

# THE LOOP DRUG CHECKING SERVICE

England & Wales · Charity number 1200533

## Details

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**Other names** UNCLASSIFIED COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

**Status** Registered

**Legal form** CIO

**Registered** 2022-09-29

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

## Contact

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75-77 Ardwick Green North  
Manchester  
M12 6FX

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**Email** [info@wearetheloop.org](mailto:info@wearetheloop.org)

**Website** [www.wearetheloop.org](http://www.wearetheloop.org)

## Activities

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**Objects:** TO PROTECT AND SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH AND PROMOTE THE REDUCTION OF HARM TO THE PUBLIC WHO USE PSYCHOACTIVE DRUGS IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY BY: A. DRUG CHECKING AND THE PROVISION OF NON-JUDGEMENTAL HARM REDUCTION INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO INDIVIDUAL SERVICE USERS; B. THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON SUBSTANCES OF CONCERN AND ASSOCIATED HARM REDUCTION INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO PARTNER AGENCIES, STAKEHOLDERS AND WIDER DRUG USING COMMUNITIES, INCLUDING THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH MESSAGING, EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS AND ALERTS; C. TRAINING FOR ORGANISATIONS IN THE EDUCATION, HEALTH AND EVENTS SECTORS IN HARM REDUCTION, DRUGS AWARENESS, RESPONDING TO CRITICAL INCIDENTS AND DELIVERING SUPPORT SERVICES; D. DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING POLICY AND STRATEGIES TO REDUCE DRUG-RELATED HARM AND PROMOTE HEALTH; E. PARTICIPATING IN ANY OTHER HEALTH PROMOTION ACTIVITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE REDUCTION OF DRUG-RELATED HARM IN THE COMMUNITY. F. OPERATING AT ALL TIMES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW OF ENGLAND AND WALES. FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS CLAUSE, 'HARM REDUCTION' MEANS POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PRACTICES THAT AIM PRIMARILY TO REDUCE THE ADVERSE HEALTH, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE USE OF LEGAL AND ILLEGAL PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

**Activities:** The Loop provide event-based and community-based drug checking and associated harm reduction services. The Loop also provide specialist training courses in drugs awareness, harm reduction and managing problems in nightlife venues.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

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- Throughout England And Wales

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£236,101	£208,012	-	-
2024-03-31	£161,812	£175,747	-	-
2023-03-31	£29,679	£64,079	-	-

## Trustees

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Name	Role	Appointed
<b>Professor Fiona Measham</b>	Chair	2022-09-03
Darren John Knight		2022-09-03
Dr EMILY JANE LUCY FINCH		2025-09-01
Jonathan Paul Drape		2022-09-03
Philip Alan Kolvin KC		2023-01-14
Sarah Dalton		2024-02-10

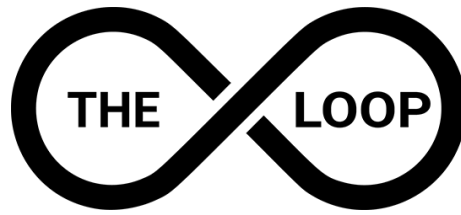
**THE LOOP DRUG CHECKING SERVICE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1200533

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# Accounts

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**The Loop Drug Checking Service**

**Charity Registration Number: 1200533**

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025**

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## Administrative Information

Trustees:	Professor Fiona Measham (Chair)	3 September 2022
	Darren Knight	3 September 2022
	Jon Drape	3 September 2022
	Philip Kolvin KC	14 January 2023
	Sarah Dalton (Treasurer)	10 February 2024

Chief Executive Officer: Katy Porter BEM

Charity Address: George House Trust,  
75-77 Ardwick Green North  
Manchester  
M12 6FX

Bankers: Barclays Bank

Accountant: Beyond Profit Ltd  
G104 Bolton Arena  
Arena Approach  
Horwich  
Bolton  
BL6 6LB

Independent Examiner: It Doesn't Have to Cost the Earth Ltd  
47 St Dunstons Close  
Worcester  
WR5 2AJ

## Trustees Annual Report

The Loop Drug Checking Service is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the Charity Registration Number 1200533. The governing document of the charity is a constitution dated 29 September 2022.

**The Loop Drug Checking Service** is a pioneering health service which exists to reduce the potential harms related to drug use and does so by generating and disseminating accurate information on substances of concern and in circulation, and providing advice, both direct and indirect, to the public.

Our **Harm Reduction services** bring together technologies and evidence-based interventions for the purpose to inform, prevent harm, and improve the health, well-being and safety of all in our communities and society.

### What we do and why?

Drug-related deaths are at an all-time high in the UK<sup>1</sup> and continue to rise. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that there were 5,448 deaths related to the use of Drugs in England and Wales in 2023; the highest level of drug-related deaths on record and an 11% increase in drug-related deaths compared to 2022. The rate of drug-poisoning deaths is now double the rate in 2012.

The associated harms have, and continue, to increase in the UK since 2012, with mis-sold drugs, as well as high and variable strength substances, as key contributing factors. There were a total of 4,907 drug-related deaths in England and Wales in 2022 (4,859 in 2021, 4,393 in 2019), almost half of which were for opiates. Total ecstasy-related deaths reported were 51, a decrease from a spike seen in 2018 (92 reported deaths), a significant increase from the 8 deaths reported in 2010. Cocaine-related deaths rose to 857 in 2022, which represents the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive annual rise,<sup>2</sup> with 840 deaths in 2021, and more than 7 times the 112 deaths recorded in 2011.

There is also greater potential exposure and access to an ever-increasing number of drugs<sup>3</sup>. In December 2021, the UK government published its 10-year Drug Strategy calling for 'innovation' to help reduce increasing drug harms. Drug checking and the work of The Loop is exactly that: an innovative healthcare response to the risks associated with drug use which is shown to reduce harm.

As we see the emerging and increasing threat of synthetic opioids, nitazenes, in the UK, drug checking becomes more important than ever.

The Loop's team of chemists, predominantly volunteer professionals, test substances of concern in mobile laboratories; these test results are then embedded in individually tailored healthcare consultations delivered by our volunteer health professionals to service users; and research and evaluation are conducted by our volunteer researchers. Our drug checking

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<sup>1</sup>Home Office (2023), Drugs Misuse: Findings from the 2018/19 Crime Survey for England and Wales, Statistical Bulletin 21/19, London: Home Office

<sup>2</sup>Office for National Statistics, (2024), Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales: 2023 registrations, Statistical Bulletin, London: ONS:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoninginenglandandwales/2023registrations>

<sup>3</sup>[New psychoactive substances – the current situation in Europe \(European Drug Report 2024\) | www.euda.europa.eu](https://www.euda.europa.eu) s.

can also contribute to the national surveillance of illicit drug markets, which allows more targeted interventions when responding to drug use and can be disseminated through evidence-based media and social media health messaging to reach a wide audience. Our work both draws from and contributes to evidence-based research and approaches in effective public health messaging.

More than 10 peer reviewed academic papers have been published which feature The Loop's work ([Publications — The Loop \(wearetheloop.org\)](https://www.wearetheloop.org)) evaluating its drug checking and associated harm reduction services, drug trends and broader socio-cultural and policy contexts.

There is a growing evidence base showing that drug checking:

- Leads to reduced drug use,
- Results in lower levels of polydrug use,
- Has a lasting, positive health impact on service users.

It is The Loop's mission and vision to have far greater reach into communities and this aligns with our commitment to equality and diversity. For us this means developing a nationwide network of drug checking services and related harm reduction hubs to distribute information that is non-judgemental, accessible and available to all. These services would be based on universal availability, free access and a non-judgmental ethos, including those considering taking drugs, occasional, regular or dependent drug users, and those in need of advice or support for themselves or others.

We are working to expand regular community-based drug checking, additional to continued event-based drug testing. This is a widening of The Loop's reach, working within and with communities, to reach a diverse demographic and to support them in accessing and using of drug checking services. In ensuring this can potentially be universally accessible in future, we are considerate of barriers, such as literacy levels, digital poverty, fear of stigma or arrest, and problematic social and community connections, which may mean that contacting and engaging with those in most need of our harm reduction services can be more challenging.

## **Who we are?**

The Loop was established as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2012 by Professor Fiona Measham. The Loop became the first organisation to deliver publicly accessible drug checking in the UK, in festivals in 2016 and in city centres in 2018. Since then The Loop has gone on to deliver direct and structured healthcare consultations to over 10,000 service users. In addition, the Loop has directly connected and communicated with people through harm reduction conversations and conducted these types of intervention throughout the past year and the period of this report.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reports directly to the Board of Trustees. The Loop has a registered base in Manchester, hosted by George House Trust, and operates across the UK in its delivery and development.

Katy Porter, leads the organisation as CEO, having joined in September 2022, and works in collaboration with an Administrator, Training Coordinator, Operations Lead for festivals and events, sessional lead roles in our service delivery (chemists and healthcare), and our many volunteers. Our salaried positions are funded by our service delivery and grant income.

The Loop has a volunteer base of 285 people across the UK, and with 40 of these forming a senior team, focused across four workstreams (Healthcare, Chemistry, Research, Media and Communications). If we were to employ and pay one full-time, senior staff member from each of our workstreams this would represent a cost to the organisation of ~£250,000; and we are harnessing the expertise of many in their volunteer roles.

Our direct service delivery has utilised ~5,920 volunteer hours throughout 2024/25. Based on the estimated value of volunteer time in the UK (£13.70 per hour), this represents a monetary value to The Loop, and its many stakeholders, of £81,104.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Charity's governing body is the Board of Trustees, whose members are trustees under charity law. Trustees are appointed for a 3-year period following recruitment procedures, due diligence and ratification of appointment by the Board. Trustees meet at least four times per year. These will be a minimum of twice in-person, and with two meetings held online.

At year end, the Board comprised of five trustees, and with a commitment to grow the Board to a minimum of seven trustees following a skills appraisal by the Board and CEO. The Board has been actively recruiting both clinical and policy expertise, and in the field of drug or social justice policy, to the Board as we enter 2025/26.

Conflicts, or declarations, of interest are requested and recorded through an annual declaration, and updates requested at each Board meeting. Any declared conflicts of interest would be recorded; these would then be monitored and managed as necessary.

The Board is confident that the Charity conforms to and is compliant with the Charity Commission's guidance, 'The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do' (July 2015), and works under the Charity Governance Code (2018).

## **Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit**

**The Loop complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and all other relevant legislation or regulations, and the Board operates to ensure that the organisation pursues its charitable objects as per constitution and ensures that it uses its resources in pursuance only of those objects being:**

*To protect and safeguard the health and promote the reduction of harm to the public who use psychoactive drugs in particular but not exclusively by;*

- a. drug checking and the provision of non-judgemental harm reduction information and advice to individual service users;*
- b. the provision of information on substances of concern and associated harm reduction information and advice to partner agencies, stakeholders and wider drug using communities, including through public health messaging, early warning systems and alerts;*
- c. training for organisations in the education, health and events sectors in harm reduction, drugs awareness, responding to critical incidents and delivering support services;*
- d. developing and promoting policy and strategies to reduce drug-related harm and promote health;*
- e. participating in any other health promotion activities that contribute to the reduction of drug-related harm in the community.*

*f. operating at all times in accordance with the law of England and Wales.*

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

### **Organisational Strategy and decision making**

In November 2024, the Board reviewed the organisational Strategy, reaching clear agreement on the continued focus to expand drug checking across the UK. The strategy informs strategic goals and provides a framework for growth, development and delivery. Operational and day-to-day decision making is delegated to the CEO and the staff and senior team.

Major new initiatives are considered with the Board for approval. Trustees receive in advance of each Board meeting comprehensive and detailed written reports from the CEO. These reports describe activities of the charity, and inform for growth, stability, and future planning. Quality assurance, safeguarding and risk management are essential considerations of the Board, and are captured in the Risk Register. The trustees regularly receive copies of management accounts, along with notes on variations between budgeted and actual expenditure, and any bad debts. At the meetings the CEO will guide the Trustees through these documents.

### **Risk Management**

Potential areas of risk to the charity are identified, recorded and reviewed by the Board at every meeting, assisted by the CEO. The Risk Register incorporates financial, operational risk and external risk, assessing likelihood of occurring, impact, and mitigation to reduce likelihood and the impact. Whilst recognising that no organisation can ever be risk free, the Board of Trustees consider that the range of measures and controls in place continue to reduce to an acceptable level various risks faced by The Loop.

### **Review of Activities and Achievements**

#### **Key milestones (2024-25):**

- A year of delivery of the first regular drug checking service in the UK, based in Bristol and fully funded by Public Health, Bristol City Council since January 2024. This followed the reissuing of a Home Office licence in November 2023.
- Re-commencing of festival-based drug testing for the summer 2024 season, following the application and issuing of the first festival-based Home Office controlled drug licences.
- Introduction of all-year round drug testing within festivals and club events through the securing of Home Office licences for two of the largest venues in the UK.
- Contribution to local and national domestic early warning systems, and as priority with the emerging concerns regarding a changing drug market, in particular the presence of synthetic opioids, nitazenes, in the UK.
- "Poppers, the politics of exemption and the characteristics of poppers users in the annual English Festival Study, 2014–2023" published in the British Journal of Criminology.
- Ongoing research on drug checking, drug trends and harm reduction - with a particular focus on the annual English Festival Survey dataset - to inform service delivery, drug policy debates and wider consideration of issues around social justice.

### **Drug Checking**

The first *regular* Home Office-licensed drug checking service was introduced into the UK by The Loop in January 2024 utilising the first new 'test case' licence specifically designed for drug checking. This is commissioned and funded by Bristol City Council and operating with full support of Avon and Somerset Police and wider local stakeholders and partners across health, care, and emergency services, and informing regionally and nationally to Local Drug Information Systems. Evaluation of the service has been completed and submitted in November 2024 for review to the Home Office.

Drug checking is a publicly accessible health service, sometimes referred to as 'front of house', which provides a vital opportunity for people to access accurate, timely, and relevant information directly to make more informed decisions about drugs, alongside support and treatment options. Service users surrender substances of concern, which are later destroyed, for laboratory analysis by chemists, and test results inform local harm reduction messages and alerts.

The results inform individually tailored, non-judgmental healthcare consultations with health professionals, to communicate relative risk and help reduce potential harm. Service users receive signposting into treatment and other local support services, where appropriate. The Loop communicates to all service users that there is no such thing as safe drug use, all drug use carries risk, and it benefits all at-risk communities and emergency services to better understand the nature and extent of dangerous drugs in circulation, to reduce the harm caused to individuals, communities and wider society.

Our aim through drug checking testing is to reduce drug-related harm in a number of ways, including to:

- a) identify adulterants to reduce the risk of poisoning from unknowingly consuming adulterated substances and by reducing the risk of combination consumption of contraindicated illicit or pharmaceutical drugs;
- b) assess strength to reduce the risk of overdose from unknowingly consuming high and variable strength substances;
- c) effectively communicate risk more broadly – eg. related to polydrug use, alcohol, dehydration, tolerance, medical conditions and other risk factors – through brief interventions with health professionals; and
- d) disseminate test results to onsite support services, offsite stakeholders, early warning systems, and wider drug using communities in the event of public-facing alerts and infographics.

The Loop is conducting evaluation of drug checking in the UK, informed by our service delivery and understanding of international approaches. We continue in our consultation with cities across England to plan for further implementation and mobilisation of drug checking services. Mobilisation plans have been assisted by the inclusion of Home Office licence drug checking services being in scope for the Drug and Alcohol Treatment, Recovery and Improvement Grant (DATRIG) 2025/26 provided by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to local authorities.

## **Healthcare and Harm Reduction**

The Loop's healthcare team, made up of medical practitioners, health professionals and substance misuse practitioners, delivered harm reduction services at our drug checking service and at festival and events across the UK in 2024/25.

Our harm reduction interventions include brief interventions usually conducted in combination with the submission of a substance for testing and with the test result embedded into the tailored consultation. This is a more in-depth interaction, enabling greater assessment of individual understanding, behaviours and intentions, and tailoring the information to the needs of each person.

The Loop reaches and engages people in harm reduction conversations, brief messaging and interaction, informed by the testing of The Loop and others (WEDINOS, TIC TAC), and wider knowledge of the drug market, in particular regarding changing trends in drug use and the latest substances of particular concern in circulation. The Loop typically, through our interventions, can reach 10% of attendees at a festival over the course of 2-4 days.

The most common substances for which people sought advice within a community/city centre drug checking service were benzodiazepines, ketamine and heroin. In festivals and events, this extended to harm reduction communications related to cocaine and MDMA. There was also an increase in intended use and conversations related to psychedelics, and in particular 2C-B tablets. Another recurring theme at all events was the interactions between prescribed/over-the-counter medications (such as SSRIs, benzodiazepines, antipsychotics and antihistamines) and other drugs commonly taken at festivals. There was also an increase in conversations related to prescribed medication for ADHD and hormone treatments.

**A total of 4334 contacts with individuals, across a range of harm reduction interventions, including those accessing our community-based drug checking service,** were delivered by The Loop's healthcare professionals in 2024 at 8 different locations and across 36 events. These range from harm reduction conversations to a structured brief intervention; all are informed by The Loop's drug checking and testing data.

We are far reaching in our harm reduction messaging and communicate to the public through our social media platforms informed by our testing and engaging in regard to understanding of risk and actions to take to reduce risk of harm. We indirectly connected with ~128.5k followers across three primary social media platforms and through 18 harm reduction information bulletins across the year.

## **Drug Testing**

In the delivery of our 'back of house' non publicly accessible substances come predominantly from confiscations, seizures, ground finds and medical incidents, which are prioritised when in these environments, most usually via onsite support services and also occasionally from members of the public via an amnesty bin located within The Loop service. The Loop re-commenced back of house testing in festivals and venues in 2024, following application and receipt of the first Home Office licences issued for this type of environment.

We have worked with the Home Office throughout this time in completing the application process and ensuring our proposed use of controlled drug licence, for drug testing and drug checking services, will operate in line with government policy.

Drug testing facilities wider harm reduction messaging and, when indicated, drug alerts informing of risk and advising accordingly: [Drug Alerts — The Loop](#).

**A total of 2,448 substances were tested, including those surrendered by member of the public accessing our community based drug checking service.**

Location	MDMA (pills & powders)	Cocaine	Ketamine	Other (detail)
City Centre DCS	20%	11%	16%	54% (Benzodiazepines, Heroin, Spice, Methamphetamine.)
Festivals and venues	52%	15%	17%	14% (Viagra)

## Research

The Loop is an evidence-making action research project, as well as an evidence-based health service. With a senior team of researchers and academics led by two university professors, our services are evaluated and produce peer-reviewed publications which contribute to the emerging international evidence base on drug checking and harm reduction more widely. We hold ethical approval from the University of Liverpool for our research action project, granted for a 5-year period (2023-28) and receive additional support relating to ethical, legal, media and data-related issues from specialist university staff throughout the year.

The annual English Festival Survey continued in 2024, with over 10 years of data underpinning our research and evaluation. The research team collect, clean and analyse all data which forms the basis for a number of academic peer reviewed journal articles on drug checking, drug-related trends and wider drug policy debates. This year our researchers engaged with a further **792 participants** across three events and locations..

## Training

The Loop's training enables us to further our charitable aims of expanding knowledge and application of a harm reduction approach towards drug-related issues. We ensure this aspect of our charitable activity is sustainable in its delivery going forwards, as well as ensuring our training is accessible and affordable.

Last year, over **700 people attended training** with The Loop. We delivered 30 online training sessions, 21 of which were open and accessible to individuals working in various settings and sectors and potentially coming into contact with people who use drugs. Training sessions took place with 12 different organisations; these included venues and medical and welfare services, Local Authorities, Universities, and police forces.

The courses varied from broad understanding of drugs through awareness raising, markets and trends, to interventions and approaches which can be implemented in different situations and settings, to deep dives focused on particular drugs. Additionally, Train the Trainer was provided to partners to further embed learning in an area. Courses were adapted where appropriate for the needs of particular organisations, took place in-person and online, and with further engagement to take an action learning approach following training delivery.

## Future Plans

We will deliver high quality, accessible, evidence-based and evidence-making drug checking services to disseminate harm reduction information to individuals, communities, service providers and commissioners, and policy makers.

This is for the following purposes:

- *Early intervention and prevention*: alerting the public when substances of concern are identified, incorporating drug checking, preventing harm, and ensuring people who choose to take drugs can take them more safely.
- *Community driven approaches*: we understand and work alongside people to develop our work and expertise in person-centred interventions. People who take drugs, or have taken drugs in the past, can be honest about their experiences and not judged and assist in reducing stigma.
- *Research & development for impactful response*: we inform and develop our work and influence and effect wider system change and practice to ensure legislation and policy context allows ongoing drug checking, its expansion across the UK (in line with our mission statement), and national standards for drug checking are in place.

Our work will focus on drug checking being an established, recognised healthcare and harm reduction service, adequately funded in the UK. We plan to implement and commence a minimum of three commissioned, regular, community-based drug checking services during 2025/26, all Home Office licenced, and for these to be funded for a minimum of 12 months.

We will deliver these by developing and supporting a dedicated team of professional chemists, healthcare staff, and researchers, guided by international expertise and experience, working to establish drug checking and harm reduction services, responsive to emerging concerns in the UK.

The Loop is a leading organisation in the development and delivery of drug checking but cannot, and does not wish to, operate in isolation. We are more effective, have greater impact, and achieve better outcomes when working with others and we will continue to work in partnership and actively seek collaboration. Local Authorities, Public Health, and the police, are essential stakeholders in our work, alongside the alcohol and other drugs sector, higher education institutions, research, policy and practice NGOs, the night-time economy and the events industry. This is an opportune time to develop a national network of stakeholders committed to creating best practice guidelines for the future.

We will continue to review and develop our testing techniques and analytics, ensuring these continue to enable the mobile, rapid and accurate results we require. As our drug checking services and operations expand, so does the need for available equipment and the increased complexity of our logistics of our delivery. Investment will be required to expand our testing capacity as it relates to our resources, both in terms of personnel and our equipment and assets.

Fundraising and grant writing will be key features of our work in the coming year, ensuring we have the funds to expand our services. This will relate to infrastructure, staffing and equipment. This will be completed by the organisation and focus on individual giving and registration for gift aid and seeking further charitable grants in support of our work.

More information about our current services and developments for the charity can be found on our website at [www.weretheloop.org](http://www.weretheloop.org)

## **Financial review**

The Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) set out on page 13, shows total income of £236,101 (2024: £161,812) and total expenditure £208,012 (2024: £175,747). This resulted in surplus of £28,089 (2024: deficit of £13,935).

Total funds of the charity at the end of the period were £116,626 which comprised of £65,699 of unrestricted funds and £50,927 of restricted funds.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Board's policy is to increase Revenue Reserves to ensure that fluctuations in future income do not threaten the financial stability of the organisation. The uncertainties include grants from statutory bodies.

Revenue Reserve is needed to provide funds which can be made available for specific projects, and to assist with unforeseen economic events. The Trustees recognise that a level of this reserve should be gradually increased to the equivalent of three months' total expenditure calculated and reviewed annually.

Whilst outgoings are low, there is a need to consider the expansion of the organisation. The reserve is being built up to the desired level in stages consistent with the Charity's overall financial position and its need to maintain its activities.

At the end of the period the total funds of the charity were £116,626. Of this £50,927 was restricted with free reserves also being £65,699. This equates to just over 7 months of unrestricted expenditure.

## Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

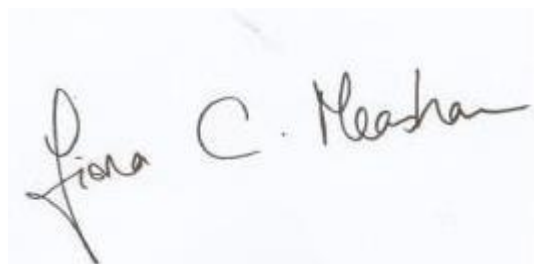
The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, of the charity for that period. In preparing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

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

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website in accordance with legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements.

Approved by the trustees on 8 November 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona C. Measham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F'.

Fiona Measham  
Chair

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Loop Drug Checking Service**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Loop Drug Checking Service ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 March 2025.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

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

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

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



**Teresa Fennell, ACMA CGMA**  
**It Doesn't Have to Cost the Earth Ltd**  
47 St Dunstons Close, Worcester, WR5 2AJ

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 March 2025

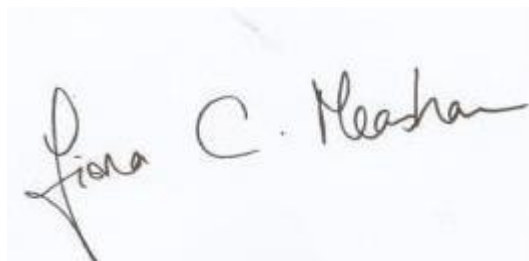
	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 31 March 2025 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 31 March 2024 £
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	2	4839	65,221	<b>70,060</b>	3,807	57,200	<b>61,057</b>
Charitable activities	2	94,017	52,319	<b>146,336</b>	77,761	20,339	<b>98,100</b>
Other income	2	19,705	-	<b>19,705</b>	2,655	-	<b>2,655</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>118,561</b>	<b>117,540</b>	<b>236,101</b>	<b>84,223</b>	<b>77,589</b>	<b>161,812</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds		538	114	<b>652</b>	1,552	-	<b>1,552</b>
Charitable activities	3	112,165	95,195	<b>207,360</b>	92,455	81,740	<b>174,195</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>112,703</b>	<b>95,309</b>	<b>208,012</b>	<b>94,007</b>	<b>81,740</b>	<b>175,747</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure before transfers)</b>		<b>5,858</b>	<b>22,231</b>	<b>28,089</b>	<b>(9,784)</b>	<b>(4,151)</b>	<b>(13,935)</b>
<b>Transfer between funds</b>		<b>216</b>	<b>(216)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>6,074</b>	<b>22,015</b>	<b>28,089</b>	<b>(9,784)</b>	<b>(4,151)</b>	<b>(13,935)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Total funds brought forward		59,625	28,912	<b>88,537</b>	69,409	33,063	<b>102,472</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>65,699</b>	<b>50,927</b>	<b>116,626</b>	<b>59,625</b>	<b>28,912</b>	<b>88,537</b>

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

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Notes	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2024 £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	7	56,533	87,481
Cash at bank and in hand	9	76,549	56,832
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>133,102</b>	<b>144,313</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	16,476	55,776
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>		<b>116,626</b>	<b>88,537</b>
<b>Total net assets / (liabilities)</b>		<b>116,626</b>	<b>88,537</b>
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>			
Restricted funds	10	50,927	28,912
Unrestricted funds	10	65,699	59,625
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>116,626</b>	<b>88,537</b>

Signed on behalf of the Trustees of The Loop Drug Checking Service on 8 November 2025.



Fiona Measham  
Chair

## Notes to the accounts

### Note 1: Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 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), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The charity has applied the exemption available to small charities in the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and does not include a Statement of Cash Flows in these Financial Statements.

The Loop Drug Checking Service 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 notes.

#### b) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### c) Income

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

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

Donations are recognised when the charity receives the funds.

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

**d) Fund 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 funds which the donor has specified are solely to be used for particular activities.

**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) Expenditure**

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 recognised reliability.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

All expenditure is shown inclusive of VAT.

**g) Allocation of support costs**

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

**h) Operating Leases**

The charity classifies the lease of photocopying and printing equipment as operating leases; the title to the equipment remains with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**i) Tangible Fixed Assets**

Individual assets costing £550 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated evenly over their estimated useful economic lives, as follows:

Leasehold improvements	10% straightline
Fixtures and fitting	33% reducing balance
Computers	33% reducing balance

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

The gain or less arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the assets, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

**j) Impairment of fixed assets**

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

**k) Debtors**

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

**l) Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probable 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 provision re normally recognised at their settle met amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

**m) Corporation Tax**

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

**n) Key estimates and accounting judgements**

In applying the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions in determining the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities. The Trustees' judgements, estimates and assumptions are based on the best and most reliable evidence available at the time when the decisions are made, and are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be applicable. Due to the inherent subjectivity involved in making such judgements, estimates ad assumptions, the actual results and outcomes may differ.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to the 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 revision and future periods, if the revision affects both current and future periods.

**Note 2: Analysis of income**

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>2025 Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total funds</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Donations and legacies:</b>			
Donations	4,839	-	4,839
Grants			
Tudor Trust	-	50,000	50,000
EIF	-		
Purple Guide		4,279	4,279
Communications Lead		5,942	5,942
Hillier Trust		5,000	5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,839</b>	<b>65,221</b>	<b>70,060</b>
Charitable activities	94,017	52,319	146,336
Miscellaneous income	19,705	-	19,705
<b>Total income</b>	<b>118,561</b>	<b>117,540</b>	<b>236,101</b>

***Prior period***

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>2024 Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total funds</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Donations and legacies:</b>			
Donations	3,807	-	3,807
Grants			
Tudor Trust	-	50,000	50,000
Purple Guide	-	7,250	7,250

<b>Total</b>	<b>3,807</b>	<b>57,250</b>	<b>61,057</b>
Charitable activities	77,761	20,339	98,100
Miscellaneous income	2,655	-	2,655
<b>Total income</b>	<b>84,223</b>	<b>77,589</b>	<b>161,812</b>

**Note 3: Analysis of expenditure**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Staff costs	118,483	116,153
Consultancy/Professional Fees	2,850	436
Licences	2,743	2,742
Travel and subsistence	19,636	15,284
Volunteer Expenses	1,158	1,589
Equipment	4,687	-
Freelance Staff	19,290	7,512
Other Service Delivery Costs	-	224
Rent	4,602	930
Miscellaneous cost	2,723	2,030
Insurance	17,654	15,965
Irrecoverable VAT	2,614	130

	<u>196,440</u>	<u>162,993</u>
Share of support costs (see note 4)	9,921	10,467
Share of governance costs (see note 4)	<u>1,000</u>	<u>735</u>
	<u><b>207,361</b></u>	<u><b>174,195</b></u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	112,165	92,455
Restricted funds	<u>95,195</u>	<u>81,740</u>
	<u><b>207,360</b></u>	<u><b>174,195</b></u>

**Note 4: Allocation of Governance and Other Support Costs**

The total support costs and overheads attributable to charitable activity is apportioned as shown below:

	<b>Support Costs</b>	<b>Total</b>
	£	£
Accountancy Fees	6,345	6,345
Office costs	<u>3,576</u>	<u>3,576</u>
	<u><b>9,921</b></u>	<u><b>9,921</b></u>

**Governance Costs**

	£
Trustee travel	250
Independent Examination	750

1,000

**Prior period:**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Support</b>	
	<b>Costs</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Accountancy Fees	5,126	5,126
Office costs	5,341	5,341
	<u>10,467</u>	<u>10,467</u>

**Governance Costs**

	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>
Independent Examination	<u>735</u>
	<u>735</u>

**Note 5: Details of certain items of expenditure**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Independent examiner's fees	<u>750</u>	<u>735</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>750</u>	<u>735</u>

**Note 6: Employees**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Salaries and wages (including secondment fees)	110,173	102,823
Social security costs	6,085	4,826
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	2,225	1,959
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>118,483</b>	<b>109,608</b>

One employee received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) for the reporting period of more than £60,000 (2024: £nil). See note 6.3 for additional information.

## 6.2 Average head count in the year

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

### Note 6: Employees (continued)

## 6.3 Key Management Personnel

The Trustees consider its key management personnel to comprise of the Trustees and the Chief Executive.

The remuneration of the key management personnel in the year totalled £72,401 (2024: £56,958). Of this sum £15,444 related to the Chief Executive undertaken work as an Independent Lay Member with Partnership Southwark, South East London NHS Integrated Care Board for which full reimbursement was received.

### Note 7: Debtors

#### Amounts falling due within one year

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	£	£
Trade debtors	48,014	58,352
Accrued income	-	14,355
Prepayments	8,539	14,744
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>56,553</u></b>	<b><u>87,481</u></b>

#### **Note 8: Creditors & Accruals**

##### **Analysis of creditors: falling due within one year**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,994	3,959
Accruals	2,285	17,066
Taxation and social security costs	1,983	4,645
Deferred income	4,050	20,846
Other creditors	1,201	1
VAT Liability	4,963	9,259
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>16,476</u></b>	<b><u>55,776</u></b>

	£
Balance at 1 April 2024	20,846

Amounts released to income earned from charitable activities	(20,846)
Amount deferred in period	4,050
Balance at 31 March 2025	<u><u>4,050</u></u>

**Note 9: Cash at bank and in hand**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Current Account	76,549	55,567
PayPal	-	1,265
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>76,549</u></u>	<u><u>56,832</u></u>

**Note 10: Charity funds**

	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfer between funds	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£		£
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
Tudor Trust	12,341	50,000	(25,000)		37,341
Events Industry Forum					
Purple Guide Grant	1,176	4,279	(5,239)	(216)	-
Communications Lead Grant	-	5,942			5,942
Bristol DCS	15,395	52,319	(65,070)		2,644
Hillier Trust	-	5,000			5,000
	<u><u>28,912</u></u>	<u><u>117,540</u></u>	<u><u>(95,309)</u></u>	<u><u>(216)</u></u>	<u><u>50,927</u></u>

<i>Unrestricted Funds</i>	59,625	118,561	(112,703)	216	65,699
	<b>59,625</b>	<b>118,561</b>	<b>(112,703)</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>65,699</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>88,537</b>	<b>236,101</b>	<b>(208,012)</b>		<b>116,626</b>

**Note 10: Charity funds (continued)**  
*Prior period*

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £		Balance at 31 March 2024 £
<i>Restricted Funds</i>					
Tudor Trust	19,299	50,000	(56,958)	-	12,341
Events Industry Forum (EIF Purple Guide Grant)	13,764	7,250	(19,838)		1,176
Bristol DCS	-	20,339	(4,944)		15,395
	<b>33,063</b>	<b>77,589</b>	<b>(81,740)</b>		<b>28,912</b>
<i>Unrestricted Funds</i>	69,409	84,223	(94,007)	0	59,625
	<b>69,409</b>	<b>84,223</b>	<b>(94,007)</b>		<b>59,625</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>102,472</b>	<b>161,812</b>	<b>(175,747)</b>		<b>88,537</b>

**Tudor Trust**

The Tudor Trust is supporting the organisation over a period of three years, commencing in 2022, and with provision of funding for core costs towards the salary of the CEO. This is to enable the development and growth of The Loop as a national charity over this time period.

**Events Industry Forum (EIF Purple Guide Grant)**

The Events Industry Forum supports the promotion of good practice within the events industry, and through the Purple Guide grants invests in projects that the EIF Board considers will benefit the industry, and in turn members of the public. The Loop has received funding for one year to increase our capacity and resources to deliver training and equip members of the workforce within the events industry with knowledge and understanding of drug use and related harm reduction.

**Events Industry Forum (Communications Lead Grant)**

The grant supports the costs of employment of a Communications Lead, part-time for 12 months. This role will further assist in the development of timely and effective public-facing harm reduction communications, and the ongoing understanding and awareness of drug checking and the services of The Loop in the UK.

**Bristol Drug Checking Service**

Bristol DCS - regular drug checking service commissioned and contracted by Bristol City Council. The monthly service delivers public facing drug checking, combining the testing of submitted substances of concern with direct and individualised harm reduction interventions in the form of a brief intervention with healthcare professionals. In addition, harm reduction communications are generated and shared with local stakeholders and wider public to inform and alert, when necessary.

**The Hillier Trust**

The grant supports the costs of employment of a Communications Lead, part-time for 12 months. This role will further assist in the development of timely and effective public-facing harm reduction communications, and the ongoing understanding and awareness of drug checking and the services of The Loop in the UK.

**Note 11: Analysis of net assets between funds**

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 represented by:			
Cash at bank and in hand	37,929	38,620	76,549
Current assets/(liabilities)	40,077	-	40,077
	<b>78,006</b>	<b>38,620</b>	<b>116,626</b>

**Prior year**

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 represented by:			
Cash at bank and in hand	27,920	28,912	56,832
Current assets/(liabilities)	31,705	-	31,705
	<b>59,625</b>	<b>28,912</b>	<b>88,537</b>

**Note 12: Trustees remuneration and expenses**

No Trustees received remuneration (2024: £150 for delivery of training).

One Trustee received reimbursement of expenses totalling £1,331 for travel and accommodation costs incurred on charity business (2024: £nil).

Trustee Indemnity Insurance is included in the charity's insurance policy.

**Note 13: Related party transactions**

There was two related party transactions during the period as detailed below:

Fiona Measham's partner was paid £327 for training delivery and associated expenses (2024: £808).

During the period £15,454 (inc VAT) was paid to the University of Liverpool for secondment fees for Fiona Measham with the purpose being to engage academic research expertise into The Loop (2024: £15,484). This has been approved by the Trustees and, in line with our Conflict of Interest policy, Fiona Measham did not participate in these discussions.

**Note 14: Donated facilities and services*****Volunteers***

Our professional volunteer team is comprised of 40 senior team members, and c.250 general volunteers. Volunteers work across our 4 workstreams; Healthcare, Chemistry, Research and Media/Communications. Our volunteers provide direct support (in-person) in relation to our service activity and delivery, and support. This includes undertaking drug testing and drug checking, harm reduction interventions and messaging, outreach and engagement through our social media platforms and profile, and all compliant to regulatory requirements. In addition, and often remote and project related, our volunteers assist in our organisational development.

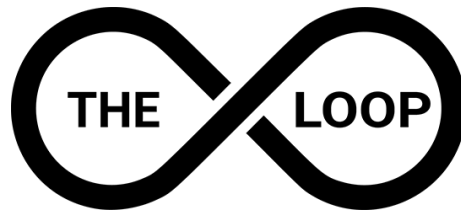
**THE LOOP DRUG CHECKING SERVICE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1200533

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# Accounts

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**The Loop Drug Checking Service**

**Charity Registration Number: 1200533**

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024**

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## Administrative Information

Trustees:	Professor Fiona Measham (Chair)	3 September 2022
	Darren Knight	3 September 2022
	Jon Drape	3 September 2022
	Philip Kolvin KC	14 January 2023
	Sarah Dalton (Treasurer)	10 February 2024

Chief Executive Officer: Katy Porter BEM

Charity Address: George House Trust,  
75-77 Ardwick Green North  
Manchester  
M12 6FX

Bankers: Barclays Bank

Accountant: Beyond Profit Ltd  
G104 Bolton Arena  
Arena Approach  
Horwich  
Bolton  
BL6 6LB

Independent Examiner: It Doesn't Have to Cost the Earth Ltd  
47 St Dunstons Close  
Worcester  
WR5 2AJ

## Trustees Annual Report

The Loop Drug Checking Service is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the Charity Registration Number 1200533. The governing document of the charity is a constitution dated 29 September 2022.

**The Loop Drug Checking Service** is a pioneering health service which exists to reduce the potential harms related to drug use and does so by generating and disseminating accurate information on substances of concern and in circulation, and providing advice, both direct and indirect, to the public.

Our **Harm Reduction services** bring together technologies and evidence-based interventions for the purpose to inform, prevent harm, and improve the health, well-being and safety of all in our communities and society.

### What we do and why?

Drug-related deaths are at an all-time high in the UK<sup>1</sup> and continue to rise. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that there were 5,448 deaths related to the use of Drugs in England and Wales in 2023; the highest level of drug-related deaths on record and an 11% increase in drug-related deaths compared to 2022. The rate of drug-poisoning deaths is now double the rate in 2012.

The associated harms have, and continue, to increase in the UK since 2012, with mis-sold drugs, as well as high and variable strength substances, as key contributing factors. There were a total of 4,907 drug-related deaths in England and Wales in 2022 (4,859 in 2021, 4,393 in 2019), almost half of which were for opiates. Total ecstasy-related deaths reported were 51, a decrease from a spike seen in 2018 (92 reported deaths), a significant increase from the 8 deaths reported in 2010. Cocaine-related deaths rose to 857 in 2022, which represents the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive annual rise,<sup>2</sup> with 840 deaths in 2021, and more than 7 times the 112 deaths recorded in 2011. Hospital admissions for cocaine and MDMA are also rapidly escalating.

There is also greater potential exposure and access to an ever-increasing number of drugs<sup>3</sup>. In December 2021, the UK government published its 10-year Drug Strategy calling for 'innovation' to help reduce increasing drug harms. Drug checking and the work of The Loop is exactly that: an innovative healthcare response to the risks associated with drug use which is shown to reduce harm.

The Loop's team of chemists, predominantly volunteer professionals, test substances of concern in mobile laboratories; these test results are then embedded in individually tailored healthcare consultations delivered by our volunteer health professionals to service users; and research and evaluation are conducted by our volunteer researchers. Our drug checking can also contribute to the national surveillance of illicit drug markets, which allows more targeted interventions when responding to drug use and can be disseminated through

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<sup>1</sup>Home Office (2022), Drugs Misuse: Findings from the 2018/19 Crime Survey for England and Wales, Statistical Bulletin 21/19, London: Home Office

<sup>2</sup>Office for National Statistics, (2024), Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales: 2022 registrations, Statistical Bulletin, London: ONS:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoninginenglandandwales/2022registrations>

<sup>3</sup>New psychoactive substances – the current situation in Europe (European Drug Report 2024) | [www.euda.europa.eu](http://www.euda.europa.eu) s.

evidence-based media and social media health messaging to reach a wide audience. Our work both draws from and contributes to evidence-based research and approaches in effective public health messaging.

More than 10 peer reviewed academic papers have been published which feature The Loop's work ([Publications — The Loop \(wearetheloop.org\)](https://wearetheloop.org)) evaluating its drug checking and associated harm reduction services, drug trends and broader socio-cultural and policy contexts.

There is a growing evidence base showing that drug checking:

- Leads to reduced drug use,
- Results in lower levels of polydrug use,
- Has a lasting, positive health impact on service users.

It is The Loop's mission and vision to have far greater reach into communities and this aligns with our commitment to equality and diversity. For us this means developing a nationwide network of drug checking services and related harm reduction hubs to distribute information that is non-judgemental, accessible and available to all. These services would be based on universal availability, free access and a non-judgmental ethos, including those considering taking drugs, occasional, regular or dependent drug users, and those in need of advice or support for themselves or others.

We are working to expand regular community-based drug checking, additional to continued event-based drug testing. This is a widening of The Loop's reach, working within and with communities, to reach a diverse demographic and to support them in accessing and using of drug checking services. In ensuring this can potentially be universally accessible in future, we are considerate of barriers, such as literacy levels, digital poverty, fear of stigma or arrest, and problematic social and community connections, which may mean that contacting and engaging with those in most need of our harm reduction services can be more challenging.

### **Who we are?**

The Loop was established as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2012 by Professor Fiona Measham. The Loop became the first organisation to deliver publicly accessible drug checking in the UK, in festivals in 2016 and in city centres in 2018. Since then The Loop has gone on to deliver direct and structured healthcare consultations to over 10,000 service users. In addition, the Loop has directly connected and communicated with people through harm reduction conversations and conducted this type of intervention throughout the period of this report.

We are now in a period of growth, having been granted charity status in 2022, and appointing the first staff member of the organisation, Katy Porter, as CEO, who joined in September 2022. Katy has been joined by another 2 staff members, an Administrator, and a Training Coordinator, with posts supported by grant funding. The Loop has a volunteer base of 289 people across the UK, and with 40 of these forming a senior team, focused across four workstreams (Healthcare, Chemistry, Research, Media and Communications). The value of our senior team alone and the time given to the development of the organisation over the course of the year would represent ~1,920 hours and a monetary value of a minimum of £24,595.20.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reports directly to the Board of Trustees. The Loop has a registered base in Manchester, hosted by George House Trust, and operates across the UK in its delivery and development.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Charity's governing body is the Board of Trustees, whose members are trustees under charity law. Trustees are appointed for a 3-year period following recruitment procedures, due diligence and ratification of appointment by the Board. Trustees meet at least four times per year. These will be a minimum of twice in-person, and with two meetings held online.

At year end, the Board comprised of four trustees, and with a commitment to grow the Board to seven trustees following a skills appraisal by the Board and CEO. The Board successfully appointed a Treasurer in February 2024, growing the Board to five as we enter the financial year 2024/25.

Conflicts, or declarations, of interest are requested and recorded through an annual declaration, and updates requested at each Board meeting. Any declared conflicts of interest would be recorded; these would then be monitored and managed as necessary.

The Board is confident that the Charity conforms to and is compliant with the Charity Commission's guidance, 'The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do' (July 2015), and works under the Charity Governance Code (2018).

## **Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit**

**The Loop complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and all other relevant legislation or regulations, and the Board operates to ensure that the organisation pursues its charitable objects as per constitution and ensures that it uses its resources in pursuance only of those objects being:**

*To protect and safeguard the health and promote the reduction of harm to the public who use psychoactive drugs in particular but not exclusively by;*

- a. drug checking and the provision of non-judgemental harm reduction information and advice to individual service users;*
- b. the provision of information on substances of concern and associated harm reduction information and advice to partner agencies, stakeholders and wider drug using communities, including through public health messaging, early warning systems and alerts;*
- c. training for organisations in the education, health and events sectors in harm reduction, drugs awareness, responding to critical incidents and delivering support services;*
- d. developing and promoting policy and strategies to reduce drug-related harm and promote health;*
- e. participating in any other health promotion activities that contribute to the reduction of drug-related harm in the community.*
- f. operating at all times in accordance with the law of England and Wales.*

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

## **Organisational Strategy and decision making**

In 2022/23, the Board agreed the Strategy for the year ahead, and this was approved in December 2022. This built on consultation with volunteers, staff and partners in the preparation for charity status, and is being further reviewed in November 2024.

The strategy informs strategic goals and provides a framework for growth, development and delivery. Operational and day-to-day decision making is delegated to the CEO and the staff and senior team.

Major new initiatives are considered with the Board for approval. Trustees receive in advance of each Board meeting comprehensive and detailed written reports from the CEO. These reports describe activities of the charity, and inform for growth, stability, and future planning. Quality assurance, safeguarding and risk management are essential considerations of the Board, and are captured in the Risk Register. The trustees regularly receive copies of management accounts, along with notes on variations between budgeted and actual expenditure, and any bad debts. At the meetings the CEO will guide the Trustees through these documents.

## **Risk Management**

Potential areas of risk to the charity are identified, recorded and reviewed by the Board at every meeting, assisted by the CEO. The Risk Register incorporates financial, operational risk and external risk, assessing likelihood of occurring, impact, and mitigation to reduce likelihood and the impact. Whilst recognising that no organisation can ever be risk free, the Board of Trustees consider that the range of measures and controls in place continue to reduce to an acceptable level various risks faced by The Loop.

## **Review of Activities and Achievements**

### **Key milestones (2023-24):**

- Mobilisation and implementation of the first regular drug checking service in the UK, based in Bristol and fully funded by Public Health, Bristol City Council in January 2024. This followed the reissuing of a Home Office licence in November 2023.
- Following a pause in festival drug testing for the summer 2023 season, The Loop completed application for Home Office licences to re-introduce festival-based drug testing in the UK,
- Contribution to the planning and introduction of local and national domestic early warning systems, and as priority with the emerging concerns regarding a changing drug market, in particular the presence of synthetic opioids, nitazenes, in the UK.
- Ongoing research on drug checking, drug trends and harm reduction - with a particular focus on the annual English Festival Survey dataset - to inform service delivery, drug policy debates and wider consideration of issues around social justice.

## **Drug Checking**

The first *regular* Home Office-licensed drug checking service was introduced into the UK by The Loop in January 2024 utilising the first new 'test case' licence specifically designed for

drug checking. This is commissioned and funded by Bristol City Council and operating with full support of Avon and Somerset Police and wider local stakeholders and partners across health, care, and emergency services, and informing regionally and nationally to Local Drug Information Systems.

Drug checking is a publicly accessible health service, sometimes referred to as 'front of house', which provides a vital opportunity for people to access accurate, timely, and relevant information directly to make more informed decisions about drugs, alongside support and treatment options. Service users surrender substances of concern, which are later destroyed, for laboratory analysis by chemists, and test results inform local harm reduction messages and alerts.

The results inform individually tailored, non-judgmental healthcare consultations with health professionals, to communicate relative risk and help reduce potential harm. Service users receive signposting into treatment and other local support services, where appropriate. The Loop communicates to all service users that there is no such thing as safe drug use, all drug use carries risk, and it benefits all at-risk communities and emergency services to better understand the nature and extent of dangerous drugs in circulation, to reduce the harm caused to individuals, communities and wider society.

Our aim through drug checking testing is to reduce drug-related harm in a number of ways, including to:

- a) identify adulterants to reduce the risk of poisoning from unknowingly consuming adulterated substances and by reducing the risk of combination consumption of contraindicated illicit or pharmaceutical drugs;
- b) assess strength to reduce the risk of overdose from unknowingly consuming high and variable strength substances;
- c) effectively communicate risk more broadly – eg. related to polydrug use, alcohol, dehydration, tolerance, medical conditions and other risk factors – through brief interventions with health professionals; and
- d) disseminate test results to onsite support services, offsite stakeholders, early warning systems, and wider drug using communities in the event of public-facing alerts and infographics.

The Loop is conducting evaluation of drug checking in the UK, informed by our service delivery and understanding of international approaches. We continue in our consultation with cities across England to plan for further implementation and mobilisation of drug checking services.

### **Healthcare and Harm Reduction**

The Loop's healthcare team, made up of medical practitioners, health professionals and substance misuse practitioners, delivered harm reduction services at six events across the UK in 2023/24, in addition to involvement in the drug checking service.

Harm reduction interventions, which include direct contact and conversations and social media messaging, are informed by the testing of The Loop and others (WEDINOS, TIC TAC), and wider knowledge of the drug market, in particular regarding changing trends in drug use and the latest substances of particular concern in circulation. The Loop typically,

through our interventions, reaches 10% of attendees at a festival over the course of 2-4 days.

The most common substances for which people sought advice were ketamine, cocaine and MDMA. There was also an increase in intended use and conversations related to psychedelics, and in particular 2C-B tablets. Another recurring theme at all events was the interactions between prescribed/over-the-counter medications (such as SSRIs, benzodiazepines, antipsychotics and antihistamines) and other drugs commonly taken at festivals. There was also an increase in conversations related to prescribed medication for ADHD and hormone treatments.

A total of **4,843 harm reduction conversations** were delivered by The Loop's healthcare professionals at festivals and events in 2023.

## **Drug Testing**

In the delivery of our 'back of house' non publicly accessible substances come predominantly from confiscations, seizures, ground finds and medical incidents, which are prioritised when in these environments, most usually via onsite support services and also occasionally from members of the public via an amnesty bin located within The Loop service. The Loop completed and submitted applications to the Home Office in December 2023 to re-introduce back of house drug testing from June 2024.

We have worked with the Home Office throughout this time in completing the application process and ensuring our proposed use of controlled drug licence, for drug testing and drug checking services, will operate in line with government policy.

## **Research**

The Loop is an evidence-making action research project, as well as an evidence-based health service. With a senior team of researchers and academics led by two university professors, our services are evaluated and produce peer-reviewed publications which contribute to the emerging international evidence base on drug checking and harm reduction more widely. We hold ethical approval from the University of Liverpool for our research action project, granted for a 5-year period (2023-28) and receive additional support relating to ethical, legal, media and data-related issues from specialist university staff throughout the year.

The annual English Festival Survey continued in 2023, with over 10 years of data underpinning our research and evaluation. The research team collect, clean and analyse all data which forms the basis for a number of academic peer reviewed journal articles on drug checking, drug-related trends and wider drug policy debates. This year the team analysed EFS data relating to trends in poppers use and wider issues of social justice for a paper successfully submitted to the British Journal of Criminology in January 2024.

## **Training**

The Loop has delivered training sporadically across the years, to organisations and events including in the public, private and third sector, such as local government, universities, festivals and nightclubs. In early 2023, The Loop was awarded a grant from the Event Industry Forum (EIF) to support us in developing our training programme, ensuring the following:

- furthering our charitable aims of expanding knowledge and application of a harm reduction approach towards drug-related issues,
- this aspect of our charitable activity is sustainable in its delivery going forwards,
- training is accessible and affordable.

We recruited a part-time training coordinator, to manage the enquiries, bookings and promotion of training courses to a wider audience, to expand our training capacity, and develop and quality assure our training offer. Our training capacity increased to 8 people, and with 2 levels of trainer and assistant in our delivery model. They are employed on a freelance basis, and our trainers are either from a teaching or training background or experienced in delivering continuous professional development (CPD) within their field. They all have a high knowledge of harm reduction and drugs.

Flexibility, and the capacity, to deliver online or in-person, and to individuals or groups, is now in place, with significantly higher numbers to be trained in the future by The Loop. By utilising the Eventbrite platform, we have been able to scale up the frequency and reach of our courses, with us offering 10 online training sessions in 2023-24, ranging from a basic introduction to drugs to more specialist training sessions on particular drugs like MDMA and ketamine as well as providing updates on the UK drugs market. This is delivered alongside directly purchased courses to Local Authorities, Police forces, Universities, and venues.

The grant has allowed us to grow our training offer, planned by the training coordinator, delivered by freelance trainers and with course oversight and development, plus marketing to expand our offer and reach.

## **Future Plans**

We will deliver high quality, accessible, evidence-based and evidence-making drug checking services to disseminate harm reduction information to individuals, communities, service providers and commissioners, and policy makers.

This is for the following purposes:

- *Early intervention and prevention*: alerting the public when substances of concern are identified, incorporating drug checking, preventing harm, and ensuring people who choose to take drugs can take them more safely.
- *Community driven approaches*: we understand and work alongside people to develop our work and expertise in person-centred interventions. People who take drugs, or have taken drugs in the past, can be honest about their experiences and not judged and assist in reducing stigma.
- *Research & development for impactful response*: we inform and develop our work and influence and effect wider system change and practice to ensure legislation and policy context allows ongoing drug checking, its expansion across the UK (in line with our mission statement), and national standards for drug checking are in place.

Our work will focus on drug checking being an established, recognised healthcare and harm reduction service, adequately funded in the UK. We plan to implement and commence a minimum of three commissioned, regular, community-based drug checking services during 2025, all Home Office licenced, and for these to be funded for a minimum of 12 months.

We will deliver these by developing and supporting a dedicated team of professional chemists, healthcare staff, and researchers, guided by international expertise and experience, working to establish drug checking and harm reduction services, responsive to emerging concerns in the UK.

The Loop is a leading organisation in the development and delivery of drug checking but cannot, and does not wish to, operate in isolation. We are more effective, have greater impact, and achieve better outcomes when working with others and we will continue to work in partnership and actively seek collaboration. Local Authorities, Public Health, and the police, are essential stakeholders in our work, alongside the alcohol and other drugs sector, higher education institutions, research, policy and practice NGOs, the night-time economy and the events industry. This is an opportune time to develop a national network of stakeholders committed to creating best practice guidelines for the future.

We will continue to review and develop our testing techniques and analytics, ensuring these continue to enable the mobile, rapid and accurate results we require. As our drug checking services and operations expand, so does the need for available equipment and the increased complexity of our logistics of our delivery. Investment will be required to expand our testing capacity as it relates to our resources, both in terms of personnel and our equipment and assets.

Fundraising and grant writing will be key features of our work in the coming year, ensuring we have the funds to expand our services. This will relate to infrastructure, staffing and equipment. This will be completed by the organisation and focus on individual giving and registration for gift aid and seeking further charitable grants in support of our work.

More information about our current services and developments for the charity can be found on our website at [www.weretheloop.org](http://www.weretheloop.org)

## **Financial review**

The Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) set out on page 13, shows total income of £161,812 (2023: £29,679) and total expenditure £175,747 (2023: £64,079). This resulted in deficit of £13,935 (2023: £34,400).

Total funds of the charity at the end of the period were £88,537 which comprised of £59,625 of unrestricted funds and £28,912 of restricted funds.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Board's policy is to increase Revenue Reserves to ensure that fluctuations in future income do not threaten the financial stability of the organisation. The uncertainties include grants from statutory bodies.

Revenue Reserve is needed to provide funds which can be made available for specific projects, and to assist with unforeseen economic events. The Trustees recognise that a level of this reserve should be gradually increased to the equivalent of three months' total expenditure calculated and reviewed annually.

Whilst outgoings are low, there is a need to consider the expansion of the organisation The reserve is being built up to the desired level in stages consistent with the Charity's overall financial position and its need to maintain its activities.

At the end of the period the total funds of the charity were £88,537. Of this £59,625 was unrestricted with free reserves also being £59,625. This equates to just over 7 and a half months of unrestricted expenditure.

## **Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements**

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

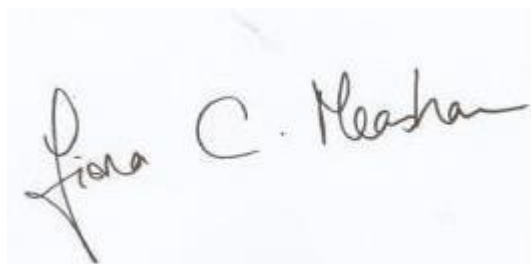
The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, of the charity for that period. In preparing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

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

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website in accordance with legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements.

Approved by the trustees on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona C. Measham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F'.

Fiona Measham  
Chair

## **Independent examiner’s report to the Trustees of The Loop Drug Checking Service**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Loop Drug Checking Service (“the Charity”) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity’s trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (“ the Act”).

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity’s accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### **Independent examiner’s statement**

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

- The accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- The accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- The accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a “true and fair” view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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



**Teresa Fennell, ACMA CGMA**

**It Doesn’t Have to Cost the Earth Ltd**

47 St Dunstons Close, Worcester, WR5 2AJ

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 March 2024

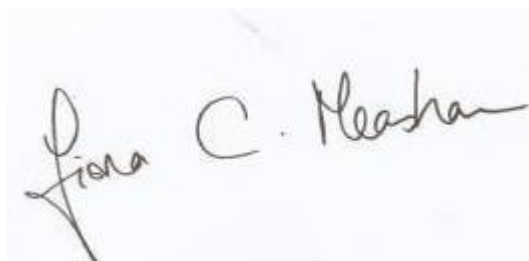
	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 31 March 2024 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 31 March 2023 £
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	2	3,807	57,250	<b>61,057</b>	6,345	14,500	<b>20,845</b>
Charitable activities	2	77,761	20,339	<b>98,100</b>	8,798	-	<b>8,798</b>
Other income	2	2,655	-	<b>2,655</b>	36	-	<b>36</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>84,223</b>	<b>77,589</b>	<b>161,812</b>	<b>15,179</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>29,679</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds		1,552	-	<b>1,552</b>	188	-	<b>188</b>
Charitable activities	3	92,455	81,740	<b>174,195</b>	32,454	31,437	<b>63,891</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>94,007</b>	<b>81,740</b>	<b>175,747</b>	<b>32,642</b>	<b>31,437</b>	<b>64,079</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before transfers</b>		<b>(9,784)</b>	<b>(4,151)</b>	<b>(13,935)</b>	<b>(17,463)</b>	<b>(16,937)</b>	<b>(34,400)</b>
<b>Transfer between funds</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(9,784)</b>	<b>(4,151)</b>	<b>(13,935)</b>	<b>(17,463)</b>	<b>(16,937)</b>	<b>(34,400)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Total funds brought forward		69,409	33,063	<b>102,472</b>	86,872	50,000	<b>136,872</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>59,625</b>	<b>28,912</b>	<b>88,537</b>	<b>69,409</b>	<b>33,063</b>	<b>102,472</b>

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

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Notes	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2023 £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	7	87,481	60,208
Cash at bank and in hand	9	56,832	82,356
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>144,313</b>	<b>142,564</b>
<hr/>			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	55,776	40,092
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>		<b>88,537</b>	<b>102,472</b>
<hr/>			
<b>Total net assets / (liabilities)</b>		<b>88,537</b>	<b>102,472</b>
<hr/>			
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>			
Restricted funds	10	28,912	33,063
Unrestricted funds	10	59,625	69,409
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>88,537</b>	<b>102,472</b>

Signed on behalf of the Trustees of The Loop Drug Checking Service on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025.



Fiona Measham  
Chair

## Notes to the accounts

### Note 1: Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 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), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The charity has applied the exemption available to small charities in the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and does not include a Statement of Cash Flows in these Financial Statements.

The Loop Drug Checking Service 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 notes.

#### b) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### c) Income

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

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

Donations are recognised when the charity receives the funds.

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

**d) Fund 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 funds which the donor has specified are solely to be used for particular activities.

**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) Expenditure**

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 recognised reliability.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

All expenditure is shown inclusive of VAT.

**g) Allocation of support costs**

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

**h) Operating Leases**

The charity classifies the lease of photocopying and printing equipment as operating leases; the title to the equipment remains with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**i) Tangible Fixed Assets**

Individual assets costing £550 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated evenly over their estimated useful economic lives, as follows:

Leasehold improvements	10% straightline
Fixtures and fitting	33% reducing balance
Computers	33% reducing balance

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

The gain or less arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the assets, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

**j) Impairment of fixed assets**

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

**k) Debtors**

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

**l) Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probable 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 provision re normally recognised at their settle met amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

**m) Corporation Tax**

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

**n) Key estimates and accounting judgements**

In applying the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions in determining the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities. The Trustees' judgements, estimates and assumptions are based on the best and most reliable evidence available at the time when the decisions are made, and are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be applicable. Due to the inherent subjectivity involved in making such judgements, estimates ad assumptions, the actual results and outcomes may differ.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to the 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 revision and future periods, if the revision affects both current and future periods.

**Note 2: Analysis of income**

	Unrestricted funds	2024 Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
<b>Donations and legacies:</b>			
Donations	3,807	-	3,807
Grants			
Tudor Trust	-	50,000	50,000
Purple Guide	-	7,250	7,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,807</b>	<b>57,250</b>	<b>61,057</b>
Charitable activities	77,761	20,339	98,100
Miscellaneous income	2,655	-	2,655
<b>Total income</b>	<b>84,223</b>	<b>77,589</b>	<b>161,812</b>

**Prior period**

	29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
<b>Donations and legacies:</b>			
Donations	6,345	-	6,345
Grants			
Tudor Trust	-	-	-
Purple Guide	-	14,500	14,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,345</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>20,845</b>
Charitable activities	8,798	-	8,798
Miscellaneous income	36	-	36
<b>Total income</b>	<b>15,179</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>29,679</b>

**Note 3: Analysis of expenditure**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Staff costs	116,151	37,260
Consultancy/Professional Fees	436	3,282
Travel and subsistence	15,284	2,180
Licences	2,742	
Rent	930	
Volunteer Expenses	1,589	422
Equipment	-	2,175
Freelance Staff	7,512	4,750
Other Service Delivery Costs	224	-
Bad debts	-	2,430
Miscellaneous cost	2,030	36
Insurance	15,965	7,630
Irrecoverable VAT	130	
	<b>162,993</b>	<b>60,165</b>
Share of support costs (see note 4)	10,467	3,226
Share of governance costs (see note 4)	735	500
	<b>174,195</b>	<b>63,891</b>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	92,455	32,454
Restricted funds	81,740	31,437
	<b>174,195</b>	<b>63,891</b>

#### Note 4: Allocation of Governance and Other Support Costs

The total support costs and overheads attributable to charitable activity is apportioned as shown below:

	<b>Support Costs</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Accountancy Fees	5,126	5,126
Office costs	5,341	5,341
	<b>10,467</b>	<b>10,467</b>

#### Governance Costs

	<b>£</b>
Independent Examination	735
	<b>735</b>

#### *Prior period: 29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023*

	<b>Support Costs</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Accountancy Fees	2,589	2,589
Office costs	637	637
	<b>3,226</b>	<b>3,226</b>

<b>Governance Costs</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£
Independent Examination	500
	<u>500</u>
	<u><u>500</u></u>

**Note 5: Details of certain items of expenditure**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023</b>
	£	£
Independent examiner's fees	735	500
<b>Total</b>	<u>735</u>	<u>500</u>
	<u><u>735</u></u>	<u><u>500</u></u>

**Note 6: Employees**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023</b>
	£	£
Salaries and wages	102,823	36,788
Social security costs	4,826	3,801
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	1,959	395
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<u>109,608</u>	<u>40,984</u>
	<u><u>109,608</u></u>	<u><u>40,984</u></u>

No employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) for the reporting period of more than £60,000

## 6.2 Average head count in the year

	2024	29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023
	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

## 6.3 Key Management Personnel

The Trustees consider its key management personnel to comprise of the Trustees and the Chief Executive.

The remuneration of the key management personnel in the year totalled £56,958 (part year ended 31 March 2023: £30,701).

## Note 7: Debtors

### Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	58,352	52,152
Accrued income	14,355	-
Prepayments	14,774	8,056
<b>Total</b>	<b>87,481</b>	<b>60,208</b>

## Note 8: Creditors & Accruals

**Analysis of creditors: falling due within one year**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade creditors	3,959	1,666
Accruals	17,066	500
Taxation and social security costs	4,645	(2,706)
Deferred income	20,846	32,547
Other creditors	1	-
VAT Liability	9,259	8,085
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>55,776</u></b>	<b><u>40,092</u></b>
	<b>£</b>	
Balance at 1 April 2023	32,547	
Amounts released to income earned from charitable activities	(32,547)	
Amount deferred in period	20,846	
Balance at 31 March 2024	<b><u><u>20,846</u></u></b>	

**Note 9: Cash at bank and in hand**

	2024	29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023
	£	£
Current Account	55,567	71,720
PayPal	1,265	10,636
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>56,832</u></b>	<b><u>82,356</u></b>

**Note 10: Charity funds**

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
<b><i>Restricted Funds</i></b>				
Tudor Trust	19,299	50,000	(56,958)	12,341
Events Industry Forum (EIF Purple Guide Grant)	13,764	7,250	(19,838)	1,176
Bristol DCS	-	20,339	(4,944)	15,395
	<b><u>33,063</u></b>	<b><u>77,589</u></b>	<b><u>(81,740)</u></b>	<b><u>28,912</u></b>
<b><i>Unrestricted Funds</i></b>				
	69,409	84,223	(94,007)	59,625
	<b><u>69,409</u></b>	<b><u>84,223</u></b>	<b><u>(94,007)</u></b>	<b><u>59,625</u></b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b><u>102,472</u></b>	<b><u>161,812</u></b>	<b><u>(175,747)</u></b>	<b><u>88,537</u></b>

**Note 10: Charity funds (continued)**

**Prior period**

	<b>Balance at 29 September 2022</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March 2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
Tudor Trust	50,000	-	(30,701)	19,299
Events Industry Forum (EIF Purple Guide Grant)	-	14,500	(736)	13,764
	<b>50,000</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>(31,437)</b>	<b>33,063</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	86,872	15,179	(32,642)	69,409
	<b>86,872</b>	<b>15,179</b>	<b>(32,642)</b>	<b>69,409</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>136,872</b>	<b>29,679</b>	<b>(64,079)</b>	<b>102,472</b>

**Tudor Trust**

The Tudor Trust is supporting the organisation over a period of three years, commencing in 2022, and with provision of funding for core costs towards the salary of the CEO. This is to enable the development and growth of The Loop as a national charity over this time period.

**Events Industry Forum (EIF Purple Guide Grant)**

The Events Industry Forum supports the promotion of good practice within the events industry, and through the Purple Guide grants invests in projects that the EIF Board considers will benefit the industry, and in turn members of the public. The Loop has received funding for one year to increase our capacity and resources to deliver training and equip members of the workforce within the events industry with knowledge and understanding of drug use and related harm reduction.

**Note 10: Charity funds (continued)**  
**Bristol DCS**

Bristol DCS - regular drug checking service commissioned and contracted by Bristol City Council. The monthly service delivers public facing drug checking, combining the testing of submitted substances of concern with direct and individualised harm reduction interventions in the form of a brief intervention with healthcare professionals. In addition, harm reduction communications are generated and shared with local stakeholders and wider public to inform and alert, when necessary.

**Note 11: Analysis of net assets between funds**

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 represented by:			
Cash at bank and in hand	27,920	28,912	56,832
Current assets/(liabilities)	31,705	-	31,705
	<b>59,625</b>	<b>28,912</b>	<b>88,537</b>

***Prior period: 29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023***

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 represented by:			
Cash at bank and in hand	49,294	33,063	82,357
Current assets/(liabilities)	20,115	-	20,115
	<b>69,409</b>	<b>33,063</b>	<b>102,472</b>

**Note 12: Trustees remuneration and expenses**

One Trustee received payment of £150 for delivery of a training course. No other Trustees received remuneration or expenses

No Trustees received any expenses during the period.

### **Note 13: Related party transactions**

There were two related party transactions during the period as detailed below:

Fiona Measham's daughter was paid £300 for delivery of two courses. In addition her partner was paid £808 for training delivery and associated expenses.

During the period £15,454 (inc VAT) was paid to the University of Liverpool for secondment fees for Fiona Measham with the purpose being to engage academic research expertise into The Loop. This has been approved by the Trustees and, in line with our Conflict of Interest policy, Fiona Measham did not participate in these discussions.

### **Note 14: Donated facilities and services**

#### ***Volunteers***

Our volunteer team is comprised of 40 senior team members, and c.250 general volunteers. Volunteers work across our 4 workstreams; Healthcare, Chemistry, Research and Media/Communications. Our volunteers provide direct support (in-person) in relation to our service activity and delivery, and support. This includes undertaking drug testing and drug checking, harm reduction interventions and messaging, outreach and engagement through our social media platforms and profile, and all compliant to regulatory requirements. In addition, and often remote and project related, our volunteers assist in our organisational development.

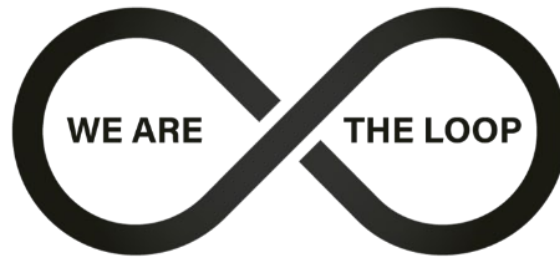
**THE LOOP DRUG CHECKING SERVICE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1200533

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# Accounts

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**The Loop Drug Checking Service**

**Charity Registration Number: 1200533**

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements  
for the period 29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023**

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## **Administrative Information**

Trustees:	Professor Fiona Measham (Chair)	3 September 2022
	Darren Knight	3 September 2022
	Jon Drape	3 September 2022
	Philip Kolvin KC	14 January 2023

Chief Executive Officer: Katy Porter BEM

Charity Address: George House Trust,  
75-77 Ardwick Green North  
Manchester  
M12 6FX

Bankers: Barclays Bank

Accountant: Beyond Profit Ltd  
G104 Bolton Arena  
Arena Approach  
Horwich  
Bolton  
BL6 6LB

Independent Examiner: It Doesn't Have to Cost the Earth Ltd  
47 St Dunstons Close  
Worcester  
WR5 2AJ

## Trustees Annual Report

The Loop Drug Checking Service is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the Charity Registration Number 1200533. The governing document of the charity is a constitution dated 29 September 2022.

**The Loop Drug Checking Service** is a pioneering health service which exists to reduce the potential harms related to drug use and does so by generating and disseminating accurate information on substances of concern and in circulation, and providing advice, both direct and indirect, to the public.

Our **Harm Reduction services** bring together technologies and evidence-based interventions for the purpose to inform, prevent harm, and improve the health, well-being and safety of all in our communities and society.

### What we do and why?

Drug-related deaths are at an all-time high in the UK<sup>1</sup> and associated harms have, and continue, to increase in the UK since 2012, with mis-sold drugs, as well as high and variable strength substances, as key contributing factors. There was a total of 4,907 drug-related deaths in England and Wales in 2022 (4,859 in 2021, 4,393 in 2019), almost half of which were for opiates. Total ecstasy-related deaths reported were 51, a decrease from a spike seen in 2018 (92 reported deaths), in part due to lower pill strength combined with post lockdown lowered footfall at nightclubs but remaining a significant increase from the 8 deaths reported in 2010. Cocaine-related deaths rose to 857 in 2022, which represents the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive annual rise.<sup>2</sup> Hospital admissions for cocaine and MDMA are also rapidly escalating.

There is also greater potential exposure and access to an ever-increasing number of drugs<sup>3</sup>. In December 2021, the UK government published its 10-year Drug Strategy calling for 'innovation' to help reduce increasing drug harms. Drug checking and the work of The Loop is exactly that: an innovative healthcare response to the risks associated with drug use which is shown to reduce harm.

The Loop's team of chemists, all volunteers, test substances of concern in mobile laboratories; these test results are then embedded in individually tailored healthcare consultations delivered by our volunteer health professionals to service users; and research and evaluation are conducted by our volunteer research academics/social scientists. Our drug checking can also contribute to the national surveillance of illicit drug markets, which allows more targeted interventions when responding to drug use and can be disseminated through social media to reach a wide audience.

More than 10 peer reviewed academic papers have been published which feature The Loop's work ([Publications — The Loop \(wearetheloo.org\)](https://www.ouretheloo.org/publications)) evaluating its drug checking and associated harm reduction services, drug trends and broader socio-cultural and policy contexts.

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<sup>1</sup> Home Office (2022), Drugs Misuse: Findings from the 2018/19 Crime Survey for England and Wales, Statistical Bulletin 21/19, London: Home Office:

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics, (2023), Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales: 2019 registrations, Statistical Bulletin, London: ONS:  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoninginenglandandwales/2022registrations>

There is a growing evidence base showing that drug checking:

- Leads to reduced drug use,
- Results in lower levels of polydrug use,
- Has a lasting, positive health impact on service users.

It is The Loop's mission and vision to have far greater reach into communities and includes a commitment to equality and diversity. For us this means developing a nationwide network of drug checking services and related harm reduction hubs to distribute information that is non-judgemental, accessible and available to all. This means services and information that is available throughout the year, freely available in local communities, and relevant to all people, whether they or others are considering taking drugs or are occasional, regular or dependent drug users, and in need of advice or support.

We are working to expand what we do to include regular community-based drug checking, additional to continued event-based testing. This is intended to be a change in reach, working within and with communities, and we anticipate reaching a diverse demographic and supporting them in access and use of drug checking services. In ensuring this can potentially be universally accessible in future, we are considerate of barriers, such as literacy levels, digital poverty, fear of stigma or arrest, and problematic social and community connections, which may mean that contacting and engaging those in most need our harm reduction services can be more challenging.

### **Who we are?**

The Loop was the first organisation to deliver drug checking in the UK, first doing so as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2016 and has since gone on to deliver healthcare consultations to over 10,000 service users. We are now in a period of growth, having been granted charity status last year, and appointing the first staff member of the organisation, Katy Porter, as CEO, who joined in September 2022. Katy has been joined by another 2 staff members, an Administrator, and a Training Coordinator, with posts supported by grant funding. The Loop has a volunteer base of 285 people across the UK, and with 40 of these forming a senior team, focused across four workstreams (Healthcare, Chemistry, Research, Media and Communications).

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reports directly to the Board of Trustee. The Loop has a registered base in Manchester, is hosted by George House Trust, and operates across the UK in its delivery and development.

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Charity's governing body is the Board of Trustees, whose members are trustees under charity law. Trustees are appointed for a 3-year period following recruitment procedures, due diligence and ratification of appointment by the Board. Trustees meet at least 4 times per year. These will be a minimum of twice in-person, and with two meetings held online.

At year end, the Board comprised of four trustees, and with a commitment to grow the Board to seven trustees following a skills appraisal by the Board and CEO.

Conflicts, or declarations, of interest are requested and recorded through an annual declaration, and updates requested at each Board meeting. Any declared conflicts of interest would be recorded; these would then be monitored and managed as necessary.

The Board is confident that the Charity conforms to and is compliant with the Charity Commission's guidance, 'The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do' (July 2015), and works under the Charity Governance Code (2018).

### **Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit**

**The Loop complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and all other relevant legislation or regulations, and the Board operates to ensure that the organisation pursues its charitable objects as per constitution and ensures that it uses its resources in pursuance only of those objects being:**

*To protect and safeguard the health and promote the reduction of harm to the public who use psychoactive drugs in particular but not exclusively by;*

- a. drug checking and the provision of non-judgemental harm reduction information and advice to individual service users;*
- b. the provision of information on substances of concern and associated harm reduction information and advice to partner agencies, stakeholders and wider drug using communities, including through public health messaging, early warning systems and alerts;*
- c. training for organisations in the education, health and events sectors in harm reduction, drugs awareness, responding to critical incidents and delivering support services;*
- d. developing and promoting policy and strategies to reduce drug-related harm and promote health;*
- e. participating in any other health promotion activities that contribute to the reduction of drug-related harm in the community.*
- f. operating at all times in accordance with the law of England and Wales.*

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

### **Organisational Strategy and decision making**

In 2022/23, the Board agreed the Strategy for the year ahead, and this was approved in December 2022. This built on consultation with volunteers, staff and partners in the preparation for charity status, and will be further reviewed in 2024.

The strategy informs strategic goals and provides a framework for growth, development and delivery. Operational and day-to-day decision making is delegated to the CEO and the staff and senior team.

Major new initiatives are considered with the Board for approval. Trustees receive in advance of each Board meeting comprehensive and detailed written reports from the CEO. These reports describe activities of the Charity, and inform for growth, stability, and future planning. Quality assurance, safeguarding, and risk management are essential considerations of the Board, and are captured in the Risk Register. The trustees regularly receive copies of management accounts, along with notes on variations between budgeted and actual expenditure, and any bad debts. At the meetings the CEO will guide the Trustees through these documents.

## **Risk Management**

Potential areas of risk to the Charity are identified, recorded and reviewed by the Board at every meeting, assisted by the CEO. The Risk Register incorporates financial, operational risk and external risk, assessing likelihood of occurring, impact, and mitigation to reduce likelihood and the impact. Whilst recognising that no organisation can ever be risk free, the Board of Trustees consider that the range of measures and controls in place continue to reduce to an acceptable level various risks faced by The Loop.

## **Review of Activities and Achievements**

### **Healthcare and Harm Reduction**

The Loop's healthcare team, which is made up of medical practitioners, health professionals and substance misuse practitioners, delivered harm reduction services at four events across England in 2022/23. Harm reduction interventions are informed by the testing of The Loop, and are able to contextualise individualised and wider messaging in an understanding of drug trends and knowledge of substances of concern in circulation. The Loop typically reaches 10% of attendees at an event through direct contact; these will include consultations and informal conversations at a location within the event held over the course of 2-4 days.

Services are designed to emphasise that there is all drug use carries risk, there is no such thing as safe drug use, and to ensure instead that people engaged in drug use are able to make informed decisions and have access to confidential support if they need it.

### **Drug Checking and Drug Testing**

Drug testing was completed by The Loop's chemists at four events in 2022; the back of house testing analysed substances of concern obtained within festivals and was delivered with the police and in partnership with the event. In the delivery of our back of house drug testing services, the public cannot submit substances for testing. Instead, substances come from onsite agencies including from confiscations, seizures, ground finds and medical incidents which are prioritised. The results were able to be disseminated to support services and used for public-facing alerts or messaging. Our testing of nearly 2,000 substances of concern over the course of these events in 2022 resulted in four public facing alerts, disseminated through social media channels. These alerts inform stakeholders and members of the public, both attending the event and more widely, advising of significant threat posed by a substance and by providing factual information, including accurate image and related harm reduction advice. With a following of over 55,000 people on Instagram, over 35,000 on Facebook and over 32,000 on X (twitter), this assists in significant reach in messaging beyond each event.

Our aim through drug testing is to reduce drug-related harm in a number of ways, including to:

- a) identify adulterants to reduce the risk of poisoning from unknowingly consuming adulterated substances and by reducing the risk of combination consumption of contraindicated illicit or pharmaceutical drugs;
- b) assess strength to reduce the risk of overdose from unknowingly consuming high and variable strength substances;
- c) effectively communicate risk more broadly – eg. related to polydrug use, alcohol, dehydration, tolerance, medical conditions and other risk factors – through brief interventions with health professionals; and
- d) disseminate test results to onsite support services, offsite stakeholders, early warning systems, and wider drug using communities in the event of public-facing alerts and infographics.

Our preparation for our first regular drug checking service, commissioned by Bristol City Council, continued. and with focus on the reapplication for a Home Office licence to possess controlled drugs. This was due to the Council stating that the previously obtained licence, could not be used and was required be re-issued in the contract holders name, The Loop Drug Checking Service. As an existing licence holder, the change in our legal entity also required us to re-apply for a new licence in the name of the new charity. We worked with the Home Office throughout this time in completing the application process and ensuring our proposed use of the licence, drug checking services, will operate in line with Government policy.

## **Research**

The Loop is an evidence-making action research project, as well as an evidence-based health service. With a senior team of researchers and academics led by two university professors, our services are evaluated and produce peer-reviewed publications which contribute to the emerging international evidence base on drug checking and harm reduction more widely. Over the course of 2022/23, ethical approval was sought from the University of Liverpool for our research action project, and has subsequently been granted for a 5-year period (2023-28).

In November 2022, The Loop's research was published in a special issue of the journal *Drugs, Habits and Social Policy* focused on drug checking (edited by Chair of the Board Professor Measham), and analysed the provision of drug checking services available to hundreds of thousands of festival-goers over three years (2016-2018). Our research<sup>3</sup> has found that drug checking services at festivals reduce the possibility of drug-related harm, provide opportunities for targeted health interventions amongst higher risk drug users and, on balance, do not result in increased quantities of drugs being consumed.

The landmark research found that, after people been given information by drug checking services, when the drug was not what they expected, nearly two thirds of people disposed of the drug. When the drug was what they expected, almost half of people said they would reduce the amount of the drug they consumed, placing them at reduced risk of harm.

The study was the first of its kind that assessed both the positive and negative impact of providing drug checking across a three-year period. The three-year research project found no evidence that drug checking provision increased drug-taking at festivals, with only 1.2% of respondents whose tested drug was identified as what they expected saying they intended to increase their dosage as a result of checking. In contrast, 48.7% said they would reduce their dosage, of those whose tested substance was as expected.

## **Training**

The Loop has previously offered training to organisations and events, many of them outdoor events and music festivals, but has been limited in its time and capacity to offer or develop this in a significant way. In early 2023, The Loop was awarded a grant from EIF to support us in developing our training programme, ensuring the following:

- furthering our charitable aims of expanding knowledge and application of a harm reduction approach towards drug-related issues,
- this aspect of our charitable activity is sustainable in its delivery going forwards,
- training is accessible and affordable.

We have recruited a part-time training coordinator, to manage the enquiries, bookings, and promote our training courses to a wider audience, expand our training capacity, and develop and quality assure our training offer.

All our courses have now had their content reviewed and updated, with a training brochure designed to include a summary of all courses. Flexibility, and the capacity, to deliver online or in-person, and to individuals or groups, is now in place, with significantly higher numbers to be trained in the future by The Loop.

<sup>3</sup> Measham, F. and Simmons, H. (2022), Who uses drug checking services? Assessing uptake and outcomes at English festivals in 2018, *Drugs, Habits and Social Policy*, special issue on drug checking, 23(4). <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/DHS-02-2022-0008/full/html>

## Future Plans

We will deliver high quality, accessible, evidence-based and evidence-making drug checking services to disseminate harm reduction information to individuals, communities, service providers and commissioners, and policy makers.

This is for the following purpose:

- *Early intervention and prevention:* A national 'early warning system' is in place, alerting the public when substances of concern are identified, incorporating drug checking, preventing harm, and ensuring people who choose to take drugs can take them more safely.
- *Community driven approaches:* we understand and work alongside people to develop our work and expertise in person-centred interventions. People who take drugs, or have taken drugs in the past, can be honest about their experiences and not judged and assist in reducing stigma.
- *Research & development for impactful response:* we inform and develop our work and influence and effect wider system change and practice to ensure legislation and policy context allows ongoing drug checking, its expansion across the UK (in line with our mission statement), and national standards for drug checking are in place.

Our work will focus on drug checking being an established, recognised healthcare and harm reduction service, adequately funded in the UK. We plan to implement and commence a minimum of three commissioned regular, community based drug checking services during 2024, all Home Office-licenced, and for these to be funded for a minimum of 12 months.

We will deliver these by developing and supporting a dedicated team of professional chemists, healthcare staff, and researchers, guided by international expertise and experience, working to establish drug checking and harm reduction services, responsive to emerging concerns in the UK.

The Loop is a leading organisation in the development and delivery of drug checking but cannot, and does not wish to, operate in isolation. We are more effective, have greater impact, and achieve better outcomes when working with others and we will continue to work in partnership and actively seek collaboration. Local Authorities, Public Health, and the police, are essential stakeholders in our work, alongside the alcohol and other drugs sector, higher education institutions, research, policy and practice NGOs, the night time economy and the events industry.

We will continue to review and develop our testing techniques and analytics, ensuring these continue to enable the mobile, rapid and accurate results we require. As our drug checking services and operations expand, as does the need for available equipment and the increased complexity of our logistics of our delivery. Investment will be required to expand

our testing capacity as it relates to our resources, both in terms of personnel and our equipment and assets.

Fundraising will be a feature of our work in the coming year, ensuring we have the funds to expand our services. This will relate to our infrastructure and staffing, and our equipment. This will be completed by the organisation, and focus on individual giving and registration for gift aid, and seeking further charitable grants in support of our work.

More information about our current services and developments for the charity can be found on our website at [www.weretheloop.org](http://www.weretheloop.org)

## **Financial review**

The Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) including an Income and Expenditure account set out on page xx, shows total income of £29,679 and total expenditure £64,079. This resulted in deficit of £34,400. However the previous CIC had total funds of £136,872 which were brought into the charity. Part of these funds included a grant of £50,000 towards the costs of the Chief Executive.

Total funds of the charity at the end of the period were £102,472 which comprised of £69,409 of unrestricted funds and £33,063 of restricted funds.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Board's policy is to increase Revenue Reserves to ensure that fluctuations in future income do not threaten the financial stability of the organisation. The uncertainties include grants from statutory bodies.

Revenue Reserve is needed to provide funds which can be made available for specific projects, and to assist with unforeseen economic events. The Trustees recognise that a level of this reserve should be gradually increased to the equivalent of three months' total expenditure calculated and reviewed annually.

Whilst outgoings are low, there is a need to consider the expansion of the organisation. The reserve is being built up to the desired level in stages consistent with the Charity's overall financial position and its need to maintain its activities.

At the end of the period the total funds of the charity were £102,472. Of this £69,409 was unrestricted with free reserves also being £69,409. This equates to just over 1 year of unrestricted expenditure.

## Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

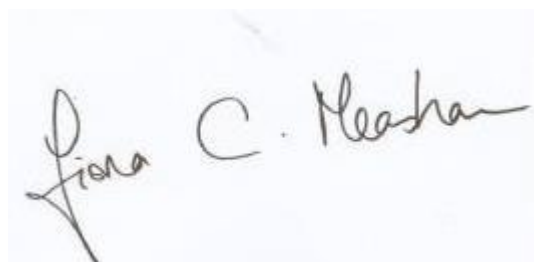
The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, of the charity for that period. In preparing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

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

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website in accordance with legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements.

Approved by the trustees on 30 January 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona C. Measham". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned on a light blue background.

Fiona Measham  
Chair

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Loop Drug Checking Service**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Loop Drug Checking Service ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 March 2023.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

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

1. The accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
2. The accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
3. The accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

*Teresa Fennell*

**Teresa Fennell, ACMA CGMA**

**It Doesn't Have to Cost the Earth Ltd**

47 St Dunstons Close, Worcester, WR5 2AJ

Date: 31/01/2024

## Statement of Financial Activities for the period 29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023

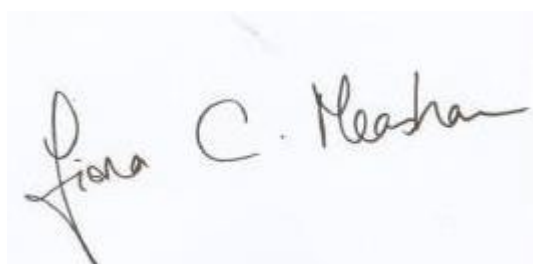
	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 31 March 2023 £
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>				
Donations and legacies	2	6,345	14,500	<b>20,845</b>
Charitable activities	2	8,798	-	<b>8,798</b>
Other income	2	36	-	<b>36</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>15,179</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>29,679</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Raising funds		188	-	<b>188</b>
Charitable activities	3	32,454	31,437	<b>63,890</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>32,642</b>	<b>31,437</b>	<b>64,079</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before transfers</b>				
		<b>(17,463)</b>	<b>(16,937)</b>	<b>(34,400)</b>
<b>Transfer between funds</b>				
		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>				
		<b>(17,463)</b>	<b>(16,937)</b>	<b>(34,400)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>				
Total funds brought forward from CIC		86,872	50,000	<b>136,872</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>69,409</b>	<b>33,063</b>	<b>102,472</b>

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

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

	Notes	31 March 2023
		£
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	7	60,208
Cash at bank and in hand	9	82,357
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>142,565</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	40,092
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>		<b>102,472</b>
<b>Total net assets / (liabilities)</b>		<b>102,472</b>
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>		
Restricted funds	10	33,063
Unrestricted funds	10	69,409
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>102,472</b>

Signed on behalf of the Trustees of The Loop Drug Checking Service on 30 January 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona C. Measham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F'.

Fiona Measham  
Chair

## Notes to the accounts

### Note 1: Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 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), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The charity has applied the exemption available to small charities in the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and does not include a Statement of Cash Flows in these Financial Statements.

The Loop Drug Checking Service 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 notes.

#### b) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### c) Income

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

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

Donations are recognised when the charity receives the funds.

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

#### d) Fund 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 funds which the donor has specified are solely to be used for particular activities.

#### 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)**  
**Expenditure**

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 recognised reliably.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

All expenditure is shown inclusive of VAT.

**g) Allocation of support costs**

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

**h) Operating Leases**

The charity classifies the lease of photocopying and printing equipment as operating leases; the title to the equipment remains with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**i) Tangible Fixed Assets**

Individual assets costing £550 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated evenly over their estimated useful economic lives, as follows:

Leasehold improvements	10% straight-line
Fixtures and fitting	33% reducing balance
Computers	33% reducing balance

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

The gain or less arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the assets, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

**j) Impairment of fixed assets**

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

**k) Debtors**

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

### **l) Creditors and provisions**

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 provision re normally recognised at their settle met amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

### **m) Corporation Tax**

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

### **n) Key estimates and accounting judgements**

In applying the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions in determining the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities. The Trustees' judgements, estimates and assumptions are based on the best and most reliable evidence available at the time when the decisions are made, and are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be applicable. Due to the inherent subjectivity involved in making such judgements, estimates ad assumptions, the actual results and outcomes may differ.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to the 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 revision and future periods, if the revision affects both current and future periods.

### **Note 2: Analysis of income**

	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023</b>		
	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total funds</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Donations and legacies:</b>			
Donations	6,345	-	6,345
Grants			
Purple Guide	-	14,500	14,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,345</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>20,845</b>
Charitable activities	8,798	-	<b>8,798</b>
Miscellaneous income	36	-	<b>36</b>
<b>Total income</b>	<b>15,179</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>29,679</b>

### Note 3: Analysis of expenditure

	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023 £</b>
Staff costs	37,260
Consultancy/Professional Fees	3,282
Travel and subsistence	2,180
Volunteer Expenses	422
Equipment	2,175
Freelance Staff	4,750
Other Service Delivery Costs	-
Bad debts	2,430
Miscellaneous cost	36
Insurance	7,631
	<u><b>60,165</b></u>
Share of support costs (see note 4)	3,226
Share of governance costs (see note 4)	500
	<u><b>63,890</b></u>
Analysis by fund	
Unrestricted funds	32,454
Restricted funds	31,437
	<u><b>63,890</b></u>

### Note 4: Allocation of Governance and Other Support

The total support costs and overheads attributable to charitable activity is apportioned as shown below:

	<b>Support Costs</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Accountancy Fees	2,589	2,589
Office costs	637	637
	<u><b>3,226</b></u>	<u><b>3,226</b></u>

	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023 £</b>
<b>Governance Costs</b>	
Independent Examination	500
	<u><b>500</b></u>

## Note 5: Details of certain items of expenditure

	2023
	£
Independent examiner's fees	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>

## Note 6: Employees

	29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023
	£
Salaries and wages	36,788
Social security costs	3,801
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	395
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>40,983</b>

No employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) for the reporting period of more than £60,000

### 8.2 Average head count in the year

	29 Septemb er 2022 to 31 March 2023
	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>

### 8.3 Key Management Personnel

The Trustees consider its key management personnel to comprise of the Trustees and the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive started their role on 12 September 2022.

The remuneration of the key management personnel is:

	29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023
	£
Salaries and wages	27,180
Social security costs	3,193
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	328
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>30,701</b>

## Note 7: Debtors

### Amounts falling due within one year

	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023</b>
	£
Trade debtors	52,152
Prepayments	8,056
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>60,208</u></b>

## Note 8: Creditors & Accruals

### Analysis of creditors: falling due within one year

	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023</b>
	£
Trade creditors	1,666
Accruals	500
Taxation and social security costs	(2,706)
Deferred income	32,547
VAT Liability	8,085
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>40,092</u></b>

	£
Balance at 29 September 2022	-
Amounts released to income earned from charitable activities	-
Amount deferred in period	32,547
Balance at 31 March 2023	<b><u>32,547</u></b>

## Note 9: Cash at bank and in hand

	<b>29 September 2022 to 31 March 2023</b>
	£
Current Account	71,720
Paypal	10,636
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>82,357</u></b>

## Note 10: Charity funds

	Balance at 29 September 2022	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
Tudor Trust	50,000	-	(30,701)	19,299
Events Industry Forum (EIF Purple Guide Grant)	-	14,500	(736)	13,764
	<b>50,000</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>(31,437)</b>	<b>33,063</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>86,872</b>	<b>15,179</b>	<b>(32,642)</b>	<b>69,409</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>136,872</b>	<b>29,679</b>	<b>(64,079)</b>	<b>102,472</b>

The opening funds are the funds that were carried forward from the CIC when in covered to the charity on 29 September 2022.

### Tudor Trust

The Tudor Trust is supporting the organisation over a period of three years, commencing in 2022, and with provision of funding for core costs towards the salary of the CEO. This is to enable the development and growth of The Loop as a national charity over this time period.

**Events Industry Forum (EIF Purple Guide Grant)** The Events Industry Forum supports the promotion of good practice within the events industry, and through the Purple Guide grants invests in projects that the EIF Board considers will benefit the industry, and in turn members of the public. The Loop has received funding for one year to increase our capacity and resources to deliver training and equip members of the workforce within the events industry with knowledge and understanding of drug use and related harm reduction.

## Note 11: Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 represented by:			
Cash at bank and in hand	49,294	33,063	82,357
Current assets/(liabilities)	20,115	-	20,115
	<b>69,409</b>	<b>33,063</b>	<b>102,472</b>

## Note 12: Trustees remuneration and expenses

The trustees, nor any persons connected with them received no remuneration or benefits for the performance of their duties.

No Trustees received any expenses during the period.

**Note 13: Related party transactions**

There was one related party transaction during the period as detailed below:

Darren Knight is a Trustee of the Charity and also the Chief Executive of the George House Trust. The George House Trust provided registered office services for the period and charged the charity £60 for this service.

**Note 14: Donated facilities and services*****Volunteers***

Our volunteer team is comprised of 40 senior team members, and c.250 general volunteers. Volunteers work across our 4 workstreams; Healthcare, Chemistry, Research and Media/Communications. Our volunteers provide direct support (in-person) in relation to our service activity and delivery, and support. This includes undertaking drug testing and drug checking, harm reduction interventions and messaging, outreach and engagement through our social media platforms and profile, and all compliant to regulatory requirements. In addition, and often remote and project related, our volunteers assist in our organisational development.


# Statutory Report FYE 31 March 2023 - SIGNED final

Final Audit Report

2024-01-31

Created:	2024-01-31
By:	Emma Willder (emma@beyondprofituk.co.uk)
Status:	Signed
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