS

Transfers between funds relate to restricted capital expenditure for the ChatBot project. The restriction on the funds has been discharged by the purchase of the asset, as the ongoing use of the asset is not restricted.

PRIOR YEAR COMPARATIVE

	At 3 December 2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	At 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
RESTRICTED FUNDS					
Oak Foundation	-	718,591	(628,212)	(86,729)	3,650
Hub / Casework	-	120,749	(65,879)	-	54,870
ChatBot	-	219,810	(1,276)	(44,280)	174,254
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS	-	1,059,150	(695,367)	(131,009)	232,774
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS					
Designated funds	-	35,000	(10,395)	-	24,605
General funds	-	283,154	(32,179)	131,009	381,984
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	-	318,154	(42,574)	131,009	406,589
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS	-	<u>1,377,304</u>	<u>(737,941)</u>	-	<u>639,363</u>

17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There were no related party transactions during the current or prior year.

THANK YOU

A note of thanks to all donors, volunteers and other supporters of ASC. Without you none of our achievements and successes would have been possible. We sincerely hope that you will continue to stand by our side as we continue on our journey, working towards a future where we all get the social care we have a right to.

With best wishes

The Access Social Care Team

ACCESS YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

England & Wales - Charity number 1186714

Accounts



ANNUAL REPORT

Charity Registration 1186714 | 31 March 2021



CONTENTS

WELCOME

- A Note From our Chairperson & CEO
- What is Social Care?
- The Access Social Care Approach
- Providing Support

LOOK INSIDE

- New Memberships
- We're Growing Up
- New Look, New Feel
- New Innovations
- Making a Supermodel
- New Systems & Processes
- New Relationships

THE PRESENT

- What we Set Out to Achieve
- A Year in Review
- Education & Early Legal Assistance
- Somewhere to Turn
- Who we Helped
- Long-term Systemic Change
- Under the Influence
- Income Generation
- Our 2020 Successes
- Our Challenges and Learnings
- Pressures of a Pandemic
- Coping with Covid

THE FUTURE

- 2021 and Beyond
- Delivering on Priorities

THE FINANCIAL REPORT AND LEGAL INFORMATION

- Going Concern & Statement of Public Benefit
- Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustees
- Facts and Figures
- Current Position
- Managing Risk
- Future Planning
- Fundraising
- Charity Information
- Financial Information

FIND IT

- Page 4
- Page 5 - 6
- Page 7-8
- Page 9

FIND IT

- Page 11
- Page 12
- Page 13
- Page 14
- Page 15
- Page 16
- Page 17

FIND IT

- Page 19
- Page 20 - 23
- Page 24 - 25
- Page 26
- Page 27 - 28
- Page 29
- Page 30
- Page 31
- Page 32
- Page 33
- Page 34
- Page 35

FIND IT

- Page 37
- Page 38-39

FIND IT

- Page 41
- Page 42
- Page 43
- Page 44
- Page 45
- Page 46
- Page 47
- Page 48 - 49
- Page 50 - 63

WELCOME



A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON & CEO

2020 was a year like no other. When our journey began in December 2019, we could never have imagined what was right around the corner. But as the pandemic hit, almost overnight, our purpose to provide legal support to people with health and social care needs, became more important - more urgent - than ever before. And we more than rose to the challenge.

We have maintained our outstanding casework success rate. Launched a prize winning legal information chatbot. Led a helpline data project on the vanguard of data collaboration in the charitable sector and influenced public body policy and guidance. Indeed, we are extremely proud of the charity's spectacular achievements since we began officially operating as Access Social Care on 1st April 2020, during the pandemic's first wave.

Incubation we received from the Royal Mencap Society and Central England Law Centre, along with the invaluable support of our many funders, pro-bono donors and members provided us with the crucial foundations we needed to begin our critical task. However, the last year would not have been possible without the dedication of our staff and volunteers, whose commitment to justice is nothing short of remarkable. Thanks to them our inaugural year not only met but far exceeded all our expectations. Allowing Access Social Care to help more people receive the care they so desperately required, in the most desperate of times.

Throughout this report we share with you our income growth and quantitative achievements. But our work is not simply about statistics. It's helping real people, get the real support they need, and to which they have fundamental rights. Our work improves lives. Alongside our financial figures we hope you'll take a few moments to read the stories of some of those whose lives were affected by the events of the past year, real people now have better outcomes and better support through our work.

As we enter our second year, and we continue to grow in size and strength, we will continue to empower local communities with our knowledge and experience. We will continue to enforce the law with our legal expertise. And we will continue to challenge the decision-makers of the social care sector.

We will create better outcomes for everyone with social care needs.

For now, and for the future.

- Janine Tregelles, Chairperson
- Kari Gerstheimer, CEO

WHAT IS SOCIAL CARE?

Social care changes lives. Prevents loneliness. Provides intimate support. Protecting the rights of those with additional needs. Whether supplied in a private residence or in a care home, social care can be a lifeline for someone living with disabilities or mental health conditions, and for people who are ageing.

Every day millions of older and disabled people are denied the help they desperately need. Demand for social care has skyrocketed. Social care resources, meanwhile, have continued to plummet. This devastating discrepancy means people with social care needs are falling through the gap. This affects all of us, we will all need social care at some point, either for ourselves or for a loved one.

In this situation, people have a legal right to hold public bodies to account; challenging the decisions of local authorities denying or delaying their care. This requires expensive legal intervention and with most of us unable to afford lawyers we rely heavily on legal aid. However, a 92% drop in legal aid community care cases since 2010, means too often we are left fending for ourselves. We have nowhere to turn. Without access to justice, our rights do not exist. The rule of law is broken.

DID YOU KNOW?

1.5 million older people have unmet social care needs

£8 billion is the latest estimate for sector-wide funding gap in 3 years' time

8 out of 10 councils don't have sufficient funds to make up for increased costs and reduced incomes resulting from the pandemic

78% of local authorities in England and Wales are without a single community care legal aid provider

92% drop in community care legal aid cases since 2010



SCHOOL OF THOUGHT



Access Social Care was founded to help make social care accessible to all who need it. However, we knew from the beginning that education would be the key to unlocking support and success.

Before our work even begins, we start by challenging perceptions of social care and the legal profession.

Our insight tells us:

- Most UK citizens are **unaware of their social care rights**
- Some **don't know what social care means**
- Few see law as a tool to help them
- Many **lack confidence to instruct lawyers** or use legal language
- **Mistrust of legal professionals** is commonplace

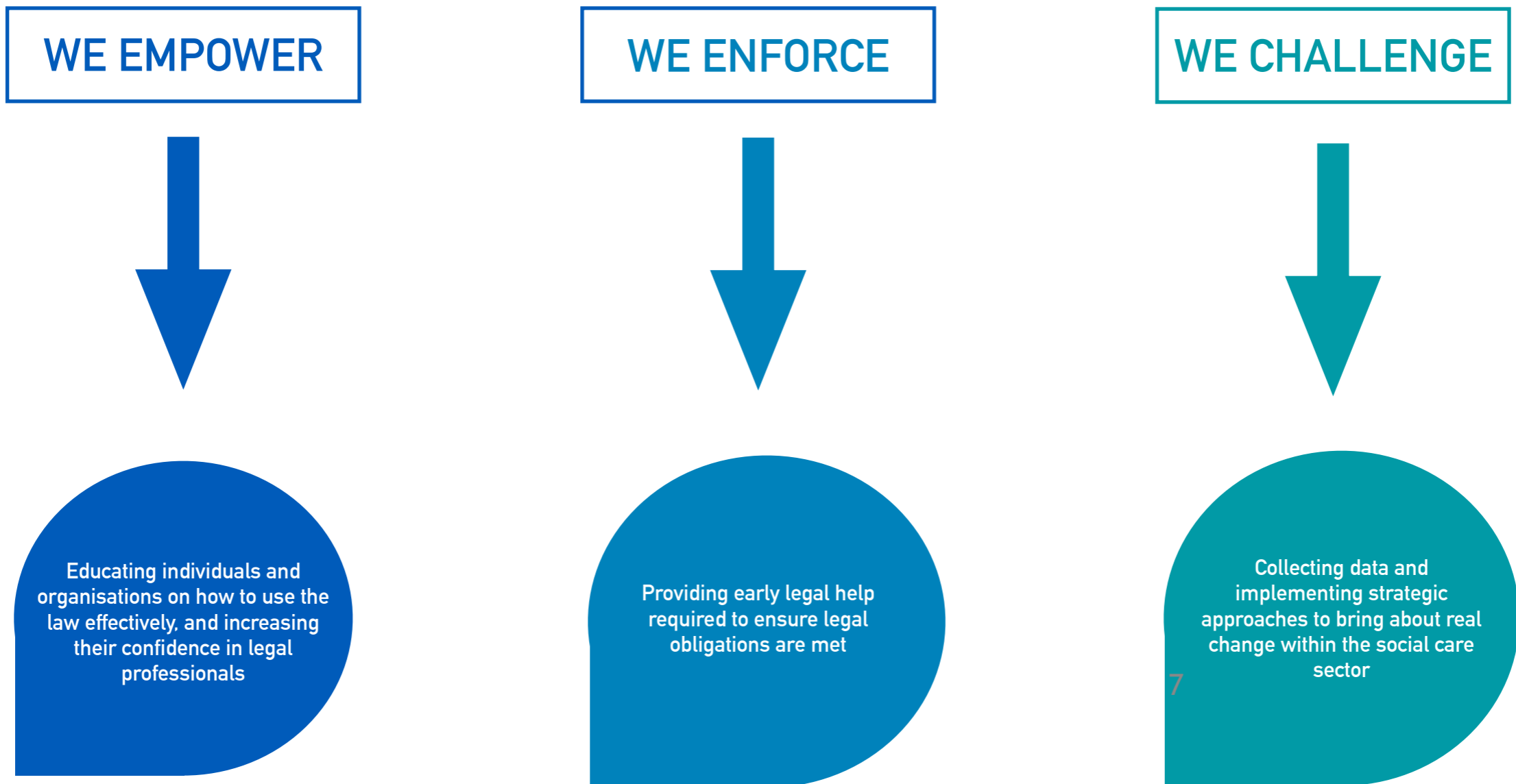
At Access Social Care we've initiated a movement; educating people on how the law helps secure better outcomes for those with social care needs, driving better social care outcomes through early legal help and taking a data and evidence led strengths-based approach to catalyse system change.

THE ASC APPROACH

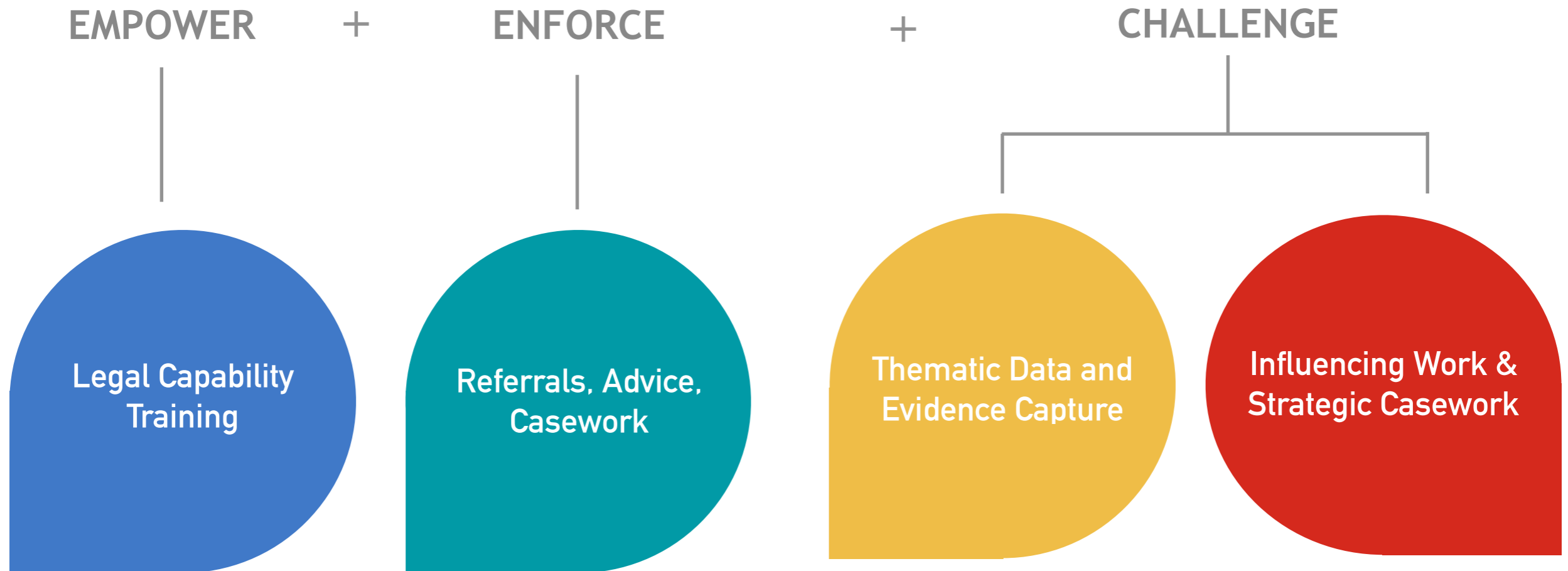
Access Social Care provides free legal advice for people with social care needs, helping them achieve a better quality of life. We highlight the gap left by cuts to Legal Aid, providing expert advice to those who can't afford it. And our network of lawyers and barristers hold a 98% success rate for ensuring fair access to justice when things go wrong.

Every day we work towards a future where social care is adequately funded. We collaborate with social services whilst ensuring legal obligations are met and we drive the change required to get support for anyone who needs it. We educate as we go, helping communities increase their knowledge of the law — and their rights in challenging it.

Our subscription-based model connects our specialist community care law expertise to other organisations through three main work-streams:



THE ASC APPROACH IN PRACTICE



PROVIDING SUPPORT

MEMBERSHIP MODEL

We connect our expertise with beneficiaries of other organisations through our membership model:

- Social care providers
- Helplines
- Place-based hubs

PEOPLE POWER

Our in-house legal team trains the lawyers working pro-bono to develop a secondary specialisation in community care law. Our pro-bono barristers assist with complex cases.

CHATBOT COUNSEL

We offer accurate legal information for free, 24/7, through our award-winning chatbot.

CLOSING CASES

We use the law positively and early on to avoid conflict. We pride ourselves on our 98% success rate in early legal intervention cases.

POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS

We collaborate with hard-to-reach and underserved communities through our place-based hub initiative. Taking a strengths-based approach to driving system change in localities.

CREATING CHANGE

We channel our expertise into innovating the social care field; bringing about long term change and making a better future for all.

LOOK INSIDE

NEW MEMBERSHIPS

Our current members are social care providers and charities with helplines, who join our network so that their beneficiaries can access our service. In this reporting period our members are:

Mencap | Dimensions | Choice Support | United Response | MacIntyre | Discovery | Barnet Mencap | Wirral Mencap | Croydon Mencap | Milestones | Camphill Village Trust | HfT | Camphill Village Trust | Independent Age | Allsorts Glos | Age UK Gloucestershire | Inclusion Gloucestershire.

Partnerships, networks and constellations are core to our work. Partners on our flagship data sharing partnership are:

Age UK | Carers UK | Independent Age and Mencap.

Access Social Care is an active member of the Care and Support Alliance, the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group, Advice UK, and we are represented on the Administrative Justice Council Advice Panel, Social Care Futures and Fair Pay for Care Campaign.

WHAT OUR MEMBERS SAY ABOUT US:

"I will definitely be recommending this service to other managers."

I knew the cuts were unlawful, but I had no-one to ask before. Thank you for saving our service!"

"Thank goodness I called you! You have made xxx so happy that he can stay in his home!"

"Your service makes such a difference! There's never been anyone to ask before. We've just had to try and work things out for ourselves which takes so much time."

"I can't believe it took just one letter!"

WE'RE GROWING UP

In our first year we've been busily recruiting and strengthening our team. In 2020 we added further expertise and experience allowing us to provide our members and beneficiaries with a first-class service.



The Access Social Care team increased from just 2 to 22 people:

- Recruited an EA and completed a whole team TUPE transfer from Mencap in March 2020
- Matured our legal team through the appointment of 3 new community care experts
- Appointed a senior advice coordinator to grow our place-based hub



NEW LOOK, NEW FEEL

As a new charity we are rapidly growing and changing as we learn along the way. From ensuring the way we look and sound inspires trust and belief, to better engaging those we are trying to help.

This year we have taken great care to assess and adjust our ways of working, allowing us to adapt to the ever-changing landscape. By looking to improve our proposition we have laid the foundations upon which we continue to build:



[What we do](#) [Our Impact](#) [News](#) [Resources](#) [About Us](#) [Support Us](#)

We provide free legal advice and support to people in England to get the care they are entitled to.

What is [social care](#)?

[What is the issue?](#) and [what is our solution?](#)

[How we work](#)

REBRAND

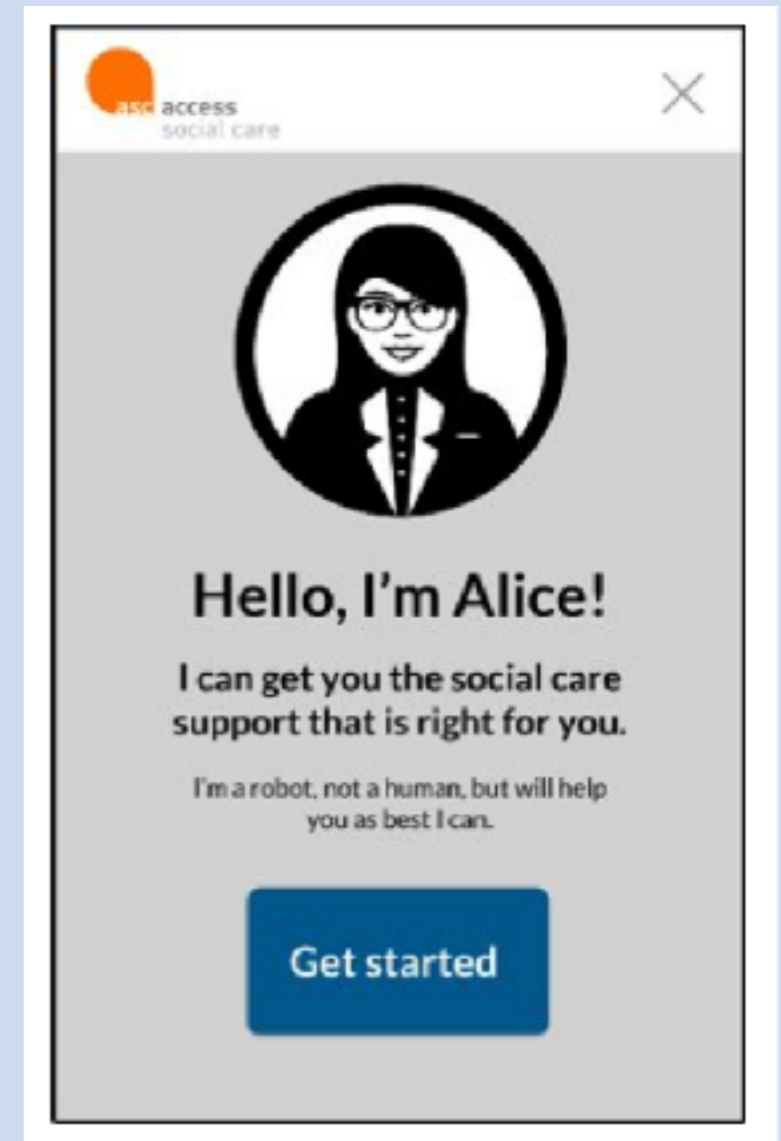
- Refined a clear proposition for the Access Social Care brand
- Secured pro-bono support from a branding agency and website designer to create distinct brand identity
- Defined our Tone of Voice for consistent comms
- Launched our new website
- Developed a suite of communication assets to amplify brand awareness
- Employed a top London PR agency; providing opportunities for ASC to speak on social care issues within the national press
- Created testimonials and video case studies to help promote our offering to a wider audience

NEW INNOVATIONS

When our legal advisors can't be there, our legal chatbot is the next best thing:

THE ASC CHATBOT

- Won the Nesta Legal Access Challenge in March 2020
- Simulates conversation with social care advice seekers
- Gives accurate and timely legal information
- Helps prevent legal problems arising
- Free at the point of use
- Available 24/7
- Accessible via desktop or mobile devices
- Gathers thematic and geographical data to help us understand advice demand and trends of unlawful public body decision making
- Recently awarded the Thrive Award from the Unltd Foundation;



MAKING A SUPERMODEL



In 2020, we identified that smaller community-based organisations struggle to afford our fees. Too many people were unable to access our service and therefore the help they needed. As a result we have committed to setting up a network of place-based hubs where we subsidise membership fees through partnership arrangements with funders. 2020 saw our very first hub open in Gloucestershire, in partnership with the Barnwood Trust.

These place-based hubs provide us with more meaningful connections to the communities we are looking to help; allowing us to respond to the needs of smaller user-led organisations working with under-served groups. These groups might otherwise associate using the law with conflict. But through education and taking a rights based approach - using the law positively and early on - we can help local citizens encourage public bodies to act lawfully. Ultimately improving first instance decision making, securing better social care outcomes and changing perceptions about the legal process.

NEW SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

Whilst delivering impact, we have been working hard to set up all the systems and processes required for a new charity. From bank accounts to accounting systems and financial models, we have set up a financial operating, management and forecasting system. Striving for excellence with our Governance we have started to build our board, recruiting two new Trustees and conducting a Governance Review.

We have developed our legal team systems – setting up a new CRM to help us capture data and manage cases, and working towards compliance with the Advice Quality Standard to ensure the highest quality advice. Working with academics Professor Lisa Vanhala and Doctor Jacqui Kinghan, we have developed our Theory of Change. We have been establishing a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework to help us understand and learn from our successes and our mistakes, so that we can continually improve our impact.

NEW RELATIONSHIPS

We would like to say a huge thank you to our funders and supporters.

Without you, our achievements this year would simply not have been possible. In this reporting period, we have benefitted from the kind support of

[Oak Foundation](#) | [Baring Foundation](#) | [Barnwood Trust](#) | [Community Justice Fund](#) | [Pears The Funding Network](#) | [The Allen and Overy Foundation](#), and [Therium](#).

We are also extremely grateful for pro-bono and in-kind support from

[Unltd](#) | [Maxx Design](#) | [Field Fisher](#) | [Baker Mackenzie](#) | [Slaughter and May](#) | [Orrick](#) | [Shearmans and Stirling](#) and [Goring solicitors](#); as well as [39 Essex](#) | [Monkton Chambers](#), and [Landmark Chambers](#).

For our work on our Legal Information Chatbot, we won the [Nesta Legal Access Challenge](#) in March 2020 and secured prize money to further develop the platform.



THE PRESENT

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE



EMPOWER

**Creating Culture
Change**

ENFORCE

Early Legal Help

CHALLENGE

**Data & Strategic
Approaches**



**Organisational
Set Up**

**Organisational
Model**

**Income
Generation**

A YEAR IN REVIEW

EXTERNAL TARGETS	OUR OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED? (Y/N)
EMPOWER	Training sessions	Y
	Rebrand by December 2020	Y
	Complete delivery of launch training to existing partners	Y
	Development of online resources (Video resources developed by December 2022)	Y
	Newsletters - Deliver monthly newsletter by December 2020	Y
	Include Rights Champion input	Y
	Rights Champions Project and L & D working groups - Recruit rights champions and hold first meeting Q3; have 10 rights champions by December 2021	Y
	L and D working groups to agree action plan to achieve culture change	Y - Consulting Member Advisory panel to agree action plan.
	Data capture - have we delivered cultural change - Baseline survey delivered to new members (50 responses) and post-training survey (50 responses) by December 2020	Delayed by Covid – Good level of responses by May 2021

A YEAR IN REVIEW

EXTERNAL TARGETS	OUR OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED? (Y/N)
ENFORCE	Legal Chatbot (All due March 2021) - Content generation - Complete social care content for person with a social care need user profile - Content creation guidelines established for other user personas - Resources navigation and referral process in place for provider persona - Input 500 set questions, test with user groups, train team to add more data	Y
	Chatbot Testing Detailed testing conducted with at least 30 people with social care needs (including at least 5 testers from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic group) to start before March 2021	Y
	Chatbot public launch	Y (one week late – start of April)
	Pro-bono work - run 10 cases through a new clinic	Y
	Grow number of barristers on panel by 1 by December 2020	Y
	Maintain barrister panel pick up rate at 90%	N pick up rate dropped during Covid.
	Recruitment of charitable provider members - 2 per year and 1 helpline Annual target – due by December 2020	Y Y
	Recruitment of commercial providers - 1 per year	Y
	Grow our Hub model - SW hub set up December 2020	Y
	Casework Success rate - maintain casework success rate at 90%	Y – success rate maintained at 98%
	Maximise use of legal aid - increase options for referrals with 5 new legal aid providers in our networks in year one (before December 2020)	Y
	Research - Implement data collection to evidence gaps in legal aid	Y
	Influencing - Analyse and present data to show gaps and provide model solutions	Y

A YEAR IN REVIEW

EXTERNAL TARGETS	OUR OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED? (Y/N)
CHALLENGE	Increase sector wide legal literacy - Set up advisory panel with first panel meeting to take place in Q3	Y
	Helplines group data collaboration Helplines group data modelled and analysed State of the Nation report issued	Y
	Working with members on strategic cases	Y
	Legal Literacy - develop and maintain sector wide relationships	Y
	Sector wide collaboration with EHRC/legal aid lawyers Shared learning on emerging themes and trends – EHRC, legal aid lawyers, pro bono counsel by December 2021	Y
	Data categorisation and review - complete work on CRM by January 2021	Y
	Ongoing helplines group data collaboration	Y
	National thematic work - 5 casework outcomes evidencing successful influencing of public authorities by December 2022	Y
	Develop our strategic casework practice - run strategic cases; learn from CELC and EHRC	Y
	Increase digital and traditional media presence	Y

A YEAR IN REVIEW

INTERNAL TARGETS	OUB OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED? (Y/N)
ORGANISATIONAL SET UP	Governance - Reporting and monitoring systems in place - KPI document to aid monitoring; financial management set up by Dec 20	Y
	Board recruitment - 1 new board member by December 2020	Y
	Policies (including handbook) - complete by March 2021	Y
	Governance review	On track
	Finance - Monthly reports, management accounts and balance sheet - Independent audit to start at end of financial year 2021	Y
	Creation of budget cost centres and financial modelling to review sustainability of each cost centre	Y
	Comms - launch Website	Y
	Charity Positioning - Agree audience and what we want them to think/feel/do by mid-January - Agree plan and integrated communications/digital strategy - Implement channel strategy	Y
	Media - Place 1 article per month	Y
	Legal team systems – develop CRM programme	Y
	AQS Submission for desk assessment by April 2021	N - Delayed desk assessment due to legal team capacity.
ORGANISATIONAL MODEL	Financial modelling - understand pricing model	Y
INCOME GENERATION	Service provision - New provider members 4 per annum	Y
	New helpline members - 1 per annum	Y
	Hub set up - 1 per annum	Y
	Fundraised income	Exceeded target which enabled us to respond to increased demand related to Covid.

EDUCATION & EARLY LEGAL ASSISTANCE

WE'VE
BEEN
EMPOWERING
& CREATING
CULTURE
CHANGE



All too often people don't know their rights or how to enforce them.

However, we know that by using the law positively, early on in the process, we can help avoid conflict and secure better outcomes. This is why we provide legal education to increase confidence in lawyers and the law, so people know exactly how, and when to use them.

In practice this means:

- Responding to feedback and **evolving our launch training** for new members to **build trust and confidence**
- Delivering 50 training sessions resulting in **239 managers trained in 29 different regions**
- Developing our **online resources** for easier access to knowledge
- Monthly newsletters **keeping people informed** of how we can help
- Recruiting 11 **rights ambassadors** to help promote our work
- Taking a learning and development approach to advice giving to **grow knowledge and understanding**

EDUCATION & EARLY LEGAL ASSISTANCE

“Up and down the country people’s rights are not being upheld. There is a clear disregard of the Care Act by local authorities.

Furthermore, the lack of understanding from individuals about their rights means that local authorities can get away with it, so they hide behind finances and budgets but neglect people’s right to access services and the right support. Sometimes it’s simply about bad practice, which is not necessarily about the Care Act but might include; linking care plans together and not considering the individual; not acknowledging care providers’ true costs and taking the cheaper option against an individual’s wishes where personal budgets are taken away and people have no choice who they are supported by; or not involving advocacy and families in an annual review. There is a lot to challenge.

Our work with Access Social Care is invaluable and we are seeing change as a result. Local Authorities sitting up and taking notice – understanding when to follow due process. This is not about winning or getting what we want, it is about ensuring individuals rights are upheld.

Families are often not aware of their rights, and they feedback to us on how helpful the service is and how supported they feel. But more importantly that their relatives’ rights are upheld. We do not back down!

- Raghbir Ram
Choice Support Registered Manager
& Access Social Care Rights Champion



SOMEWHERE TO TURN

**WE'VE
BEEN
ENFORCING**

Problems with access to justice mean people feel there is nowhere to go when their right to social care is not upheld. We are growing our service to right these wrongs, ensuring people with social care needs get the accurate advice and support they have a right to receive.

We are providing early legal help to hold public bodies to account

- We have provided 529 one-off pieces of advice and worked on 101 cases in 2020.
- We have maintained our 98% casework success rate
- We have grown our membership – connecting our legal expertise to the beneficiaries of more helplines, social care providers, and community organisations commercial providers
- We have grown our pro-bono clinics and our Barristers panel
- In April 2021 we launched our legal information Chatbot. Available on our website, this clever Ai solution is an automated legal information provider. Providing social care law information, for free, 24/7

**THIS YEAR WE
HAVE SECURED
SUPPORT FOR
MANY PEOPLE, IN
MANY DIFFERENT
WAYS:**

Increases in 1:1 support hours and direct payments

New, appropriate accommodation for individuals previously refused or delayed by the local authority

Overturned funding refusal from local authority to allow a young adult to successful transition out of family home into first supported living accommodation

Prevented proposed unlawful cuts to packages and group cuts to services by working with service managers and the local authority

Reinstated support in cases where cuts had already been made

THE PEOPLE WE HELP



“The new placement is just such an amazing place for Lauren to live. She has settled in so well and has changed beyond recognition. The guys who support her are more like family than support workers. My family cannot thank the Access Social Care team enough for what they have done for us.”

“I will never forget it.”

- Cate (Lauren's Mum)

Who We Helped: Lauren is a sociable young woman with a learning disability. When we met Lauren she was very unhappy. Sharing her home alongside people with much higher-level needs than herself, Lauren was becoming increasingly anxious, especially following intimidation by a fellow resident.

The Situation: Lauren's social worker agreed a move was needed and identified a new placement. Lauren and her mum, Cate, instantly fell in love with the new surroundings. The service manager believed Lauren would fit in well with the other residents – and Lauren could have a much longed for pet.

The local authority's funding panel rejected Lauren's placement (claiming it offered more support than Lauren needed), but did not propose any alternatives. Lauren was scared and quickly becoming more distressed.

How We Helped: We took on the case and corresponded with the local authority; setting out their legal duties to provide appropriate accommodation for Lauren, to promote her wellbeing and to involve her in care planning. The local authority was dragging its heels and risked losing the placement Lauren wanted – with no other available – but just a few letters from us led to the local authority agreeing to fund Lauren's new placement, and she moved in the following month.

THE PEOPLE WE HELP

Who We Helped: Brenda lived alone and her daughter Sian was becoming extremely concerned about her welfare. Brenda was increasingly reclusive, wearing the same clothes day and night and not eating unless food was directly put in front of her. Despite contacting both Adult Social Services and Brenda's GP for professional guidance, Sian was left alone to support her mother knowing something wasn't right.

The Situation: Although Brenda was able to self-fund her treatment, her daughter Sian felt out of her depth in trying to guide and support her, especially when Brenda received a diagnosis for Alzheimers. Countless requests for advice went unheard, meaning both Brenda and Sian were placed in an unsustainable position.

For her mother's safety, Sian moved Brenda in with her and provided round-the-clock care but sadly, Brenda sustained a broken hip through her confusion at moving home. Following a five-week hospital stay Adult Social Services incorrectly claimed to have assessed the suitability of Sian's property before granting just three thirty-minute visits a day, around the amount of time it takes for Brenda to make a single trip to the bathroom. The reality was Sian receiving next to no support and with two children and a full-time job to juggle.

How We're Helping: By providing a template letter to Sian, she was able to contact Adult Social Services and receive an initial visit. When this ultimately proved to be unsatisfactory we continued to provide counsel at each stage to support Sian in enforcing her legal rights.

"I have never asked for financial support, just advice from professionals, but I have never felt so out of my depth and on my own.

I have been let down numerous times and feel the public bodies who are meant to help are not able, and the main aim is to pass on the burden and avoid costs.

Before the legal knowledge and support of Access Social Care I was ignored, as was my Mother. Without their guidance in helping me support my mum, I truly fear she would have been left in an inhumane situation."

- Sian (Brenda's Daughter)

LONG-TERM SYSTEMIC CHANGE

WE'VE
BEEN
CHALLENGING

Public bodies do not capture enough data about social care. The lack of evidence and insight makes decision and policy making hard.

At Access Social Care we are leading the way in social care data capture and analysis. We believe a data and evidenced-based approach will enable us to clearly and effectively demonstrate the change that is required with social care. We use our data to influence and inform strategic casework.

Our Approach:

- Our monthly reports help us to **identify patterns and trends** of unlawful behaviour
- Our innovative data sharing project with Mencap, Age UK, Carers UK and Independent Age **pools data from 5 helplines and highlights issues** experienced by people with social care needs across the country
- We are collecting data to **evidence problems with legal aid**, and starting to scope solutions
- We collected **evidence from our member organisations** and from our Gloucestershire hub on cases relating to the right to family life (visiting rights) and vaccination prioritisation for people with learning disabilities

Our Outcomes:

- Our inaugural State of the Nation report was widely **picked up in the media and drew attention** to the shocking rise in helpline demand over the pandemic period
- At the beginning of the pandemic Do Not Resuscitate Orders were being issued to those with learning disabilities. We assisted Mencap in **challenging these at a local and national level** and have since provided case studies to the inquiry.
- We successfully challenged the decision by NICE to use the Clinical Frailty Scale to assess whether someone should access intensive care support in the event resources were limited. Through a pincer movement of threatened legal challenge and pressure from the policy team at Mencap we were able to **overturn this policy in two days**
- We bridge the access to justice and social care sectors and have **supported the social care sector** to respond to administrative law reform proposals
- We continue to work with Mencap and EHRC to **fight for people** with a learning disability and/or autism who are held in inpatient units, experiencing human rights abuses

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

WE'VE
BEEN
CHALLENGING

Case by case we make a difference. Holding those in charge of making unlawful decisions to account. But for real change, to make the ultimate difference, we must challenge the system.

By working with the media to grow the reputation of our CEO, Kari Gerstheimer, as an authority in social care commentary we extend our reach and influence to help us achieve this.

Working alongside our national member organisations, community groups and funders to gather data and information we will build on our media work over the next year. Continuing our mission to be a consistent voice for good and known as effective change makers in the social care landscape.

"[During the pandemic] The National Health Service was rightly first in line. But its poor cousin, social care, along with the social care workforce, and people with social care needs, have once again been left behind. Despite cross-party agreement that social care funding needs fixing, The Treasury has long been consistent in its reluctance to fund social care properly."

(The Daily Express: Kari talks about the value of social care in line with the NHS.)

"The Legal Team at my charity, Access Social Care, use Human Rights to right wrongs and ensure fair access to social care. We aim to empower and educate individuals to feel confident to seek legal advice; breaking down the perception of the law as an intimidating, complicated and opposing force."

(The Justice Gap: Kari explaining how Human Rights being under threat with the Government's review of the Human Rights Act)

"We are pleased to be stepping in to provide this much needed support for Gloucestershire with the launch of our new social care advice hub. By linking our expertise to local organisations in Gloucestershire, we want to reach as many organisations as possible, particularly those working with underrepresented groups, to ensure local people are provided with the advice and support they deserve."

(Punchline Gloucester: Kari discussing the launch of our Southwest hub)

INCOME GENERATION



MAKING
MONEY

In 2020 we benefited from a start-up grant from the Oak Foundation. However, we know that we need to make sure that we are a sustainable organisation going forwards.

We have worked hard to diversify and identify additional income streams over the past year and prioritised five areas for potential growth:

- **Memberships** - we are steadily growing our membership numbers.
- **Chatbot** - we are working with Unltd and our digital partners Springbok Ai to explore how we can generate increased income,
- **Grant Givers** – we have nurtured our existing relationships and built new ones through our fundraising programme.
- **Individual Givers** – difficulties meeting people face to face during the pandemic means we have started to engage with individuals via the LinkedIn platform; targeting Golden Circle lawyers and legal professionals with a high-value ask.
- **Fundraising Board** - beginning recruitment in 2021/22 through existing contacts in order to grow a pipeline of prospective Major Donors via, giving club, appeal or discreet events.

OUR 2020 SUCCESSES



Besides the everyday support we provide, these are a few of our favourite highlights from the past twelve months:

- **FINDING FAME** Aligning our core values and visual identity to present a clear vision for our charity. Securing press placements in national publications to raise awareness of the social care cause.
- **CHALLENGING CULTURE** Gathering evidence to provide vital support for the EHRC's proceedings against the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care for human rights' breaches of people in secure settings.
- **CRITICAL CONSULTANCY** Supporting Independent Age by training their staff in social care issues to amplify the support of more people.
- **ADVICE ALLIES** Forming an alliance, leading helplines in the collaboration of data, pooling insights and producing reports evidencing thematic trends to correct unlawful decision making.

We are proud of our 98% success rate in our cases.
So we know we can
- and must - help more people.

- ASC

OUR CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS

Our successes haven't been without their challenges. However, quickly adapting and creating solutions means we have been able to minimise impact and disruption.

TRAINING:

Area managers struggled to attend our training due to pandemic pressures

- Delivered shorter/recorded sessions online - accessible and convenient

TEAMS:

Covid-19 meant added pressures of homeschooling, isolation and health concerns for our staff

- Offered flexible hours, a wellbeing package and supported staff to sift and prioritise to safeguard our impact

TROUBLES:

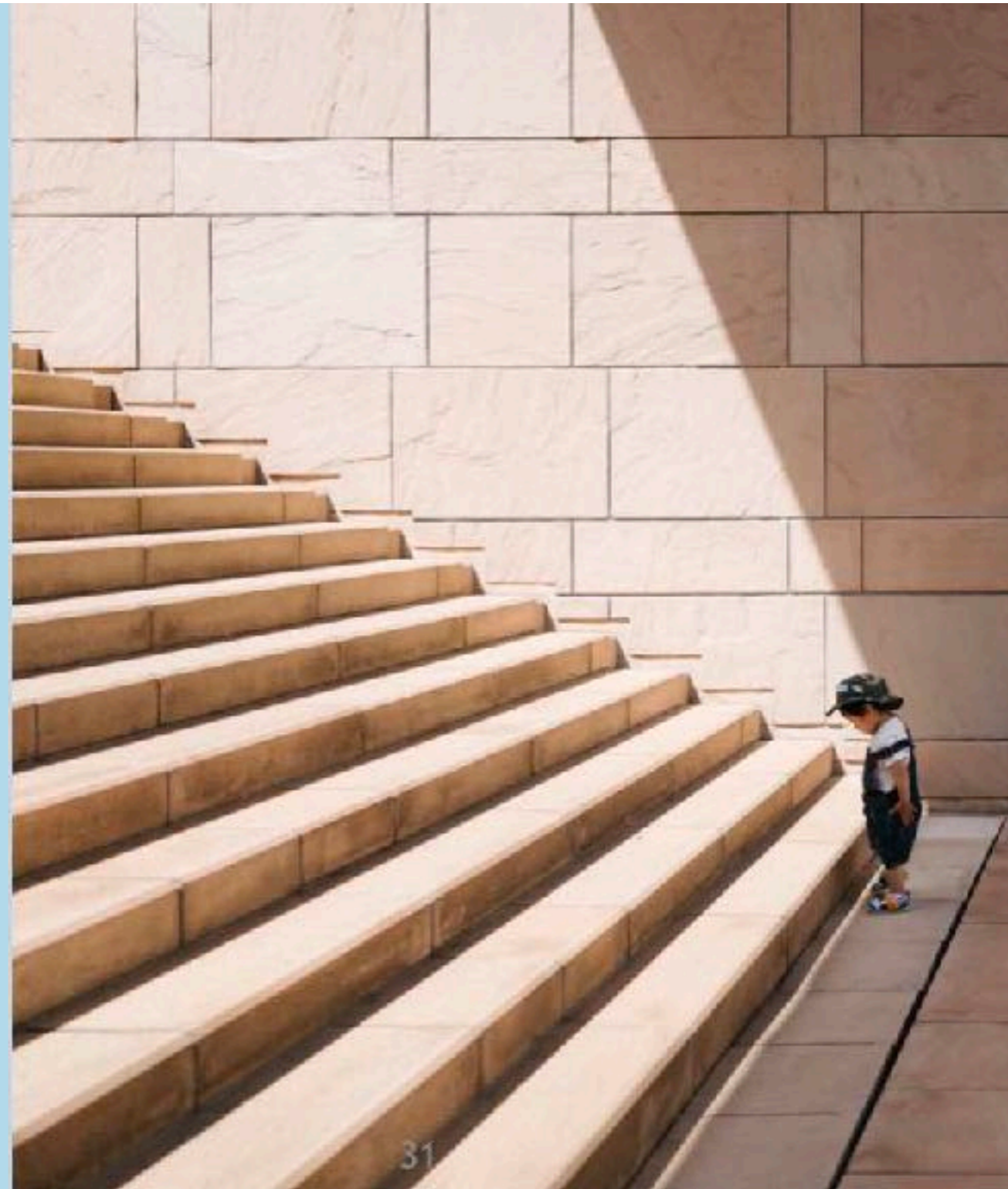
Financial pressures led to delays and organisations stopping membership.

- Forecast additional time for conversion due to changing circumstances

TRUST:

Longer than anticipated to develop relationships with frontline care managers that drive needed culture change

- Create maximum engagement with launch activity to inspire confidence



PRESSURES OF A PANDEMIC

When we first founded Access Social care, we never could have imagined that the world would be affected by a global pandemic. The virus has thrown up challenges for all of us, but many people with social care needs experienced much more serious difficulties than most. We are proud of our response.

COVID CONCERNS:

- Covid-19 pushed local authorities, and the people relying on them for care and support, to the brink
- 8/10 authorities warned of potential bankruptcy; stripping social care spending, sometimes unlawfully
- Council leaders estimate the pandemic will cut funding by a further 20%
- People with a learning disability have died at 6 times the rate of the general population
- NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) issued treatment guidelines marginalising working age disabled people



COPING WITH COVID



THE ASC RESPONSE

- Partnered with Mencap to influence NICE to amend guidelines; preventing unlawful discrimination in the treatment of working age disabled people.
- Worked swiftly to react to the unlawful practice of issuing Do Not Attempt Resuscitation Orders to people without consent.
- Led data project, tracking pandemic impact on social care, to focus strategic work on thematic issues.
- Leveraged network to expedite referrals; securing legal aid to enable much needed in person visits in conjunction with EHRC.
- Produced covid guidelines recognised by social care managers as indispensable in maintaining balance of health and safety with social care needs.
- Joined National Care Forum, along with 130 peer organisations, to call for clarification on care home visits.
- Assisted senior leadership teams across member organisations navigate the impact of rapidly changing regulations and guidance.

As well as being there for those who needed us, it was important we took the time to be there for each other. To look after staff wellbeing we introduced counselling services, emphasised the importance of flexible working and provided furlough for staff members with particularly challenging home situations.

From meditation and yoga classes to Zumba; reading clubs to Quiz nights, we Zoomed into each other's homes to laugh and build resilience together.

THE FUTURE

2021 AND BEYOND

OUR PLANS

We will continue to work on our strategic aims to increase the reach and influence of our work. By growing our membership we will find a sustainable way to provide public access to our service; providing more people with the social care they have a right to receive.

OUR IMPACT

In the 2021/22 period, we will complete our monitoring and evaluation framework in partnership with academics Professor Lisa Vanhala and Doctor Jacqui Kinghan. This will allow us to continue tracking our progress, learn from our experiences and further develop our model.

- **TO BETTER EMPOWER:** In 2021/22 we will develop more on-line resources to support our public legal education.
- **TO BETTER ENFORCE:** In 2021/22 we will continue to reach more people through the development of our legal chatbot and the growth of our membership. We are carrying out a review of our pro-bono activity to ensure that we are maximising the strength of these partnerships by targeting this support where it is needed the most.
- **TO BETTER CHALLENGE:** In 2021/22 we will be reviewing our strategic and influencing work. Following analysis we will redefine our influencing strategy to better steer our work in this important area.

OUR PRIORITIES

- **OUR TEAMS:** We are developing our operating model so that we can grow our organisation. In 2021/22 we are taking a period of consolidation so that we can feel confident that we have the right infrastructure, resources, systems and processes to support future growth.
- **OUR OFFERING:** We are growing our membership, reaching out to new partners and growing our place-based hubs.
- **OUR INCOME:** We are diversifying our income to ensure that our model is sustainable in the long term. We are evolving our membership offer, developing a commercial offer for the chatbot and broadening our fundraising activity.

OUR PROMISE

In 2021/22 we are committed to focussing on diversity. We want to stand shoulder to shoulder with Black and Asian-led organisations to reach under-served communities within our place-based hubs; tackling health and social care inequalities. Working with formal and informal community leaders we will take the time to build relationships and trust, co-create a framework which ensures parity of esteem, and responds effectively to cultural ethnic and hyper local sensitivities.

We want Access Social Care to be an organisation that celebrates difference, where all employees, clients and partners feel equally valued. We will develop our diversity strategy to ensure authenticity in our approach to diversity, and task and finish groups will help us deliver change where it is needed.

DELIVERING ON PRIORITIES



MORE EMPOWERING

In 2021/22 we will develop more on-line resources to support our public legal education.

With an ambitious growth strategy, Access Social Care will need to quickly increase our capacity to provide high volumes of public legal education to care managers of our member organisations at times to suit their busy schedules.

The pandemic has shown that we can deliver training and engage managers remotely, and that the flexibility that online resources offer suits the increasingly stretched working lives of social care staff. Moreover, the frequent changes to regulations over the past year have highlighted the need to be responsive around training delivery and to offer a wider range of material to staff of our member organisations.

Throughout this period, we will:

Apply accessibility standards to make our training available to all learners

Design our online learning provision in an agile way, testing what works and using existing software where possible

Create at least eight short learning modules within the first year

Conduct user research with our stakeholders

Work with each of our partners to agree the best way to disseminate our online learning within their organisation

Evaluate our online learning alongside our partners to identify the most effective way to develop our public legal education programmes

DELIVERING ON PRIORITIES

MORE ENFORCING

In 2021/22 we will continue to reach more people through the development of our legal chatbot and the growth of our membership. We are carrying out a review of our pro-bono activity to ensure that we are maximising the strength of these partnerships by targeting this support where it is needed the most.

One of our highest priorities is helping local organisations and community leaders to feel more confident using the law. And the easiest way for us to achieve this is by training trusted intermediaries in using our legal information chatbot to give more specialist advice.

Our belief is that as we work with community leaders, we will create a movement, so that the leaders themselves carry our mission forwards. Our aim is to create a legacy of communities empowered to uphold the rule of law to ensure better social care outcomes for their citizens and fairer local systems.

We will build partnerships with community organisations and MPs in their constituency offices to encourage use of the chatbot. New grants secured will allow next level development with new functionality

Increase our memberships – helplines, providers, commercial providers. However, we will slow this growth in 21/22 to allow for a period of consolidation in order to develop the right internal infrastructures to support future expansion

Continue to intervene with early legal help to hold public bodies to account

We will set up a new place-based hub in London/SE in 2021 before finalising plans for a national network of place-based hubs. Each hub will be co-designed and co-produced with the communities it serves

Learn from local people, (particularly under-represented groups who regularly experience multiple barriers to accessing social care and information) using the chatbot. iteratively improving the product to respond better to the needs of local populations

Grow and develop our pro-bono clinics and Barristers panel; implementing changes from our strategic review

Reach more people through our chatbot and seek to license the product to other organisations to increase our impact

Collect local data in partnership with our community-based members will help us to take a data and evidence-led approach to driving change

THE FINANCIAL REPORT AND LEGAL INFORMATION

GOING CONCERN AND STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

GOING CONCERN

As a start-up charity, Access Social Care is well placed to manage the business risks we face. This position is supported by strong liquidity; sufficient reserves for business continuity and development plans; a good relationship with our key funders; and proven ability to retain and secure new services.

We have set out in this report a review of Access Social Care's financial performance, the reserves position and principal risks and uncertainties.

Notwithstanding the pandemic, the performance to date has been robust in terms of income generation. Whilst the pandemic has been hugely challenging at the operational level, Access Social Care has remained firmly in control of its service quality and financial performance throughout the operating period.

We have accrued over £200k of reserves in our first operating period. As set out in our reserves policy, we are working towards having 6 months operating costs to ensure business continuity and the ability to continue providing casework for our clients in the event of financial disruption. Access Social Care has maintained its cash and reserves at levels which provide a good degree of financial protection against a continuation of the pandemic through FY 2021/22.

As a new charity Access Social Care is still developing financial management processes. We have carried out a range of cashflow projections and financial modelling exercises over the past year, supported in particular by Unltd. We are currently working with an external consultant provided through the Cranfield Trust to further develop our forecasting tools to enable us to undertake regular scenario and strategic financial planning. The 2021/22 budget has been approved by the Access Social Care Board. Following the current financial modelling exercise, as well as an exercise at board level to agree on an organisational approach to financial risk, we anticipate that the Executive will make a range of investment requests to enable and facilitate successful future organisational growth.

Our planning processes, including financial projections, take into consideration the current economic climate and its potential impact on the various sources of income and planned expenditure.

The trustees therefore have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, "Charities and Public Benefit". Access Social Care's charitable objects are enshrined within its memorandum and articles and as such the trustees ensure that the charity's activities are carried out for the public benefit through its strategic priorities. This is done primarily through the delivery of services aimed at people with a social care need as well as those who support them. This report allows us to show how our charitable funds are spent and the impact and benefits that has on those using our services, as well as the wider impact on society.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

In so far as the trustees are aware:

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website.

Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions. If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent Auditors Godfrey Wilson Ltd were appointed as the charity's independent auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to act in that capacity.

FACTS AND FIGURES

- We started operating with 14 staff members; by March 2021 we had 22 staff members
- £41,738 spent on public legal education
- £212,641 spent on legal advice
- £64,223 spent on our South West hub
- £143,509 spent on developing our legal chatbot
- The contribution of our volunteers is significant and helps us with our aims and objectives
- 25 chatbot volunteers, 70 x one off quantitative testers number of volunteers
 - 50 volunteer hours spent on our chatbot - ca. 50 hours
 - £88,426 spent on fundraising. £1,145,580 raised

CURRENT POSITION

Charitable Activities:

Total Income

Our total income for our first reporting period (Dec 2019 – March 2021) was £1,377,304 against a budget of £984,139.

The largest part of our income comes from our start up grant from the Oak Foundation. This income was £757,091 in the operating period. Income from other grants and donations was £387,564, some of this income must be used on activities which fall outside the operating period.

We have grown our membership subscription income to £225,178 in the operating period.

Total Expenditure

Total expenditure in the reporting period was £737,941.

Our spend on charitable activities was £649,515.

Expenditure on raising funds was £88,426.

Access Social Care has £547,594 in cash at 31 March 2021.

Restricted funds are £232,774

Unrestricted funds are £406,589

Total liabilities are £170,876 at 31st March 2021

Our risk management processes help identify where we might need reserves, and our financial management policies then determine how our resources are managed and how investment decisions are made. Annually, our board of trustees considers what resources will be required to meet Access Social Care's objectives and obligations and what the risks are that might threaten the desired outcomes.

Reserves Policy for the Charity

Reserves are maintained at a level that enables the charity to manage operational financial risks and short-term income volatility. They allow the charity to sustain service delivery, in particular legal casework support to our clients, over the long term, as well as ensuring that financial commitments can be met as they fall due.

As noted above, of the charity's £639,363 total funds at the end of March 2021, £232,774 are restricted funds and not available for general purposes.

The remaining £406,589 of total funds are unrestricted of which £24,605 is designated for programme expenditure and £150,906 are capitalised assets. Our free reserves are £231,078. Reserves are those unrestricted funds which are freely available to the trustees to spend on any of the charity's purposes. However, they exclude amounts which, if spent, would adversely affect the charity's ability to deliver its aims. Reserves do not therefore include property, funds which are set aside for programmes specifically to further our charitable objectives, or amounts set aside for essential costs.

Reserves 31 March 2021

The trustees have set a target for reserves based upon an analysis of the potential financial impacts of significant risks identified through the charity's risk management processes, as well as the need to continue to provide legal services to our clients. Access Social Care has reserves of £231,078 compared to target reserves of £339,396. Following financial modelling and risk analysis in 21/22, the charity anticipates that it will invest some reserves in a managed fashion to support the future growth of the charity.

MANAGING RISK

Risk Management and Internal Control for the Charity

Access Social Care continually reviews its risk framework, ensuring that it aligns with the organisation’s strategic aims and objectives. The board of trustees reviews strategic risks on a quarterly basis. Independent assurance is provided by an outsourced independent audit function from Godfrey Wilson accountants. Risk management at the operational level is managed by the executive directors and departmental Heads , who review risks regularly both within their directorates and as a group.

Principal Risks for Access Social Care	What the Risks Mean	How we Mitigate the Risks
Need to increase income and bank reserves over the next 2-3 years so that we are a going concern after the term of our start up grant.	Likelihood – 4 x Impact - 5 =20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are diversifying our fundraising and commercial income streams. We are increasing our fundraising capacity, growing our membership and developing a business plan for our chatbot.
Need to deliver on current contracts to a range of grant makers.	Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 5 =10	We have developed organisation wide monitoring, evaluation and learning systems to ensure that we are meeting our KPIs. KPIs are threaded through accountabilities. Progress is communicated regularly at operational, strategic and funder level.
Need to deliver on contracts to members.	Likelihood – 3 x Impact - 5 =10	We are entering a period of consolidation to review our growth; and to develop a People Strategy looking at recruitment, retention, remuneration, diversity and training.
Maintain and develop social care expertise to deliver expert legal advice through recruitment and retention of key staff members.	Likelihood – 3 x Impact - 5 =15	See above.
Define and agree service model.	Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 5 =10	Advisory board meetings with network partners set up to seek on-going advice on fees and model. Financial modelling work on-going – seeking robust challenge from financial experts. Hub model pilot live and seeking funding for roll out in other areas.
Develop and enshrine effective governance arrangements and board oversight.	Likelihood – 2 x Impact - 4 =8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance review document complete, review ongoing. Agreed to move forwards slowly in light of Covid.
Develop and implement organisational systems and IT including staff handbook and other policies and procedures.	Likelihood – 3 x Impact - 3 =9	Good progress with policy development. Handbook, and CRM are live.
Failure to protect clients from harm caused by staff or corporate negligence.	Likelihood – 1 x Impact - 5 =5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working towards AQS – training and supervision arrangements are in line with the standard. Barristers panel and external consultancy (Karen Ashton) to assist with the quality of advice. Note also the work on our People Strategy and growth.
Ensure Compliance with regulatory bodies i.e. Charity commissioner, ICO, Fundraising Regulator.	Likelihood – 3 x Impact - 4 =12	GDPR advice secured from Baker MacKenzie. Policy and procedures development on-track. Independent auditors appointed and working towards first audit in June 2021.
Enshrine effective internal and external communication strategies and identify and mitigate reputational risk.	Likelihood – 3 x Impact - 5 =15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracted with external communications agency BLJ until April 2020 to put in place a comms strategy and to start to shape our brand. Working with a copy writer to develop tone of voice. Working with a brand elevator consultant to raise digital profile. Major incident policy and process drafted. Put in place policy and procedure for comms involving risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reputational risk Ethical position statement Public perception
Covid-19 impacts delivery model.	Likelihood – 5 x Impact - 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covid Impact paper prepared including mitigation plans for key staff absence. Consideration given to slowing down work streams to protect staff wellbeing. Consideration given to adapting to Covid Regulations including social distancing.

FUTURE PLANNING

To enable us to grow throughout the 2021/2 financial period, we have identified the following revenue streams:



MEMBERSHIP



CHATBOT



FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISING

Our Fundraising Campaign

Access Social Care has a compelling 'ask' which has stood us in good stead in our first year with grant giving bodies. Even as a new charity, we already employ an executive member of staff focussed on fundraising and a philanthropy fundraiser, with a wealth of major donor experience, who was recruited in April 2021.

Our initial goal in 2020/1 was to begin building a stakeholder network that would ensure long-term support and consistent high-value gift giving. A stakeholder network would ideally comprise; senior members of staff and volunteers aiding introductions and building relationships with prospective donors and influential individuals who can grow our network and provide further connections to gift givers. Although our stakeholder pool is currently limited, our aim is to grow relationships with careful stewardship and networking events for groups and individuals whose interests and values closely align with our work.

Interruption to face-to-face meetings in 2020 meant the pandemic severely delayed our progress. However, we are committed to continuing our strategy in this next period, with plans to form a fundraising board lead by one of our connected trustees. Fundraising budgets for 2021/22-2023/24 will continue their focus on grant giving bodies and we will nurture our existing relationships with strategic funders whilst growing a pipeline of new funders to achieve this financial commitment. In addition, we have grown a 500+ network of high-earning legal professionals via LinkedIn – we aim to engage online with this group, using a lead magnet campaign to pull individuals offline and motivate them towards a fundraising ask. This campaign will be evaluated via KPIs and objectives throughout 2021.

ACCESS is committed to ensuring that fundraising activities are carried out in an ethical manner. The Access Social Care policy on donation and fundraising applies to the Board, casual, permanent and both contract staff and volunteers. It lays out clear processes and guidelines, with a firm position on fundraising practice and the standards expected in raising funds from the community.

Our Fundraising Principles

- Fundraising activities carried out by ACCESS will comply with all relevant laws.
- Any communications to the public made in the course of carrying out a fundraising activity shall be truthful and non-deceptive.
- All monies raised via fundraising activities will be used to support the organisation's stated mission and purpose.
- All personal information collected by ACCESS is confidential. We will not sell, give away or disclose personal information to any third party without explicit consent.
- Nobody directly or indirectly employed by or volunteering for ACCESS shall accept commissions, bonuses or payments for fundraising activities on behalf of the organisation.
- No general solicitations shall be undertaken by telephone or door-to-door.
- Fundraising activities should not be undertaken if they may be detrimental to the good name or community standing of ACCESS.
- Financial contributions will only be accepted from sources the Board considers ethical. Companies and organisations specifically excluded from making financial contributions to ACCESS include gambling, tobacco and alcohol, fossil fuel companies.

CHARITY INFORMATION

Charity Details

Charity Name: Access Your Right to Care, operating as Access Social Care

- Charity registration number: 1186714
- Registered office address: Oakwood House, St Patricks Road, CV1 2HL, Coventry, England

The Charity is constituted as a CIO and does not currently have any subsidiary undertakings.

- Details of governing document can be found at: <https://www.accesscharity.org.uk/governance>
- Organisations providing professional advice to the charity during the reporting period are as follows:
 - Central England Law Centre, Oakwood House, St Patricks Road Entrance, Coventry CV1 2HL
 - Davies Accounting, Rose Tree Cottage, Ross-on-Wye HR9 7QX
 - Godfrey Wilson, 5th Floor, Mariner House, 62 Prince Street, Bristol, BS1 4QD
 - Unltd – Business consultancy, 123 Whitecross Street, Islington, London, EC1Y 8JJ
 - BLJ – PR and Communications, 15 & 17, Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0BD
 - Fieldfisher and Gowling LLP – Legal advice Riverbank House, 2 Swan Lane, London, EC4R 3TT
 - Co-operative Bank The Co-Operative Bank, 118-120 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3-3BD

CHARITY INFORMATION

The Board of Trustees and Delegated Arrangements

Access Social Care follows Charity Commission best practice guidance on recruitment and induction of new trustees. Skills gaps relevant to the strategic objectives of the charity are identified on the board by way of informal audit (last conducted in Spring 2020). These are addressed through the recruitment of new trustees. Potential trustees submit a CV and covering letter, and meet the CEO and one other member of the Executive team. Then the chair of trustees and two other trustees conduct an interview to assess suitability of the candidate.

New trustees are offered an induction programme including a set of key documents, meetings with other trustees, and discussions with staff. Opportunities for training are offered to support trustees in their roles.

In line with our Diversity aims, we are working hard to encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates and guarantee interviews for people from under-represented groups. We have a Governance Toolkit including an induction checklist for new Trustees.

The Articles of Association include terms of office and, with the exception of two of the founding trustees, an initial appointment is made for a 3-year term. Trustees will be eligible for reappointment for one further term of 3 years. The two founding trustees are appointed as follows and will be eligible for a further term of 3 years:

- Janine Tregelles – 5 years
- Chris Hale – 4 years

The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the overall strategic direction of the charity and for developing policies and plans to support the delivery of charitable objectives. The Board monitors progress across all areas of activity including legal requirements and financial performance. The Board has agreed to carry out a full Governance Review to ensure excellence across all governance matters. Work on the Governance Review is on track and on-going. If the CIO is wound up, the Trustees as members of the CIO, have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

A chief executive officer (CEO) is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations, the authority for operational matters including financial management, employment and performance relating to agreed key objectives is delegated to the CEO and other members of the Executive team. Any decisions outside of the strategic direction agreed by the Board, or more than £100,000 outside of the agreed budget, are referred to trustees for approval.

Pay and remuneration of the charity's key management personnel is reviewed by the board each year and any changes made are based on performance, an assessment of the market, the financial position of the organisation and relativity across the team.

Volunteers

Access Social Care volunteers support the charity's work in many ways and the charity benefits greatly from their experience and commitment to the cause. The trustees are grateful for the dedicated efforts of the volunteers who are involved in:

- The development of the chatbot
- The provision of legal advice
- The provision of legal education

We are also grateful to our team of Rights Ambassadors who help spread the word about the use of the law in their communities.

At least 200 people provided voluntary service to the charity in our first accounting period.

This Trustees' Annual Report was approved by the Trustees on 28th September 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Janine Tregelles - Chair

Access Your Right To Care

Reference and administrative details

For the period ended 31 March 2021

Charity number	1186714	
Registered office	Coventry Law Centre Ltd Oakwood House Cheylesmore Coventry CV1 2HL	
Trustees	The trustees who served during the period and up to the date of this report were as follows: Christopher Hale appointed 3 December 2019 Kevin McGuirk appointed 25 May 2021 Rebecca Mills appointed 3 December 2019 Linda Redford appointed 13 January 2021 Janine Tregelles appointed 3 December 2019	
Chief executive officer	Kari Gerstheimer	
Senior management team	Joanne Williams Lainey Gough Catriona Filmer Miriam Valencia Hannah Hewish	Director of Partnerships and Engagement Head of Legal Head of Legal Head of Operations Legal Strategy Manager
Bankers	The Co-Operative Bank Business Direct Skelmerdale WN8 6GH	
Auditors	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD	

Independent Auditors Report

To the members of

Access Your Right to Care

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Access Your Right To Care (the 'charity') for the period ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for Opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other Information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- sufficient accounting records have not been kept;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit.

Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out in the trustees' report, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Independent Auditors Report

To the members of

Access Your Right to Care

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

(1) We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, and assessed the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Throughout the audit, we remained alert to possible indications of non-compliance.

(2) We reviewed the charity's policies and procedures in relation to:

- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations, and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risk of fraud, and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- Designing and implementing internal controls to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud.

(3) We inspected the minutes of trustee meetings.

(4) We enquired about any non-routine communication with regulators and reviewed any reports made to them.

(5) We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and assessed their compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(6) We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions or balances that may indicate a risk of material fraud or error.

(7) We assessed the risk of fraud through management override of controls and carried out procedures to address this risk. Our procedures included:

- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries;
- Assessing judgements and accounting estimates for potential bias;
- Reviewing related party transactions; and
- Testing transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. Irregularities that arise due to fraud can be even harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and the regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Date: 28 September 2021

GODFREY WILSON LIMITED
Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of financial activities

For the period ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	16 months 2021 Total £
Income from:				
Donations	2.	1,059,150	86,430	1,145,580
Charitable activities	3.	-	231,711	231,711
Investments		-	13	13
Total income		1,059,150	318,154	1,377,304
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		88,426	-	88,426
Charitable activities		606,941	42,574	649,515
Total expenditure	5.	695,367	42,574	737,941
Net income		363,783	275,580	639,363
Transfers between funds		(131,009)	131,009	-
Net movement in funds	6.	232,774	406,589	639,363
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward		-	-	-
Total funds carried forward		232,774	406,589	639,363

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 15. to the accounts.

Access Your Right To Care

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2021

	Note	£	2021 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9.		7,397
Intangible assets	10.		<u>143,509</u>
			150,906
Current assets			
Debtors	11.	111,739	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>547,594</u>	
		659,333	
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	12.	<u>170,876</u>	
Net current assets			<u>488,457</u>
Net assets	14.		<u>639,363</u>
Funds	15.		
Restricted funds			232,774
Unrestricted funds:			
Designated funds			24,605
General funds			<u>381,984</u>
Total charity funds			<u>639,363</u>

Approved by the trustees on 28 September 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Janine Tregelles - Chair

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of cash flows

For the period ended 31 March 2021

	2021 £
Net movement in funds	639,363
Adjustments for:	
Depreciation charges	2,835
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(13)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(111,739)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	<u>170,876</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>701,322</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:	
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	13
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(10,232)
Purchase of intangible fixed assets	<u>(143,509)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(153,728)</u>
Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period	547,594
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	<u>-</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	<u>547,594</u>

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the period ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Access Your Right To Care meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves and having considered the potential financial implications of the ongoing Covid pandemic. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

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

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income from subscriptions received in advance is deferred until criteria for income recognition are met.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

As discussed in the trustees' report, the charity benefitted from significant pro bono support in 2021, however these have not been recognised in the accounts on the basis that the charity would not have been able to afford these services if not provided for free.

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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

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

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities based on the proportion of direct costs, as follows:

	2021
Raising funds	12%
Charitable activities	88%

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the period ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

i) Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Computer equipment 3 years straight line

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500.

j) Intangible fixed assets

Internally generated intangible assets meeting the relevant recognition criteria are initially measured at cost. Intangible fixed assets relate to the costs incurred in developing the charity's ChatBot asset. No amortisation has been charged as the asset is currently under development.

k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

m) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

n) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

o) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

p) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying 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 if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are the depreciation and amortisation policies as set out in notes 1 i) and j) above.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the period ended 31 March 2021

2. <u>Income from donations</u>	16 months		
	Restricted	Unrestricted	2021 Total
	£	£	£
Oak Foundation grant	757,091	-	757,091
Trusts and foundations	302,059	38,233	340,292
Corporate donations	-	45,500	45,500
Individual donations	-	1,772	1,772
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	-	925	925
<u>Total income from donations</u>	<u>1,059,150</u>	<u>86,430</u>	<u>1,145,580</u>

3. <u>Income from charitable activities</u>	16 months		
	Restricted	Unrestricted	2021 Total
	£	£	£
Consultancy income	-	6,533	6,533
Subscriptions	-	225,178	225,178
<u>Total income from charitable activities</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>231,711</u>	<u>231,711</u>

4. Government grants

The charity received government grant funding under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in the period to 31 March 2021. The total amount received was £925. There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

[Access Your Right To Care](#)

[Notes to the financial statements](#)

For the period ended 31 March 2021

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	16 months 2021 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	70,903	473,392	66,150	610,445
Other staff costs	-	2,136	13,601	15,737
Evaluation	-	6,875	-	6,875
Consultancy	-	34,238	-	34,238
IT and telephone costs	-	2,767	39,560	42,327
Office costs	-	1,397	4,145	5,542
Finance and governance	-	-	17,569	17,569
Depreciation	-	-	2,835	2,835
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	2,373	2,373
Sub-total	70,903	520,805	146,233	737,941
Allocation of support and governance costs	17,523	128,710	(146,233)	-
<u>Total expenditure</u>	<u>88,426</u>	<u>649,515</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>737,941</u>

Total governance costs were £4,950.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the period ended 31 March 2021

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

16 months

2021

£

Trustees' remuneration

Nil

Trustees' reimbursed expenses

199

Auditors' remuneration:

▪ Statutory audit (including VAT)

5,940

▪ Other services (including VAT)

2,280

During the period, one trustee was reimbursed for travel expenses of £199.

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

16 months

2021

£

Salaries and wages

545,888

Social security costs

38,761

Pension costs

25,508

Freelancers

288

610,445

2021

No.

Number of employees earning in the range of:

£60,000 - £70,000

1

£70,000 - £80,000

1

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Senior Management Team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the period were £353,625.

2021

No.

Average head count

14

8. Taxation

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

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the period ended 31 March 2021

9. Tangible fixed assets

IT equipment
£

Cost	
At 3 December 2019	-
Additions in period	<u>10,232</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>10,232</u>
Depreciation	
At 3 December 2019	-
Charge for the period	<u>2,835</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>2,835</u>
Net book value	
At 31 March 2021	<u>7,397</u>
At 3 December 2019	<u>-</u>

10. Intangible fixed assets

Assets under
development
£

Cost	
At 3 December 2019	-
Additions in period	<u>143,509</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>143,509</u>
Amortisation	
At 3 December 2019	-
Charge for the period	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>-</u>
Net book value	
At 31 March 2021	<u>143,509</u>
At 3 December 2019	<u>-</u>

Intangible fixed assets relates to the charity's ChatBot app, which is currently under development.

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the period ended 31 March 2021

11.	Debtors				
				2021	
				£	
	Trade debtors			93,920	
	Prepayments			3,195	
	Accrued income			1,600	
	Other debtors			13,024	
				<u>111,739</u>	
12.	Creditors: amounts due within 1 year			2021	
				£	
	Trade creditors			9,391	
	Accruals			14,881	
	Other taxation and social security			27,712	
	Deferred income (see note 13.)			118,892	
				<u>170,876</u>	
13.	Deferred income			2021	
				£	
	At 3 December 2019			-	
	Deferred during the period			118,892	
	Released during the period			<u>-</u>	
	At 31 March 2021			<u>118,892</u>	
	Deferred income relates to subscription income invoiced in advance.				
14.	Analysis of net assets between funds				
		Restricted funds	Designated funds	General funds	Total funds
		£	£	£	£
	Tangible fixed assets	-	-	7,397	7,397
	Intangible fixed assets	-	-	143,509	143,509
	Current assets	282,774	24,605	351,954	659,333
	Current liabilities	<u>(50,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(120,876)</u>	<u>(170,876)</u>
	Net assets at 31 March 2021	<u>232,774</u>	<u>24,605</u>	<u>381,984</u>	<u>639,363</u>

Access Your Right To Care

Notes to the financial statements

For the period ended 31 March 2021

15. Movements in funds

	At 3 December 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds					
Oak Foundation	-	718,591	(628,212)	(86,729)	3,650
Hub / Casework	-	120,749	(65,879)	-	54,870
ChatBot	-	219,810	(1,276)	(44,280)	174,254
Total restricted funds	-	1,059,150	(695,367)	(131,009)	232,774
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	-	35,000	(10,395)	-	24,605
General funds	-	283,154	(32,179)	131,009	381,984
Total unrestricted funds	-	318,154	(42,574)	131,009	406,589
Total funds	-	1,377,304	(737,941)	-	639,363

Purposes of restricted funds

Oak Foundation

This a core grant which has enabled the set up of Access Social Care. The majority of the grant covers the cost of salaries.

Hub / Casework

These funds are to set up the place-based hub in Gloucestershire, fund community care casework, strategic casework and strategic data work.

ChatBot

These funds are to develop a legal information chatbot, which will be free at the point of use and available on the Access Social Care website.

Purposes of designated funds

This is grant income which been internally designated for programme work, mainly on the ChatBot project.

Transfers between funds

Transfers between funds relate to restricted capital expenditure for the ChatBot project.

16. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions during the period.

THANK YOU

We wish to thank all of our donors, funders and supporters for helping make our first year as a charity a resounding success. We look forward to working together again in 2021-22.

With best wishes,
The Access Social Care team

Access Social Care

Oakwood House, St Patricks Road,
CV1 2HL, Coventry, England
enquiries@accesscharity.org.uk