DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

England & Wales · Charity number 229119

Details

Other names	COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR DURHAM COUNTY LIMITED, DURHAM RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIMITED, THE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE FOR DURHAM COUNTY LIMITED, DURHAM RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	00309329
Registered	1964-01-28
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Unit 8 St. Stephens Court Low Willington Industrial Esta Willington Crook DL15 0BF
Phone	01388742040
Email	finance@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk
Website	www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE THE BENEFIT OF THE INHABITANTS OF COUNTY DURHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREAS WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, RACE OR OF POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS OR OTHER OPINIONS, BY ASSOCIATING TOGETHER THE SAID INHABITANTS AND THE STATUTORY AUTHORITIES, VOLUNTARY AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS IN A COMMON EFFORT TO ADVANCE THE WELFARE OF THE SAID INHABITANTS WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THEIR CONDITIONS OF LIFE, THROUGH ANY OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING: (A) THE RELIEF OF POVERTY; (B) THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION; (C) THE ADVANCEMENT OF HEALTH (D) THE RELIEF OF UNEMPLOYMENT; (E) THE PROMOTION OF URBAN AND RURAL REGENERATION; (F) SUCH OTHER CHARITABLE PURPOSES AS MAY FROM TIME TO TIME BE DETERMINED. THE CHARITY SHALL BE NON-PARTY POLITICAL AND NON-SECTARIAN IN RELIGION.

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Activities: Our main areas of activity are the provision of advice and support services for the voluntary and community sector; outreach work with community groups and individuals; assistance and advice services for volunteers; health and well-being initiatives for disadvantaged and/or isolated people; assistance for local communities in developing initiatives that help to sustain their communities.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Environment/conservation/heritage, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF DURHAM
- Durham

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£1,046,445	£1,152,645	£790,072	19
2024-03-31	£1,261,962	£957,813	£896,272	16
2023-03-31	£847,431	£936,197	£592,123	16
2022-03-31	£888,087	£667,528	£680,889	16
2021-03-31	£796,839	£654,581	£460,330	15

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
JANICE MARGARET WORTERS	Chair	
Angela Hawkes		2021-09-23
CLARICE ANNIE SMITH		2011-10-29
Elaine Kilgannon		2021-09-23
Ian Douglas Hunter Smart		2024-11-21
JOHN ROBINSON		
Karen Lesley Davison		2024-11-21
Linda Catherine Bird		2020-11-26
MICHAEL JOHN LITCHFIELD		2020-07-16
PATRICIA BUCKLEY-ATKINS		2018-09-11
PROFESSOR SARAH JANE BANKS		
Stephen Kumar Bhowmick		2025-11-20

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DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 229119

Accounts

Charity registration number 229119 (England and Wales)

Company registration number 00309329

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Professor SJ Banks	
	Mrs LC Bird	
	Mrs P Buckley-Atkins	
	Mrs KL Davison	(Appointed 21 November 2024)
	Mrs A Hawkes	
	Mr ID Hunter Smart	(Appointed 21 November 2024)
	Mrs E Kilgannon MBE	
	Mr MJ Litchfield	
	Mr J Robinson	
	Professor JFF Robinson	
	Mrs CA Smith	
	Mrs JM Worters MBE	
Secretary	Mrs KJ Burrows	
Charity number	229119	
Company number	00309329	
Registered office	8 St. Stephens Court Low Willington Crook County Durham England DL15 0BF	
Auditor	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear England NE2 1TJ	
Bankers	Lloyds Bank 54 Fawcett St Sunderland SR1 1SF	
Solicitors	Muckle LLP Time Central 32 Gallowgate Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 4BF	
	Swinburne Maddison LLP Venture House Aykley Heads Business Centre Durham DH1 5TS	

HAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

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DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

CHAIR'S REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The past 12 months have continued to present challenges for organisations within the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector whether by way of increased service demand or uncertainty about contracting or grant funding. Nevertheless, it is clear that the strong contribution by sector colleagues in supporting our communities with the needs they face, is never more needed. The VCSE continues to enable community led action as trusted sources of practical and emotional support to their communities, underpinning community resilience.

In response to this landscape, Durham Community Action maintained our close collaborative work with colleagues in the sector, and across the Public Sector. We continued to keep in touch with the organisations and groups that have played such a key role in sustaining community-led support activity, in response to the most pressing needs of their communities. 2024/25 was once again about supporting our communities to develop, and to grasp new opportunities that help to build community resilience.

Colleagues in the VCSE (large and small organisations) continue to face many challenges adapting service provision to meet community needs, amidst increasingly constrained funding and rising delivery costs. Staff recruitment and retention have continued to present difficulties, even where funding and investment is secured.

There are complex challenges for the VCSE and our partners in the public sector with respect to equitable provision of public services, including health, social care, and education, at a time when public finances are under growing pressure. These challenges include the undermining impacts of poverty, poor and worsening mental health and continued inflationary pressures faced by individuals and organisations alike. We continue to see increases in the numbers using food and fuel banks, and the growing number of new people seeking debt advice and other welfare or emotional support services. These challenges are highly visible and exacerbate the health inequalities evident across our communities.

Through all these challenges, volunteer led activity across the County continues to provide a safety net of support to those in need.

Our work during the year has been focused on supporting volunteer leaders to build capacity and take action with their communities.. We were able to collaborate with our colleagues in the VCSE, and in the public sector, to support communities with information, advice, and training; provide leadership and advocate for volunteer led delivery, and amplify the demonstrable contribution the voluntary sector makes to our local economy.

Addressing this broad spectrum of issues, our work themes continued to prioritise:

- Health and wellbeing & community resilience including mental health
- Volunteering
- Representation, advocacy, and voice for the VCSE
- Policy and implications for communities: housing, access to services, enterprise, carbon reduction and energy, digital infrastructure and reach, and loneliness.

The three key themes that remain consistent for us, year on year, are Volunteering Support, Community Asset building, and collaborations and alignment with key VCSE support organisations..

Supporting networks and partnerships within the VCSE continued to be of crucial importance to us. As a VCSE infrastructure support provider, we play a key role in representing and championing the sector. Multi-sector partnerships in County Durham have continued to be highly effective conduits for information exchanges, problem solving, consultation and co-production in shaping new approaches to services.

Over the course of the year, we once again worked closely with a diverse range of funders, including commissioners, Point North Community Foundation, and charitable grant giving trusts. Working collaboratively, funders have been hugely supportive, enabling greater flexibility, and supporting the sector as organisations have adapted the ways in which they reach their beneficiaries. Through this support a lot of VCSE organisations and groups have been able to sustain, and to start the process of reshaping their income streams and activities.

Alongside many organisations in the VCSE who are reliant on a broad portfolio of funding support, we were very fortunate and grateful to have the overwhelming support of Durham County Council, Defra, the National Lottery Communities Fund, the Climate Action Fund North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, the Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner, Point North Community Foundation, and all our other funders.

CHAIR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Our Trustees have continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis to review income and cash flow and ensure DCA remains a proactive well-run organisation that is able to respond to the needs of our beneficiaries.

Financially, we are grateful that DCA can once again look forward to the coming year with a degree of confidence, despite the continuing challenges, and the climate in which we continue to operate.

This report outlines the charity's objectives and achievements during the year to 31 March 2025 and details the arrangements that are in place to protect and develop resources.

2024/25 was a year that continued to challenge and stretch community resilience; DCA's longevity in County Durham has helped us to work responsively and supportively and, as we mark our 90th year of operation in 2025 we know the challenges on all sectors will continue to be exceptional. Alongside all our colleagues in public service, we continue to adapt and respond to new and emerging needs as we go.

As Chair, I would once again like to express my thanks and appreciation to our Staff and Trustees, who are without doubt Durham Community Action's most valuable assets. On behalf of all the Members, Staff and Trustees I would also like to express special thanks and appreciation to our funders and all those who placed their faith in us to continue our support for the sector.

Mrs Jan Worters MBE
Chair of Executive Committee

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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

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

Objectives and activities

The purpose of the charity is 'to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of County Durham and the surrounding areas without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions, by associating together the said inhabitants and the statutory authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance the welfare of the said inhabitants with the object of improving their conditions of life, through any or all of the following:

(a) the relief of poverty.
(b) the advancement of education.
(c) the advancement of health.
(d) the relief of unemployment.
(e) the promotion of urban and rural regeneration; and
(f) such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined.'

About DCA and Our Values

Durham Community Action (DCA) works with and for communities across County Durham. We believe County Durham is a better place for having thriving community organisations. We run DCA well, so we can support community organisations by:

- Providing expertise and advice which is tailored to needs and circumstances.
- Supporting and nurturing new community initiatives.
- Enabling good volunteering practice and opportunities.
- Representing and providing a voice for the community and voluntary sector in County Durham.

Our values	About us
Objectivity, honesty & integrity **Do the right thing** **Set high standards for the sector** **Encourage a can-do culture** **Accountability and responsibility** **Professional pride** **Enabling leadership** **Learning the lessons and sharing them** **Listening, reflecting** **Analysis and problem solving**	**Providing Expertise and Advice:** We support community organisations to do their work effectively, by providing advice, training, resources, and help to tackle challenges, and to realise their aspirations. **Supporting initiatives:** We work with networks and communities of interest to track opportunities and challenges for the sector, and to innovate and test new approaches which strengthen our social and community infrastructure. **Enabling good volunteering:** We provide brokerage and resources to develop volunteering opportunities and good practice in volunteer involving organisations. We champion volunteering across all sectors in County Durham, and support people who are new to volunteering to find the right opportunities for them. **Providing a voice:** We apply our knowledge and expertise within the VCSE (Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector) into sector led networks, and multi-agency partnerships in County Durham, the North East and nationally. We achieve this, through effective leadership, and representing sector interests and the issues that affect communities in County Durham. Through championing the interests of our local VCSE sector, we can influence and help shape public sector policy, and the design and commissioning of local services.

The Trustees consider the Charity Commission's guidelines on public benefit, including 'Public benefit: running a charity' (PB2) when shaping and planning the charity's objectives and activities.

Achievements and performance

We have placed an emphasis on supporting and sustaining community assets, with an objective to support the resilience of our social and community infrastructure in County Durham. Our work streams were focused primarily on three objectives.

Good progress was made in delivering against each of the three themes during the year, producing a range of outcomes that provided clear public benefits:

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations: Keeping in touch, providing support and help (information, advice, and guidance) for community organisations and groups, particularly for volunteer led groups. Supporting development and public access to community spaces and services.

Priorities	• Keeping in touch with volunteer led community groups, and providing a range of information, updates & news, advice, and guidance. • Supporting groups with funding training and all aspects of capacity building, • Providing opportunities for networking and training, plus on-going support for the wider VCSE. • Supporting community groups providing informal mental health support through the Cree network • Assisting local groups planning for community-led housing initiatives, energy efficiency of community spaces, community energy and other NetZero programmes.
Achievements	• 1169 VCSE groups and organisations were supported with information, advice, and guidance. • The Share and Learn Network for community organisations and groups continued to thrive on-line and we provided a fully subscribed programme of networking and training activities. Membership of the network held steady at 617 organisations and groups, reflecting the value that members place on the support provided. • 1172 people participated in themed workshops, including Meet the Funder, Community Buildings, Themed Meetings & Good Food Network. • Collaborating with colleagues in the VCSE, we continued to provide information and training, particularly promoting safeguarding and risk awareness for staff and volunteers in the sector. We also contributed to Adult Safeguarding Awareness Week in November 2024 through a series of on-line activities and events. • We delivered the Community Hubs Development Programme, supporting a cohort of 157 community organisations through consultancy, case work, and training for volunteer Trustees to put governance and business planning into place, particularly focusing on energy efficiency measures. We also provided funding advice and access to small grants, including 12 organisations that were assisted to apply for capital grants through the National Lottery funded Community Spaces Partnership. • 23 organisations hosting 39 groups in the Cree network were supported, with developmental workshops and support to access grant aid.

Public benefit	• As a broker and information point for the VCSE, we were able to ensure the sector had rapid access to relevant, timely guidance and advice. We supported and advised community services about how they could manage the issues and problems faced by volunteer led groups, such as sustaining their volunteer base, and dealing with fuel costs and increasing demands on services. • Advice, guidance, and interventions helped to sustain community-based services delivered by volunteers, and community buildings managed by local people, helping them to establish, grow and develop the resources they need (staff, volunteers, and funding) to continue supporting their beneficiaries. • Peer to peer networks for volunteer Trustees were expanded and supported, ensuring greater shared learning, problem solving and confidence building to plan and to sustain their offer. • Knowledge, understanding and access to a changed funding climate were improved within the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector. • Volunteers and front-line staff were able to work together across sectors, to develop good practice and help them to provide stronger support for their clients and user groups. • Lessons learned and intelligence were shared and disseminated, ensuring a clear view of social infrastructure issues arising through cost-of-living pressures and through longer term adjustments to different ways of working and the tools required e.g., digital services and reach for the most vulnerable and isolated people.

Objective 2. Volunteering: Support for volunteers and the volunteering infrastructure in County Durham (groups and organisations that work with volunteers, mutual aid groups, individual volunteers supporting health and wellbeing programmes, and local community action).

Priorities	• Sustaining our online County Durham Volunteering platform for recruiting volunteers and promoting opportunities. • Supporting networking with the Volunteer Co-ordinators Network membership. • Developing closer relationships with Social Prescribing Link Workers and the Primary Care Networks (PCNs), so they are better connected to the Volunteer led social infrastructure to inform longer term opportunities for development. • Support and training for volunteer led groups, advice, funding and access to resources and training. • Supporting organisations with volunteers, with advice and training, particularly regarding safeguarding. • Collaboration with partners to support the on-going development of a scheme for Employee Supported Volunteering (ESV). • To ensure that volunteer involving organisations have the resources and skills they need to support volunteers and their beneficiaries safely and in full compliance with their legal obligations.

Achievements	• 908 people, new to volunteering, were supported via the Centre for Volunteering, with advice, information, and guidance. 23 volunteering promotion / recruitment events were supported. • 312 volunteer involving organisations were actively promoting volunteer opportunities through the County Durham Volunteering online platform hosted by DCA. • We developed and expanded training and support sessions and provided good practice support for organisations that are run by, and support volunteers in: volunteer recruitment & management, volunteers and the law, safeguarding, disclosure and barring, and cyber security. • 61 training sessions attracted 615 delegates from 292 organisations and groups, with 85 organisations attending more than one training session. • We supported 70 Social Prescribing Link Workers with information and networking and professional training & development through a series of bi-monthly events. • The Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum ended the year with a membership of 518 organisations that work with volunteers. We organised and hosted 4 meetings of the Forum alternating meetings in person and on-line, attracting increased participation from the membership. • We continued to inform and consult with the VCSE Safeguarding Network and provided representation on both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Partnerships in County Durham. Contributions from the Network are fed through to Safeguarding Partnership meetings and training events, helping to inform and shape resources. • We sustained contact and support for spontaneous and emergency volunteering activity, and assisted Town and Parish Councils and communities with support for development of Community Resilience Planning.
Public benefit	• As a result of this work, volunteer involving organisations in County Durham are more effectively networking, sharing good practice, and offering mutual support for tackling and finding solutions to problems. • There are improved pathways for volunteers to access opportunities, develop their experience, and make contributions that are both valued and add value to civil society. • There is now a robust and efficient system of communication and collaboration between front line staff in the NHS and the VCSE sector with respect to recruitment, support, and placements for volunteers. • Volunteer led groups and organisations have support and ready access to advice and help when they need it. They are better informed and have the resources on hand that help them to ensure that their volunteers are well trained and supported.

Objective 3 - Voice: Representing and championing the VCSE (Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector) voice, through the range of strategic multi sector partnerships, and through continuing reviews of partnership working across the sector.

Priorities	• Health and wellbeing - to sustain, and ensure that a social and community infrastructure is in place, and has access to resources which help it to thrive and re-build. • Consulting VCSE organisations and service providers to build stronger local connections with Primary Care Networks and supporting Social Prescribing models and new systems for access to health care. • Consulting, surveying, and analysis of intelligence gathered from the VCSE sector and disseminating it through partnerships. • Representing community and voluntary sector interests as a member of the County Durham Together Partnership, and as a member of the Board of the County Durham Partnership (CDP). This enables DCA to collaborate with public sector colleagues to promote a joined-up policy for commissioning and funding, engaging with communities of interest in the development of new funding programmes, and influencing the provision of key services by engagement with Heads of Services. • Consulting and surveying VCSE sector service providers to gather and share intelligence about needs, and issues arising from support work in the community. Disseminating important information and best practice through multi sector partnerships. • Ensuring that the VCSE sector is fully engaged with co-production on responsive services to support mental health, access to advice providers and health care. • Ensuring that Advice in County Durham (AICD) and The Better Together VCS Forum' are mobilised to share insights and experience, as networks of countywide VCSE and specialist providers, and contributing to development and delivery of objectives arising from the Poverty Action Group. • Chairing and supporting the development of the Advice in County Durham multi-agency network as the 'go to' practitioner network for all advice agencies to come together and join up services. Network members provide advice and one to one casework support across County Durham. • Continued development of a shared approach to system and workforce development in order that front line staff and volunteers have access to the training and support they will be needing remained critical (plus the tools to provide support e.g., access to referral pathways and link workers, funding for initiatives, and for addressing needs highlighted by people in crises, triggered through health, financial or housing related issues).

Achievements	• During the year, we continued to Chair the Better Together VCS Forum, including two policy forums, and a conference focused around the County Durham evidence base. We continued to chair the Advice in County Durham Partnership, and also contributed to the County Durham Partnership Board from a VCSE perspective. These roles have helped to inform strategic agendas for partnership working in County Durham, and for emerging new models of commissioning services. • Working alongside regional Grant Funding Foundations & Trusts, we helped inform and shape funders approaches. Working in collaboration with the Ballinger Trust, we administered a micro grants scheme to support local community groups. • We continued to implement a connector model, to support more effectively targeted funding into the VCSE sector, and consulted with VCSE and commissioning colleagues through Better Together Policy VCS Forum meetings • We represented VCSE interests in multi-sector Task Groups, tackling mental health, economic and community regeneration, funding and investment, and volunteering. We collaborated with partners from the local authority and NHS/ Public Health to co-ordinate communications, resources and reach into communities and responding to local needs. • Co-ordinating and managing information exchanges for the VCSE and health & social care providers about good practice particularly in rural areas, regarding social isolation, health, and wellbeing services. • Health and Wellbeing cross sector networking continues to increase in complexity and importance, with key changes in primary care, access to mental health services and the firming up of the 'wiring' of the Integrated Care Systems (ICS). Our focus has been on evolving changes in community based mental health support, access to and building strong social prescribing linkages with the VCSE (through the delivery of a Social Prescribing Link Workers Network), and providing representation for the VCSE into strategic governance models for the Integrated Care Board (ICB). . • In partnership with colleagues at the Rural Design Centre we have successfully secured long term funding to enable the Rural Durham Community Research Network. We have also been cross linking this with CDP and academic colleagues to assure alignment to the strategic goals of both the County Durham Health & Wellbeing Board, County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy, and the strategic vision of both the County Durham Care Partnership and the regional Integrated Care Board. Through County Durham Together, the Better Together Forum and AiCD Partnerships we continue to build collaborative responses to key themes facing our communities, including responses to the cost-of-living crisis, opportunities for the delivery of welfare support funding, and supporting the Poverty Truth Commission for County Durham. • The ongoing development of a clearer governance framework and strategic work plan for AiCD continues to support the strength and impact of this partnership.

Public benefit	• Voluntary and community sector led partnerships are collaborating to shape community services. This will enable them to be responsive to the needs of communities that are struggling with significant inflationary pressures within the context of a cost-of-living crisis, particularly regarding mental health, food and fuel poverty and access to wellbeing support and advice services. This in turn ensures that the voluntary sector is actively engaged and represented within key public sector led networks as they address issues of loneliness and isolation within our communities. • Collaborative coalitions are working to influence the design and delivery of public service contracts. • Front line VCS organisations are better informed and trained about the issues that affect them and the people they work with. • Funding and investment into the VCSE sector are becoming more responsive, streamlined, and targeted, and more enabling in terms of sustaining a community infrastructure through the pandemic. • The VCSE in County Durham has a strong representational base that is influencing the ways in which public services are shaped.

Volunteers
The charity provides a comprehensive range of services that promote and support volunteering across County Durham. These services are provided through a Volunteer Centre (County Durham Volunteering). The priorities and achievements for volunteering services are set out in Objective 2 above.

The charity's work is directly supported through the Trustees, all of whom are volunteers. The recruitment and management of casual volunteers is handled through the Volunteer Centre, and there are appropriate policies, procedures, and agreements in place to cover both their recruitment, and their roles and engagement with the charity's staff and work.

Our primary role regarding volunteers in any setting, is one of brokerage and advice. We support groups and organisations in the VCSE sector to recruit and support volunteers, and provide training and resources to ensure that they have compliant policies and procedures in place. Significantly, we provide training, resources, guidance, and advice about Safeguarding for volunteers and for VCSE beneficiaries.

Financial review

The result for the financial year ended 31 March 2025 showed a deficit of £106,200, compared to a surplus of £304,149 in 2024. This was split between a £3,928 unrestricted surplus from the charity's core activities, and a deficit of £110,128 on its restricted activities.

Financial procedures

Our financial planning follows an annual cycle, linked into the business planning and reporting rounds. The draft annual budget for organisational core costs is usually set by the Board of Trustees at the start of each financial year. Income and projected expenditure for programmes / projects and work streams during the year are factored into the budget.

The charity operates an accounting system that ring fences project / programme funding within the accounts, ensuring that monitoring and auditing systems are transparent. The Executive Committee undertakes regular monitoring of the budget on a bi-monthly basis.

Durham Community Action's accounts are subject to a full external audit on an annual basis. The charity compiles with Charity Law by lodging all accounts with the Charities Commission. The accounts are authorised and approved by the Board of Trustees and presented to members for adoption at the Annual General Meeting each Autumn.

We aim to maintain a diverse portfolio of funding sources. Forms of investment in services are also varied and include a balance of income from grants, commissions and earned income. Sources of funding include:

- Charitable Trusts: The Ballinger Trust, Point North Community Foundation, Young Foundation
- Climate Action Fund
- Government: Defra, UKRI
- Health: North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Local Authorities: Durham County Council, Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner
- National Lottery Community Fund

Details of incoming resources for project-based activities are listed in Note 3 to the accounts.

Surplus cash balances are invested on deposit to earn interest at the best available rate having due regard to the balance between risk and reward.

Reserves policy
On 31 March 2025, the Charity's free reserves were £477,902 with an additional £294,964 held in restricted funds that are ring fenced to support specific projects.

DCA starts from a position of relative strength, with healthy reserves that we built up thanks to the support of our funders in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, DCA has not been immune to the wider cost pressures within the economy, and we continue to look for savings through the careful management of running costs.

The calculation of free reserves, and the amounts that have been allocated against each category are:

Description	Amount
Total reserves (comprising Restricted and Unrestricted Funds)	£790,072
Deduct Restricted Funds (which are ring fenced to support specific projects)	(£294,964)
Deduct fixed assets (which are necessary for the operation of the charity)	(£17,206)
Free reserves	**£477,902**
Free reserves are ring-fenced for the following:	
Six months' core costs and estimated redundancy costs	£322,083
Designated investment to undertake a stakeholder evaluation to measure impact and social value	£11,500
Designated fund for future organisational development	£30,000
Designated fund for the provision of services in the next business planning cycle (2026-29)	£100,000
Contingency fund	£14,319
Total	**£477,902**

In accordance with DCA's Reserves Policy, our Trustees have addressed the following priorities when determining how our reserves should be designated:

- Six months core costs and estimated redundancy costs. This is the amount that we estimate would be needed to cover staff costs, redundancy costs, and essential running costs for up to 6 months in the event of the unplanned closure of DCA. This would allow time for an orderly wind down or transfer of activities to other providers, thereby offering some protection for beneficiaries, staff, and volunteers.

- Designated investment to undertake a stakeholder evaluation to measure impact and social value. This is a follow up to the survey previously undertaken in 2022-2023 and will provide evidence of DCA's social impact.

- The designated fund for future organisational development will allow DCA to ramp up investment in staff training and development, and allocate extra resources to improve IT facilities and, digitise services etc. over the next 12 – 18 months. Greater use of online training and development is attracting more participants, and freeing up valuable staff time for more specialised one to one interventions.

- There are growing pressures on all community support services, and DCA's support will be under additional and significant demand by the VCSE over the next 2-3 years. Designating funds for the provision of services in the next business planning cycle (2026-29) will provide a buffer through the anticipated contraction and difficulties, when we expect to see a reduction in income whilst maintaining expenditure to continue our current range of support services.

- The contingency fund provides a hedge against inflationary cost pressures and unforeseen costs.

Investment policy and objectives
Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees have the power to deposit or invest funds in any manner, including the establishment of a trading arm (but to invest only after obtaining advice from a financial expert and having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification). They have adopted a conservative policy on depositing funds and choose only low risk deposits.

Risk management
The Executive Committee of Trustees has a risk management strategy that comprises:

- A Business Continuity Plan incorporating an annual review of the risks that the charity may face.
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should any of the risks materialise.

Key risks for the coming 2-3 years considered relevant to this report, together with mitigating actions that have already been taken, or which are planned, are outlined in the table below.

These are also further considered as part of the reserves allocation policy (detailed earlier), which offsets the actual and contingent liabilities of the organisation against the combined value of all unrestricted funds.

This policy allows the charity to continue to operate on a reduced basis until alternative funding arrangements can be put in place.

Nature of risk	Details	Mitigation
Loss of income	• Over-reliance on a small number of significant funders	• Work to secure multi-year grant funding resources from a range of key funders e.g., National Lottery Communities Fund, to provide greater security and reduce dependency on short term income. • Reduce reliance on any single funder by broadening and diversifying income streams e.g., through the development of income generating activities such as bespoke consultancy, training etc that build on the strengths of the staff team. • Support the above objective by continuing to develop niche specialities within the staff team that enable DCA to respond to need, increase its reach and to fill gaps in service provision that open up, ensuring that services are cost effective & relevant.
	• Diminishing opportunities to fund infrastructure, policy, and support services for community organisations.	• Continued close working with thematic partnerships (Volunteering and Advice) to address needs and develop improved collaboration in service provision (shared resources, co-locations, and shared intelligence).
	• Public service priorities focused on crisis interventions and removed from preventative community initiatives / development.	• Review and consolidate partnership working where possible to streamline and build capacity for shared resources with partner organisations/service providers.

Large scale transfers of public sector services and contracts	• Lack of capacity and resources to bid for large contracts. • Payment by results • Bankrolling • TUPE implications	• Ensuring formal, relevant, and bid ready consortia are in place with Memoranda of Understanding and partnership agreements. • Spread the risk and share resources and liabilities with a balance of larger and smaller, niche organisations and partners. • Ensure that Durham Community Action retains organisational scale and resources that are sufficient to deliver realistic levels of service, whilst also reacting responsively to opportunities.
Business interruption	• Impact of pandemic e.g., Covid-19 • Loss of use of office premises due to flood, fire, storm damage, terrorism, vandalism etc • Loss of IT services	• Business Continuity Plan updated with details of actions to be taken, and regularly tested. • Health & Safety Risk Assessments, and Staff provided with appropriate equipment to enable remote working. • Use of IT systems e.g., video conferencing etc to maintain regular contact with clients, partners, and team members. • Use of cloud services, and IT back-up systems and procedures to ensure that services can be quickly restored in the event of problems.
Loss of key Trustees, and loss of key staff and skills (in the face of reduced levels of funding, or because of illness / pandemic)	• Capacity for sustaining key relationships, and ability to work responsively. • Resources to build intelligence and sustain the evidence base for influencing and shaping new work. • Inability to fulfil key contractual obligations, resulting in possible reputational damage. • Impact on strategic decision making and day to day activities	• .Adopt smarter, less labour-intensive approaches to communications, information sharing and making resources available for beneficiaries. • Ensure staff engagement and training programmes are in place, optimising specialist skills and experience within the delivery team, ensuring that experienced staff are available to fill gaps in the event of the loss of key personnel. • Use of trusted contractors to fulfil tasks on a temporary basis if required. • Enabling closer co-working and collaboration between the charity's staff and partner staff members, thereby adding value to resources, and consolidating working relationships. • Recruiting new Trustees to mitigate the loss of existing Trustees.

Plans for future periods

The charity will continue to adapt and respond in a manner that is designed to meet our primary objectives. Objectives are reviewed annually, based on shared intelligence with our colleagues and partners in the VCSE, and regarding an evolving face of public services, local government, and policy.

As set out in the Reserves Policy, the Trustees have considered the implications for a changing landscape of public services, especially for health care, and the continuing evolution of systems for integrating health and social health care services. This is in the context of rebuilding civil society in the wake of service demand and funding pressures, coupled with a continuing fall back in confidence and ongoing economic uncertainty.

Over the course of the last three years, Senior Management and Trustees have been working proactively in dialogue with funders and commissioners. We have been collaborating on a more robust system for informing Commissioners where there are needs arising, and working with the VCSE to target resources more effectively.

2024/2025 marked the first year of a renewed three-year Grant Funding Deed, testament to the value placed upon VCSE infrastructure support. This has enabled us to work in partnership with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Durham County Council, including Public Health. The Grant Funding Deed (GFD) has been brought together by public sector commissioning partners as an investment into VCSE infrastructure support and development. This is intended to enable a more collaborative and trust-based approach to funding the sector in County Durham.

During 2024/2025, DCA continued to operate a hybrid working policy that enabled staff to split their time between home and office-based working, providing greater operational flexibility and directly benefiting DCA through savings on office running costs.

Demand for the charity's services remained high throughout the year, reflecting the continued need to support community groups, volunteers, and volunteering infrastructure organisations on issues such as fundraising and governance. DCA's Trustees are continuing to meet on a bi-monthly basis, to review budgets and cashflows and to act if required to continue within the parameters of the agreed budget.

DCA will also explore opportunities to secure additional funding that are a comfortable fit with the charity's remit and forward work plan.

Structure, governance and management

Durham Community Action Limited is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The charity is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association that were adopted on 17 October 2013.

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission. Membership is open to any individual or organisation that meets the criteria specified in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

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

Professor SJ Banks
Mrs LC Bird
Mrs P Buckley-Atkins
Mrs KL Davison (Appointed 21 November 2024)
Mrs A Hawkes
Mr ID Hunter Smart (Appointed 21 November 2024)
Mrs E Kilgannon MBE
Mr MJ Litchfield
Mr J Robinson
Professor JFF Robinson
Mrs CA Smith
Mrs JM Worters MBE

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees
The Trustees as charity trustees have control of the Charity and its property and funds, however there is no individual exercising significant control (PSC). All the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £10 in the event of a winding up. There must be a minimum of five Trustees and a maximum of 20 Trustees.

All the charity's Trustees are volunteers and provide their time freely. Expenses are offered to cover travel costs. Trustees attending appropriate conferences and networking activities for the charity may also be reimbursed for travel costs, conference fees and occasional accommodation when an overnight stay is necessary. No Trustees benefit financially, contractually, or materially from their roles.

Our Trustees have continued to work with the Senior Management Team to monitor and review our policies and procedures, and to undertake a review of our Business Continuity Plan.

Officers
The honorary posts of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer are elected by serving Trustees immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

Organisation
Currently membership of the Board of Trustees stands at 12. The Executive Committee meets bi-monthly, and on an ad hoc basis if the necessity arises. There is the facility to establish ad hoc task and finish sub-groups; for example Trustees and Staff collaborated during the year to review DCA's policies and procedures.

Pay policy for senior staff
Salary scales for senior staff are determined by the Trustees, having due regard to remuneration for similar roles within the VCSE sector. No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

Induction and training of new trustees
New Trustees undergo orientation meetings to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Executive Committee and decision-making process, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other Trustees. All Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external and internal training events.

Key management remuneration
The Trustees hold overall responsibility for management of the organisation, its assets, staff, and funds. Responsibility for day-to-day management of the organisation, finance, employment of staff, and for providing support and resources to the Trustees to enable strategic planning, is delegated to the Executive Director. She is appointed by the Trustees to manage the operations of the charity and is an employee of the company. Despite the title, the Executive Director is neither a Director of the Company nor a Trustee of the Charity.

The Executive Director manages the charity with the support of a small Senior Management Team, comprising the Managers for Community Development, Community Support, and Volunteering. Governance and finance support are provided by an external contractor, with a good working knowledge of the business. Details of the Key Management Personnel and their costs applicable during 2024-2025 are included in the accounts.

Related parties
The charity's work programme is primarily determined by the needs of the communities that it serves.

Wherever possible, DCA aligns its work with prevailing national, and local policies and priorities. We achieve this by working closely with a range of partners, including ACRE, County Durham Partnership, Durham County Council, the Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner, and the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

DCA also works responsively with our colleagues in the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector within County Durham, and in various community-based networks and partnerships. As a result, close working relationships are maintained with a range of other organisations, although none meet the related parties' criteria as defined in company law:

- During 2024/25 DCA maintained a Funding Agreement with Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) to provide intelligence and information for Defra about areas of policy, as it affects rural communities on a regional and county-wide basis. Key priorities included digital infrastructure, digital skills and inclusion, rural life opportunities, social infrastructure, rural transport, net zero and affordable energy, housing and planning, and business support and social enterprise development. .

- The charity maintains a strong relationship with Durham County Council and is recognised by the Council as the primary VCSE infrastructure support organisation for County Durham. This provides the council with a single conduit for public sector investment into VCSE support services. During the year DCA worked particularly closely with Public Health, both Adult and Children's Services, Environment, Economic Regeneration and the Transformation & Partnerships team at Durham County Council. The Office of County Durham's Police & Crime Commissioner also contributed funds to support work with front line community groups and organisations.

- Physical and mental health and wellbeing was an important theme during 2024/25. Working with the Integrated Care Board, and wider Integrated Care System (ICS) partners, we developed a programme of work to reinforce VCSE engagement in new and emerging governance structures for primary and secondary care.

- We were represented on and supported on a range of networks and partnerships including the County Durham Partnership Board, County Durham Economic Partnership, the Environment & Climate Change Partnership, the Health & Wellbeing Board, the North East Combined Authority, and the Safeguarding Children & Safeguarding Adults Partnerships,

- The Better Together VCS Forum, and the Advice in County Durham Partnership, the Community Growing and Food Network (comprising 152 organisations and individuals), and the Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum (comprising 518 organisations engaged in volunteering across the North East) were amongst the networks and organisations that we chaired or supported during the year.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of Durham Community Action Limited for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Robson Laidler Accountants Limited be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

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

Mrs JM Worters MBE
Trustee

18 September 2025

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

Opinion

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

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

The risk of material misstatement due to error or fraud has been assessed in conjunction with how internal controls may mitigate any such risk. These controls are reviewed as part of the audit by performing systems walkthroughs to ensure they are operating effectively. Analytical review and substantive testing is also performed on all material balances and therefore any instances of non-compliance should be identified or considered as insignificant. In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team;

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the industry and sector, including the legal and regulatory framework, in which the charity operates and how the charity complies with that legal and regulatory framework
- inquired with management and those charged with governance about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any know actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud
- discussed with management and those charged with governance any non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessments of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

The risk of management override of controls was also considered an area of potential misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included testing of manual journal entries and other adjustments and evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud rests with management. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal controls.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Nicholas Cunningham MSc BSc FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Robson Laidler Accountants Limited, Statutory Auditor
Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE2 1TJ
England
Date: 22-9-2025

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Current financial year	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:					
Charitable activities	3	-	996,950	996,950	1,194,890
Other trading activities		8,917	-	8,917	32,866
Investments		40,578	-	40,578	34,206
Total income		49,495	996,950	1,046,445	1,261,962
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	4	45,567	1,107,078	1,152,645	957,813
Total expenditure		45,567	1,107,078	1,152,645	957,813
Net movement in funds	6	3,928	(110,128)	(106,200)	304,149
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		491,180	405,092	896,272	592,123
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		495,108	294,964	790,072	896,272

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Prior financial year	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:				
Charitable activities	3	-	1,194,890	1,194,890
Other trading activities		32,866	-	32,866
Investments		34,206	-	34,206
Total income		67,072	1,194,890	1,261,962
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	4	59,603	898,210	957,813
Total expenditure		59,603	898,210	957,813
Net movement in funds	6	7,469	296,680	304,149
Reconciliation of funds:				
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		483,711	108,412	592,123
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		491,180	405,092	896,272

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	10		1,260		1,680
Tangible assets	11		15,946		20,806
			17,206		22,486
Current assets					
Debtors	12	109,435		46,207	
Cash at bank and in hand		702,260		875,207	
		811,695		921,414	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(38,829)		(47,628)	
Net current assets			772,866		873,786
Total assets less current liabilities			790,072		896,272
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	14		294,964		405,092
Unrestricted funds	15		495,108		491,180
			790,072		896,272

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 18 September 2025

Janice M. Worters

Mrs JM Worters MBE
Trustee

Company registration number 00309329 (England and Wales)

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	21		(211,167)		232,265
Investing activities					
Purchase of intangible assets		-		(1,680)	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,358)		(5,924)	
Investment income received		40,578		34,206	
Net cash generated from investing activities			38,220		26,602
Net cash generated from financing activities			-		-
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents			(172,947)		258,867
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			875,207		616,340
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			702,260		875,207

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Durham Community Action Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 8 St. Stephens Court, Low Willington, Crook, County Durham, DL15 0BF, England.

1.1 Accounting convention

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

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

Durham Community Action Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity entry under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have considered a period of 12 months from the balance sheet date and consider no further disclosures relating to the charity's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made.

1.2 Charitable funds

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

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

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.3 Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income received by way of grants, donations and gifts is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant;

- Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance;

- Rental & other income are recognised on a receivable basis;

- 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.

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.4 Expenditure

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

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure includes VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income;

- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

1.5 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

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

Volunteering website	25% straight line

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

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

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

Leasehold land and buildings	25% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% reducing balance/25% straight line

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

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

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

1 **Accounting policies** **(Continued)**

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.9 Taxation

As a charity, the company is exempt from tax on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

1.10 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the charity has a legal or constructive present obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the charity will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting end date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value. When a provision is measured at present value, the unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in net income/(expenditure) in the period in which it arises.

1.11 Debtors/creditors due within one year

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectation of future events that are believed to be reasonable under circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

Critical areas of judgement

In categorising leases as finance leases or operating leases, the Trustees make judgements as to whether significant risk and rewards or ownership have transferred to the charity as lessee.

In recognising income from projects, the trustees make judgements as to whether the conditions of income have been met.

3 Charitable activities

	Support & Advisory 2025	Community Development 2025	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£
Income from Charitable Activities	718,655	278,295	996,950	1,194,890
Income from Charitable Activities				
ACRE	-	86,972	86,972	66,579
Durham County Council	431,915	100,000	531,915	583,467
Durham Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
NE BIC	18,000	-	18,000	-
Voluntaary Action Leeds	38,467	-	38,467	-
Rural Design Centre	-	57,044	57,044	252,000
Bloom Procurement Services	15,675	-	15,675	-
Point North Community Foundation	-	15,000	15,000	78,799
Community Action Northumberland	149,258	-	149,258	-
VONNE	34,842	-	34,842	41,479
Other	20,498	19,279	39,777	72,566
	718,655	278,295	996,950	1,194,890

Other includes grants totalling £Nil (2024: £1,500) from NAVCA, £2,800 (2024: £Nil) from OASES,,£Nil (2024: £10,000) from Consett Advice Hub, £Nil (2024: £7660) from BASH Volunteer Passport, £6,479 (2024: £14,344) from Innovate UK, £Nil (2024: £10,000) from Citizens Advice, £12,800 (2024: £23,062) from The Ballinger Trust, £11,000 (2024:£nil) from Cornforth Partnership, £6,000 (2024:£6,000) from British Red Cross and £698 (2024: £nil) from sundry funders.

4 Charitable activities

	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£
Staff costs	702,066	639,957
Consultancy	121,976	78,189
Meeting expenses	5,658	6,003
Grants to small communities	211,038	123,777
	1,040,738	847,926
Share of support costs (see note 5)	101,483	103,076
Share of governance costs (see note 5)	10,424	6,811
	1,152,645	957,813

5 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2025	Support costs	Governance costs	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Depreciation	7,638	-	7,638	5,741	-	5,741
Office rent	27,149	-	27,149	27,149	-	27,149
Marketing and promotion	180	-	180	89	-	89
Cleaning and welfare	3,453	-	3,453	3,699	-	3,699
Electricity, gas and water	11,353	-	11,353	14,984	-	14,984
Repairs and renewals	975	-	975	988	-	988
Insurance	2,393	-	2,393	2,264	-	2,264
Staff travel and training	11,237	-	11,237	4,960	-	4,960
Printing, postage and telephone	9,410	-	9,410	8,676	-	8,676
Publications and subscriptions	11,625	-	11,625	8,374	-	8,374
Computer costs	15,832	-	15,832	25,374	-	25,374
Sundries	238	-	238	778	-	778
Legal and professional	-	2,299	2,299	-	311	311
Auditors remuneration	-	8,125	8,125	-	6,500	6,500
	101,483	10,424	111,907	103,076	6,811	109,887
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	101,483	10,424	111,907	103,076	6,811	109,887

6 Net movement in funds

	2025	2024
	£	£
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	6,825	6,500
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	7,218	5,741
Amortisation of intangible assets	420	-
Operating lease charges	27,149	27,149

7 Trustees

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

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

8 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Executive director	1	1
Field workers	17	14
Administrator	1	1
Total	19	16

Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	613,666	566,990
Social security costs	58,746	47,947
Other pension costs	29,654	25,020
	702,066	639,957

Key management remuneration

The key management of the charity comprise the Executive Director, Community Support Manager, Community Partnerships Manager and the Volunteering Development Manager. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £192,791 (2024 : £193,540).

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

9 Taxation

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

10 Intangible fixed assets

	Volunteering website
	£
Cost	
At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025	19,680
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 April 2024	18,000
Amortisation charged for the year	420
At 31 March 2025	18,420
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2025	1,260
At 31 March 2024	1,680

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	9,539	79,648	89,187
Additions	-	2,358	2,358
At 31 March 2025	9,539	82,006	91,545
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 April 2024	9,539	58,842	68,381
Depreciation charged in the year	-	7,218	7,218
At 31 March 2025	9,539	66,060	75,599
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2025	-	15,946	15,946
At 31 March 2024	-	20,806	20,806

12 Debtors

	2025	2024
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	970	-
Prepayments and accrued income	108,465	46,207
	109,435	46,207

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Other taxation and social security	-	837
Other creditors	13,182	31,127
Accruals and deferred income	25,647	15,664
	38,829	47,628

Included within accruals and deferred income is deferred income of £Nil (2024: £198) relating to project income received in advance of entitlement.

14 Restricted funds

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

		Movement in funds		
	Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£
ACRE / Defra funding	-	42,585	(42,585)	-
ACRE / Defra Rural Housing Enabler	10,440	44,387	(54,827)	-
Amicable	-	38,467	(30,465)	8,002
BEEP (Business Energy Efficency Project)	8,917	-	(8,917)	-
Community Buildings Energy Audit Small Grant Fund	185,000	-	(140,799)	44,201
Community Spaces Partnership	14,237	80,038	(85,737)	8,538
Destination Capacity to Support Mental Health Transformation	150,000	-	(39,663)	110,337
Durham Together - VCS employability Programme	-	11,000	(11,000)	-
Enterprising Places Management Research	-	15,675	(15,675)	-
Health Determinants in Research	-	41,848	(36,206)	5,642
Healthy Communities & Social Prescribing place-based engagement & support	-	34,842	(34,842)	-
Impactful Volunteering/Social Action Project	-	86,000	(86,000)	-
Poverty Truth Commission	7,576	115,000	(98,692)	23,884
Rural Durham Community Research Network	-	57,044	(18,348)	38,696
Rural North East Climate Action Plan	-	69,220	(40,377)	28,843
Social Enterprise Animation Durham	-	18,000	(18,000)	-
Social Prescribing Development & Support	26,000	-	(26,000)	-
The Ballinger Charitable Trust - Community Micro Grants	-	12,800	(12,800)	-
Volunteering & Infrastructure Support	-	306,800	(281,579)	25,221
Grouped restricted funds	2,922	23,244	(24,566)	1,600
	405,092	996,950	(1,107,078)	294,964

14 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

ACRE / Defra funding
Provision of strategic support to rural communities, sharing learning on sustainable funding models, and providing access to local intelligence.

ACRE / Defra Rural Housing Enabler
This Defra funded initiative aims to boost the supply of new rural affordable housing by providing access to a service that supports landowners and communities to identify sites, and works with housing associations and local authorities to deliver high quality homes that meet local housing need through small scale schemes.

Amicable
This project is supporting volunteers working with the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner's Community Peer Mentors initiative to support the recovery of vulnerable and isolated people who have been affected by significant life-changing events including crime and anti-social behaviour.

BEEP (Business Energy Efficiency Project)
This project is providing funding for an assessor to undertake energy efficiency audits for small community organisations.

Community Buildings Energy Audit Small Grant Fund
Small grant scheme that will assist community buildings groups to implement energy audit improvements recommended by Durham County Council's BEEP energy audit team.

Community Spaces Partnership
This partnership project, supported by the Communities Fund is supporting DCA to provide community buildings in County Durham with information, advice, and guidance, and grant funding to assist with building improvements.

Destination Capacity to support Mental Health Transformation
Funded by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, this aims to provide a dedicated resource in each new community Mental Health hub area to increase the capacity of VCSE organisations to deliver interventions.

Durham Together - VCS Employability Programme
Provision of volunteering advice and support as part of the lottery funded Durham Together project. Delivered in partnership with Cornforth Partnership (lead partner), the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Wheels 2 Work County Durham and WEA North East and Cumbria, to provide community learning and bespoke training to support individuals to increase their confidence, improve their health and wellbeing and progress into further learning or sustainable employment and volunteering.

Enterprising Places Management Research
The purpose of this research is to identify potential 'Enterprising Spaces' in community centres, halls etc. where a range of enterprising activities can be tested and implemented. The aim is to find spaces that are suitable to host activity designed to support a wide range of enterprise challenges to inspire and raise awareness of enterprise, as well as to host Enterprise Roadshows.

Health Determinants in Research
Working in partnership with Durham University and Durham County Council to deliver this project, which aims to use research and innovation to tackle the causes of unfair differences in health outcomes across County Durham. The aim is to place inclusive research, evaluation, and innovation practice at the heart of the design and delivery of public services, and to ensure that communities are fully and equitably engaged in public health policy research activity.

14 **Restricted funds** (Continued)

Healthy Communities & Social Prescribing place-based engagement & support
Funded by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, and administered by VONNE, this project is building sustainable community-centred approaches that connect and promote public health messages, support communities, enhance relationships with the voluntary sector, and provide local intelligence to inform planning.

Impactful Volunteering/Social Action Project
Exploring opportunities to develop a system wide approach to volunteering best practice within Community Hubs, enabling accreditation of the County Durham Volunteer Kite Mark, and building an evidence base of social value impact measurement for community and volunteer led activity through a Social Value UK accredited tool.

Poverty Truth Commission
This project aims to better understand the challenges faced by residents living in poverty in County Durham, and to come up with practical changes and solutions to some of those challenges. It aims to bring about changes for individuals and organisations at a policy and systems level, and alter the ways people think about poverty.

Rural Durham Community Research Network
Collaboration with Durham University and the Rural Design Centre, to develop and deliver a 5-year project that will provide a community research network for County Durham, giving local communities a voice. The project is funded by The Young Foundation.

Rural North East Climate Action Plan
Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, CAIRN aims to support small communities to take charge of their energy needs and find practical, long-term solutions that benefit everyone. The project is being delivered in partnership with Community Action Northumberland (CAN), the Rural Design Centre (RDC) and National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE).

Social Enterprise Animation Durham
This project aims to raise awareness of social enterprise and socially enterprising activity in County Durham as part of the Enterprising Durham Framework, by delivering community and third sector animation activities including workshops and one to one support.

Social Prescribing Development & Support
This initiative, funded by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, supports DCA to develop and expand the Social Prescribing Link Worker (SPLW) network, providing peer support for SPLW's, raising awareness, and embedding social prescribing into teams working across and within GP practices.

The Ballinger Charitable Trust - Community Micro Grants
Micro-grants initiative for groups in County Durham, supported by The Ballinger Charitable Trust.

Volunteering & Infrastructure Support
Grant funding agreement with Durham County Council for the provision of support services to the Voluntary & Community Sector across County Durham.

Grouped Restricted Funds

AICD Referral Pathways Investigation
The project is undertaking research to better understand the Information, Advice & Guidance Referral Pathways of AICD (Advice in County Durham) partner organisations within County Durham.

County Durham Faith Network
This is funds held on behalf of County Durham Faith Network.

Covid-19 Vaccination Centre Volunteer Exoenses
Administration of a fund to provide travel expenses to volunteers assisting at Covid 19 vaccination and lateral testing centres.

14 Restricted funds (Continued)

Durham Police, Crime & Victims Commissioner grant
Provision of advice and signposting to organisations providing specialist support for people, including volunteering, mutual aid groups, link workers, and assistance with liaison meetings & on-line training.

UKRI Community research Networks
The Community Research Network (CRN) is a way for communities to be actively involved in setting research agendas contributing experiences and collecting relevant information, that in turn can help to influence changes in practice & policy. The project is funded by UK Research & Innovation via Innovate UK.

VCS Emergencies Partnership preparedness
Administered via the British Red Cross Society, this is funding DCA to help local organisations ensure they are prepared to work together to assist local emergencies. There is no carry forward balance.

15 Unrestricted funds

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

	At 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£
General funds	491,180	49,495	(45,567)	495,108

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
General funds	483,711	67,072	(59,603)	491,180

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025
	£	£	£
At 31 March 2025:			
Intangible fixed assets	1,260	-	1,260
Tangible assets	15,946	-	15,946
Current assets/(liabilities)	477,902	294,964	772,866
	495,108	294,964	790,072

16 **Analysis of net assets between funds** (Continued)

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
At 31 March 2024:			
Intangible fixed assets	1,680	-	1,680
Tangible assets	20,806	-	20,806
Current assets/(liabilities)	468,694	405,092	873,786
	491,180	405,092	896,272

17 **Operating lease commitments**

Lessee

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Within one year	1,759	1,759
Between two and five years	7,035	7,035
In over five years	14,950	16,708
	23,744	25,502

18 **Retirement Benefits**

Durham Community Action participates in The Pension Trust's Flexible Retirement Plan, a defined contribution scheme. The plan is funded and contracted out of the state scheme.

The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The contributions payable by the charity expensed to income and expenditure amounted to £29,654 (2024: £25,020).

Contributions totalling £287 (2024: £nil) were payable to the fund at the year end.

19 **Related party transactions**

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

20 **Legal Status of the Charity**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

21	Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	2025 £	2024 £
	(Deficit)/surplus for the year	(106,200)	304,149
	Adjustments for:		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(40,578)	(34,206)
	Amortisation and impairment of intangible assets	420	-
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	7,218	5,741
	Movements in working capital:		
	(Increase) in debtors	(63,228)	(39,205)
	(Decrease) in creditors	(8,799)	(4,214)
	Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	(211,167)	232,265

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 229119

Accounts

Charity registration number 229119

Company registration number 00309329 (England and Wales)

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Professor SJ Banks Mrs LC Bird Mrs P Buckley-Atkins Mrs A Hawkes Mrs E Kilgannon MBE Mr MJ Litchfield Mr J Robinson Professor JFF Robinson Mrs CA Smith Mrs JM Worters MBE
Secretary	Mrs KJ Burrows
Charity number	229119
Company number	00309329
Registered office	8 St. Stephens Court Low Willington Crook County Durham England DL15 0BF
Auditor	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear England NE2 1TJ
Bankers	Lloyds Bank 54 Fawcett St Sunderland SR1 1SF
Solicitors	Muckle LLP Time Central 32 Gallowgate Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 4BF Swinburne Maddison LLP Venture House Aykley Heads Business Centre Durham DH1 5TS

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

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DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Chair's report

The end of this financial year falls as the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector continues to battle with inflationary and service demand pressures, but it is clear that the strong contribution by sector colleagues in supporting our communities with the needs they face is never more needed. The VCSE continues to enable community led action as trusted sources of practical and emotional support to their communities underpinning community resilience.

In response to this landscape, Durham Community Action has maintained our close collaborative work with colleagues in the sector, and across the Public Sector. We continued to keep in touch with the organisations and groups that played such a key role in sustaining community-led support activity in response to the most pressing needs of their communities. 2023/24 was about supporting our communities to develop, and to grasp new opportunities building community resilience.

Colleagues in the VCSE (large and small organisations) are continuing to face many challenges adapting service provision to meet community needs within increasingly strained funding and rising delivery costs. Alongside this, even where funding and investment is secured, colleagues report continued difficulties with the recruitment and retention of staff.

The aftermath of Covid-19, poor health outcomes and financial pressures on communities, and on the VCSE's reach, their workforce, volunteering, and their growth / development did weaken capacity. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine and its direct impact on energy prices and the resultant cost of living crisis, continued to present a real challenge to an already fragile sector.

In the light of all this, there are increasingly complex challenges for both the VCSE and our partners in the public sector with respect to equitable provision of public services, including health, social care, and education.

These challenges include the undermining impacts of poverty, poor and worsening mental health, and the escalating rate of the cost of living. We continue to see increases in the numbers using food and fuel banks, and the growing number of new faces queuing for food and debt advice. These challenges are very evident and highly visible, and there seems little prospect of any improvement in the coming year.

Any one of the challenges which we are facing would be difficult to respond to with stretched workforces across all sectors, however the range and depth of these challenges coming together in the wake of the pandemic and cost of living crisis remains a very real concern.

Our work during the year has been responsive in nature. We were able to collaborate with our colleagues in the VCSE, and in the public sector, to support communities with information, advice, and training, as we responded to the cost-of-living crisis, and its impact on vulnerable individuals and communities.

Addressing this broad spectrum of issues, our work themes continued to prioritise:

- Health and wellbeing, including mental health
- Volunteering
- Representation, advocacy, and voice for the VCSE
- Policy and implications for communities: housing, access to services, enterprise, carbon reduction and energy, digital infrastructure and reach, and loneliness.

The three key themes that remain consistent for us, year on year, are Volunteering Support, Community Asset building, and collaborations and alignment with key VCSE support organisations.

Supporting networks and partnerships within the VCSE continued to be of crucial importance to us. As a VCSE infrastructure support provider, we play a key role in representing and championing the sector. Multi-sector partnerships in County Durham have continued to be highly effective conduits for information exchanges, problem solving, consultation and co-production in shaping new approaches to services.

Over the course of the year, we worked closely with a diverse range of funders, including commissioners, the Community Foundation and charitable grant giving trusts. Working collaboratively, funders have been hugely supportive to the sector, enabling greater flexibility, and supporting the sector as organisations adapted the ways in which they reach their beneficiaries. Through this support a lot of VCSE organisations and groups have been able to sustain, and to start the process of reshaping their income streams and activities.

Chair's report (continued)
Alongside many organisations in the VCSE who are reliant on a broad portfolio of funding support, we were very fortunate and grateful to have the overwhelming support of Durham County Council, Defra, the National Lottery Communities Fund, North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, the Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner, County Durham Community Foundation, and all our other funders.

Our Trustees have continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis to review income and cash flow and ensure DCA remains a proactive well-run organisation which is able to respond to the needs of our beneficiaries.

Financially, we are grateful that DCA can once again look forward to the coming year with a degree of confidence, despite the continuing challenges, and the climate in which we continue to operate.

This report outlines the charity's objectives and achievements during the year to 31 March 2024 and details the arrangements that are in place to protect and develop resources.

2023/24 was a year that continued to challenge and stretch community resilience, with the cost-of-living crisis adding to the pressures that many already face in the aftermath of Covid. For DCA, our longevity in County Durham has helped us to work responsively and supportively, however the challenges on all sectors will continue to be exceptional. Alongside all our colleagues in public service, we are continuing to adapt and respond to new and emerging needs as we go.

As Chair, I would once again like to express my thanks and appreciation to our Staff and Trustees, who are without doubt Durham Community Action's most valuable assets. On behalf of all the Members, Staff and Trustees I would also like to express special thanks and appreciation to our funders and all those who placed their faith in us to continue our support for the sector.

Mrs Jan Worters MBE
Chair of Executive Committee

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

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

Objectives and activities
The purpose of the charity is 'to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of County Durham and the surrounding areas without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions, by associating together the said inhabitants and the statutory authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance the welfare of the said inhabitants with the object of improving their conditions of life, through any or all of the following:

(a) the relief of poverty.
(b) the advancement of education.
(c) the advancement of health.
(d) the relief of unemployment.
(e) the promotion of urban and rural regeneration; and
(f) such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined.'

ABOUT DCA AND OUR VALUES
Durham Community Action (DCA) works with and for communities across County Durham. We believe County Durham is a better place for having thriving community organisations. We run DCA well, so we can support community organisations by:

- Providing expertise and advice which is tailored to needs and circumstances.
- Supporting and nurturing new community initiatives.
- Enabling good volunteering practice and opportunities.
- Representing and providing a voice for the community and voluntary sector in County Durham.

Our values	About us
Objectivity, honesty & integrity **Do the right thing** **Set high standards for the sector** **Encourage a can-do culture** **Accountability and responsibility** **Professional pride** **Enabling leadership** **Learning the lessons and sharing them** **Listening, reflecting** **Analysis and problem solving**	**Providing Expertise and Advice:** We support community organisations to do their work effectively, by providing advice, training, resources, and help to tackle challenges, and to realise their aspirations. **Supporting new initiatives:** We work with networks and communities of interest to track opportunities and challenges for the sector, and to innovate and test new approaches which strengthen our social and community infrastructure. **Enabling good volunteering:** We provide brokerage and resources to develop volunteering opportunities and good practice in volunteer involving organisations. We champion volunteering across all sectors in County Durham, and support people who are new to volunteering to find the right opportunities for them. **Providing a voice:** We apply our knowledge and expertise within the VCSE (Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector) into sector led networks, and multi-agency partnerships in County Durham, the North East and nationally. We achieve this, through effective leadership, and representing sector interests and the issues that affect communities in County Durham. Through championing the interests of our local VCSE sector, we can influence and help shape public sector policy, and the design and commissioning of local services.

Objectives, performance, and achievements
The Trustees consider the Charity Commission's guidelines on public benefit, including 'Public benefit: running a charity' (PB2) when shaping and planning the charity's objectives and activities.

Objectives, performance, and achievements (continued)
We have placed an emphasis on supporting and sustaining community assets, with an objective to support the resilience of our social and community infrastructure in County Durham. Our work streams were focused primarily on three objectives:

Good progress was made in delivering against each of the three themes during the year, producing a range of outcomes that provided clear public benefits:

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations: Keeping in touch, providing support and help (information, advice, and guidance) for community organisations and groups, particularly for volunteer led groups. Supporting development and public access to community spaces and services.

Priorities	• Keeping in touch with volunteer led community groups, and providing a range of information, updates & news, advice, and guidance. • Supporting groups with funding and training, • Providing opportunities for networking and training, plus on-going support for the wider VCSE. • Supporting community groups providing informal mental health support through the Cree network • Assisting local groups planning for community-led housing initiatives.
Achievements	• 930 VCSE groups and organisations were supported with information, advice, and guidance. • The Share and Learn Network for community organisations and groups continued to thrive on-line and we provided a fully subscribed programme of networking and training activities. Membership of the network increased to 617 organisations and groups. • 1215 people participated in themed workshops, including Meet the Funder, Community Buildings, Themed Meetings & Good Food Network • Collaborating with colleagues in the VCSE, we continued to provide information and training, particularly promoting safeguarding and risk awareness for staff and volunteers in the sector. We also contributed to Adult Safeguarding Awareness Week in November 2023 through a series of on-line activities and events. • We delivered the Community Hubs Development Programme, supporting a cohort of 86 community organisations through consultancy, case work and training for volunteer trustees, to put governance and business planning into place particularly focusing on energy efficiency measures. We also provided funding advice and access to small grants, including 17 organisations that were assisted to apply for capital grants through the National Lottery funded Community Spaces Partnership. • 40 organisations in the Cree network were supported, with developmental workshops and support to access grant aid.

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations (continued)

Public benefit	• As a broker and information point for the VCSE, we were able to ensure the sector had rapid access to relevant, timely guidance and advice. We supported and advised community services about how they could manage the issues and problems faced by volunteer led groups, such as sustaining their volunteer base, and dealing with fuel costs and increasing demands on services. • Advice, guidance, and interventions helped to sustain community-based services delivered by volunteers, and community buildings managed by local people, helping them to establish, grow and develop the resources they need (staff, volunteers, and funding) to continue supporting their beneficiaries. • Peer to peer networks for volunteer trustees were expanded and supported, ensuring greater shared learning, problem solving and confidence building to plan and to sustain their offer. • Knowledge, understanding and access to a changed funding climate were improved within the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector. • Volunteers and front-line staff were able to work together across sectors, to develop good practice and help them to provide stronger support for their clients and user groups. • Lessons learned and intelligence were shared and disseminated, to ensure a clear view of social infrastructure issues arising through cost-of-living pressures and through longer term adjustments to different ways of working and the tools required e.g., digital services and reach for the most vulnerable and isolated people.

Objective 2. Volunteering: Support for volunteers and the volunteering infrastructure in County Durham (groups and organisations that work with volunteers, mutual aid groups, individual volunteers supporting health and wellbeing programmes, and local community action).

Priorities	• Sustaining our online County Durham Volunteering platform for recruiting volunteers and promoting opportunities. • Supporting networking with the Volunteer Co-ordinators Network membership. • Developing closer relationships with Social Prescribing Link Workers and the Primary Care Networks (PCNs), so they are better connected to the Volunteer led social infrastructure to inform longer term opportunities for development. • Support and training for volunteer led groups, advice, funding and access to resources and training. • Supporting organisations with volunteers, with advice and training, particularly regarding safeguarding. • Collaboration with partners to support the on-going development of a scheme for Employee Supported Volunteering (ESV). • To ensure that volunteer involving organisations have the resources and skills they need to support volunteers and their beneficiaries safely and in full compliance with their legal obligations.

Achievements	• 681 people, new to volunteering, were supported via the Centre for Volunteering, with advice, information, and guidance. • We developed and expanded training and support sessions and provided good practice support for organisations that are run by, and support volunteers in: volunteer recruitment & management, volunteers and the law, safeguarding, and with new workshops on Disclosure and Barring, and Cyber Security. • 41 training sessions attracted 606 delegates from 218 organisations and groups, with 96 organisations attending more than one training session. • We supported 49 Social Prescribing Link Workers with information and networking through a series of bi-monthly events. • The Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum ended the year with a membership of 518 organisations that work with volunteers. We organised and hosted 4 meetings of the Forum alternating meetings in person and on-line, attracting increased participation from the membership. • We continued to inform and consult with the VCSE Safeguarding Network and provided representation on both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Partnerships in County Durham. Contributions from the Network are fed through to Safeguarding Partnership meetings and training events, helping to inform and shape resources. • We sustained contact and support for spontaneous and emergency volunteering activity, and assisted Town and Parish Councils and communities with support for development of Community Resilience Planning.
Public benefit	• As a result of this work, volunteer involving organisations in County Durham are more effectively networking, sharing good practice, and offering mutual support for tackling and finding solutions to problems. • There are improved pathways for volunteers to access opportunities, develop their experience, and make contributions that are both valued and add value to civil society. • There is now a robust and efficient system of communication and collaboration between front line staff in the NHS and the VCSE sector with respect to recruitment, support, and placements for volunteers. • Volunteer led groups and organisations have support and ready access to advice and help when they need it. They are better informed and have the resources on hand that help them to ensure that their volunteers are well trained and supported.

Objective 3 - Voice: Representing and championing the VCSE (Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector) voice, through the range of strategic multi sector partnerships, and through continuing reviews of partnership working across the sector.

Priorities	• Health and wellbeing - to sustain, and ensure that a social and community infrastructure is in place, and has access to resources which help it to thrive and re-build. • Consulting VCSE organisations and service providers to build stronger local connections with Primary Care Networks and supporting Social Prescribing models and new systems for access to health care. • Consulting, surveying, and analysis of intelligence gathered from the VCSE sector and disseminating it through partnerships. • Representing community and voluntary sector interests as a member of the County Durham Together Partnership, and as a member of the Board of the County Durham Partnership (CDP). This enables DCA to collaborate with public sector colleagues to promote a joined-up policy for commissioning and funding, engaging with communities of interest in the development of new funding programmes, and influencing the provision of key services by engagement with Heads of Services. • Consulting and surveying VCSE sector service providers to gather and share intelligence about needs, and issues arising from support work in the community. Disseminating important information and best practice through multi sector partnerships. • Ensuring that the VCSE sector is fully engaged with co-production on responsive services to support mental health, access to advice providers and health care. • Ensuring that Advice in County Durham (AiCD) and 'Better Together' are mobilised to share insights and experience, as networks of countywide VCSE and specialist providers, and contributing to development and delivery of objectives arising from the Poverty Action Group. • Chairing and supporting the development of the Advice in County Durham multi-agency network as the 'go to' practitioner network for all advice agencies to come together and join up services. Network members provide advice and one to one casework support across County Durham. • Continued development of a shared approach to system and workforce development in order that front line staff and volunteers have access to the training and support they will be needing remained critical (plus the tools to provide support e.g., access to referral pathways and link workers, funding for initiatives, and for addressing needs highlighted by people in crises, triggered through health, financial or housing related issues).

Achievements	• During the year, we continued to Chair the Better Together Network, including two policy forums, and a conference focused around the County Durham evidence base. We continued to chair the Advice in County Durham Partnership, and also contributed to the County Durham Partnership Board from a VCSE perspective. These roles have helped to inform strategic agendas for partnership working in County Durham, and for emerging new models of commissioning services. • Representing the sector on the Regional Funders Network, we helped inform and shape funders approaches. Working in collaboration with the Ballinger Trust, we administered a micro grants scheme to support local community groups. • We continued with development of a Connector commissioning model, to target funding into the VCSE sector more effectively, and consulted with VCSE and commissioning colleagues through a Better Together Policy Forum. • We represented VCSE interests in multi-sector Task Groups, tackling mental health, economic and community regeneration, funding and investment, and volunteering. We collaborated with partners from the local authority and NHS/ Public Health to co-ordinate communications, resources and reach into communities and responding to local needs. • Co-ordinating and managing information exchanges for the VCSE and health & social care providers about good practice particularly in rural areas, regarding social isolation, health, and wellbeing services. • Health and Wellbeing cross sector networking continues to increase in complexity and importance, with key changes in primary care, access to mental health services and the firming up of the 'wiring' of the Integrated Care System (ICS). Our focus has been on evolving changes in community based mental health support, access to and building strong social prescribing linkages with the VCSE (through the delivery of a Social Prescribing Link Workers Network), and providing representation for the VCSE into strategic governance models for the new health management systems and commissioning. • We have been working in partnership with colleagues at the Rural Design Centre to establish the architecture needed to enable Community Research Networks in rural County Durham. We have also been cross linking this with CDP and academic colleagues to assure alignment to the strategic goals of both the County Durham Health & Wellbeing Board, County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy, and the strategic vision of both the County Durham Care Partnership and the regional Integrated Care Board. Through County Durham Together, the Better Together Forum and AiCD Partnerships we continue to build collaborative responses to key themes facing our communities, including responses to the cost of living crisis, opportunities for the delivery of the Household Support Fund, and supporting the Poverty Truth Commission for County Durham. • The ongoing development of a clearer governance framework and strategic work plan for AiCD continues to support the strength and impact of this partnership.

Public benefit	• Voluntary and community sector led partnerships are collaborating to shape community services. This will enable them to be responsive to the needs of communities that are struggling with significant inflationary pressures within the context of a cost-of-living crisis, particularly regarding mental health, food and fuel poverty and access to wellbeing support and advice services. This in turn ensures that the voluntary sector is actively engaged and represented within key public sector led networks as they address issues of loneliness and isolation within our communities. • Collaborative coalitions are working to influence the design and delivery of public service contracts. • Front line VCS organisations are better informed and trained about the issues that affect them and the people they work with. • Funding and investment into the VCSE sector are becoming more responsive, streamlined, and targeted, and more enabling in terms of sustaining a community infrastructure through the pandemic. • The VCSE in County Durham has a strong representational base that is influencing the ways in which public services are shaped.

Volunteers
The charity provides a comprehensive range of services that promote and support volunteering across County Durham. These services are provided through a Volunteer Centre (County Durham Volunteering). The priorities and achievements for volunteering services are set out in Objective 2 above.

The charity's work is directly supported through the Trustees, all of whom are volunteers. The recruitment and management of casual volunteers is handled through the Volunteer Centre, and there are appropriate policies, procedures, and agreements in place to cover both their recruitment, and their roles and engagement with the charity's staff and work.

Our primary role regarding volunteers in any setting, is one of brokerage and advice. We support groups and organisations in the VCSE sector to recruit and support volunteers, and provide training and resources to ensure that they have compliant policies and procedures in place. Significantly, we provide training, resources, guidance, and advice about Safeguarding for volunteers and for VCSE beneficiaries.

Financial review

Financial review
The result for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 showed a surplus of £304,149, compared to a deficit of £88,766 in 2023. This was split between a £7,469 unrestricted surplus from the charity's core activities, and a surplus of £296,680 on its restricted activities.

The surplus on restricted funds relates to year-on-year differences in the timing between funds being received and expended on project activity. The surplus in our day-to-day activities was encouraging, especially given the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and its direct impact on energy prices and the wider cost of living during the year. We ended the year with healthy reserves that will hold us in good stead to maintain delivery at current levels, when funding inevitably becomes more constrained due to the wider financial pressures within the economy.
Our proven track record of delivery enabled us to continue attracting and delivering additional fully funded activities using our existing staff resources. We were also able to plan for additional staff resources to meet increasing levels of need and developing work to adapt and design new systems for joined up working between the VCSE and public sector services.

Financial procedures
Our financial planning follows an annual cycle, linked into the business planning and reporting rounds. The draft annual budget for organisational core costs is usually set by the Board of Trustees at the start of each financial year. Income and projected expenditure for programmes / projects and work streams during the year are factored into the budget.

The charity operates an accounting system that ring fences project / programme funding within the accounts, ensuring that monitoring and auditing systems are transparent. The Executive Committee undertakes regular monitoring of the budget on a bi-monthly basis.

Durham Community Action's accounts are subject to a full external audit on an annual basis. The charity complies with Charity Law by lodging all accounts with the Charities Commission. The accounts are authorised and approved by the Board of Trustees and presented to members for adoption at the Annual General Meeting each Autumn.

We aim to maintain a diverse portfolio of funding sources. Forms of investment in services are also varied and include a balance of income from grants, commissions and earned income. Sources of funding include:

- Charitable Trusts: The Ballinger Trust, County Durham Community Foundation
- Government: Defra
- Health: North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Local Authorities: Durham County Council, Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner
- National Lottery Community Fund

Details of incoming resources for project-based activities are listed in Note 3 to the accounts.

Surplus cash balances are invested on deposit to earn interest at the best available rate having due regard to the balance between risk and reward.

Reserves policy
On 31 March 2024, the Charity's free reserves were £468,694 with an additional £405,092 held in restricted funds that are ring fenced to support specific projects.

DCA starts from a position of relative strength, with healthy reserves that we built up thanks to the support of our funders in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, DCA has not been immune to the wider cost pressures within the economy, and we continue to look for savings through the careful management of running costs.

The calculation of free reserves, and the amounts that have been allocated against each category are:

Description	**Amount**
Total reserves (comprising Restricted and Unrestricted Funds)	£896,272
Deduct Restricted Funds (which are ring fenced to support specific projects)	(£405,092)
Deduct fixed assets (which are necessary for the operation of the charity)	(£22,486)
Free reserves	**£468,694**
Free reserves are ring-fenced for the following:	
Six months' core costs and estimated redundancy costs	£288,215
Designated investment to implement a rural catalyst project in County Durham	£11,500
Designated fund for future organisational development	£30,000
Designated fund for the provision of services in the next business planning cycle (2025-28)	£100,000
Contingency fund	£38,979
Total	**£468,694**

In accordance with DCA's Reserves Policy, our Trustees have addressed the following priorities when determining how our reserves should be designated:

- Six months core costs and estimated redundancy costs. This is the amount that we estimate would be needed to cover staff costs, redundancy costs, and essential running costs for up to 6 months in the event of the unplanned closure of DCA. This would allow time for an orderly wind down or transfer of activities to other providers, thereby offering some protection for beneficiaries, staff, and volunteers.

- Designated investment of £11.5k during 2024/25 to complete the implementation of a rural catalyst project in County Durham, in partnership with the Rural Design Centre (RDC), and the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE). One of the existing RDC Innovation and Design Associates has been assigned to work specifically with our team as a one-off investment. This work cannot be funded by other means, and is regarded as a necessary investment to support the exploration of in-depth rural community economic development in County Durham, providing evidence to influence better policy and support for rural businesses. Community engagement and a true place-based approach, aimed at building capacity within rural communities rather than delivering things to communities, is the only viable way to deliver on economic and social objectives for rural development. This means that engagement directly with rural groups (also providing ways to engage disenfranchised individuals outside the usual groups) is essential.

- The designated fund for future organisational development will allow DCA to ramp up investment in staff training and development, and allocate extra resources to improve IT facilities and, digitise services etc. over the next 12 – 18 months. Greater use of online training and development is attracting more participants, and freeing up valuable staff time for more specialised one to one interventions.

- There are growing pressures on all community support services, and DCA's support will be under additional and significant demand by the VCSE over the next 2-3 years. Designating funds for the provision of services in the next business planning cycle (2025-28) will provide a buffer through the anticipated contraction and difficulties, when we expect to see a reduction in income whilst maintaining expenditure to continue our current range of support services.

- The contingency fund provides a hedge against inflationary cost pressures and unforeseen costs.

Investment policy and objectives
Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees have the power to deposit or invest funds in any manner, including establishment of a trading arm (but to invest only after obtaining advice from a financial expert and having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification). They have adopted a conservative policy on depositing funds and choose only low risk deposits.

Risk management
The Executive Committee of Trustees has a risk management strategy that comprises:

- A Business Continuity Plan incorporating an annual review of the risks that the charity may face.
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should any of the risks materialise.

Key risks for the coming 2-3 years considered relevant to this report, together with mitigating actions that have already been taken, or which are planned for, are outlined in the table below.

These are also further considered as part of the reserves allocation policy (detailed earlier), which offsets the actual and contingent liabilities of the organisation against the combined value of all unrestricted funds.

This policy allows the charity to continue to operate on a reduced basis until alternative funding arrangements can be put in place.

Risk management (continued)

Nature of risk	Details	Mitigation
Loss of income	• Over-reliance on a small number of significant funders	• Work to secure multi-year grant funding resources from a range of key funders e.g., National Lottery Communities Fund, to provide greater security and reduce dependency on short term income. • Reduce reliance on any single funder by broadening and diversifying income streams e.g., through the development of income generating activities such as bespoke consultancy, training etc that build on the strengths of the staff team. • Support the above objective by continuing to develop niche specialities within the staff team that enable DCA to respond to need, increase its reach and to fill gaps in service provision that open up, ensuring that services are cost effective & relevant.
	• Diminishing opportunities to fund infrastructure, policy, and support services for community organisations.	• Continued close working with thematic partnerships (Volunteering and Advice) to address needs and develop improved collaboration in service provision (shared resources, co-locations, and shared intelligence).
	• Public service priorities focused on crisis interventions and removed from preventative community initiatives / development.	• Review and consolidate partnership working where possible to streamline and build capacity for shared resources with partner organisations/service providers.
Large scale transfers of public sector services and contracts	• Lack of capacity and resources to bid for large contracts. • Payment by results • Bankrolling • TUPE implications	• Ensuring formal, relevant, and bid ready consortia are in place with Memoranda of Understanding and partnership agreements. • Spread the risk and share resources and liabilities with a balance of larger and smaller, niche organisations and partners. • Ensure that Durham Community Action retains organisational scale and resources that are sufficient to deliver realistic levels of service, whilst also reacting responsively to opportunities.
Business interruption	• Impact of pandemic e.g., Covid-19 • Loss of use of office premises due to flood, fire, storm damage, terrorism, vandalism etc • Loss of IT services	• Business Continuity Plan updated with details of actions to be taken, and regularly tested. • Health & Safety Risk Assessments, and Staff provided with appropriate equipment to enable remote working. • Use of IT systems e.g., video conferencing etc to maintain regular contact with clients, partners, and team members. • Use of cloud services, and IT back-up systems and procedures to ensure that services can be quickly restored in the event of problems.

Risk management (continued)

Loss of key Trustees, and loss of key staff and skills (in the face of reduced levels of funding, or because of illness / pandemic)	• Capacity for sustaining key relationships, and ability to work responsively. • Resources to build intelligence and sustain the evidence base for influencing and shaping new work. • Inability to fulfil key contractual obligations, resulting in possible reputational damage. • Impact on strategic decision making and day to day activities	• Adopt smarter, less labour-intensive approaches to communications, information sharing and making resources available for beneficiaries. • Ensure staff engagement and training programmes are in place, optimising specialist skills and experience within the delivery team, ensuring that experienced staff are available to fill gaps in the event of the loss of key personnel. • Use of trusted contractors to fulfil tasks on a temporary basis if required. • Enabling closer co-working and collaboration between the charity's staff and partner staff members, thereby adding value to resources, and consolidating working relationships. • Recruiting new Trustees to mitigate the loss of existing Trustees

Plans for future periods

The charity will continue to adapt and respond in a manner that is designed to meet our primary objectives. Objectives are reviewed annually, based on shared intelligence with our colleagues and partners in the VCSE, and regarding an evolving face of public services, local government, and policy.

As set out in the Reserves Policy, the Trustees have considered the implications for a changing landscape of public services, especially for health care, and the continuing evolution of systems for integrating health and social health care services. This is in the context of rebuilding civil society in the wake of service demand and funding pressures, coupled with a continuing fall back in confidence, and a more protracted than anticipated recovery period in the aftermath of Covid 19.

Over the course of the last three years, Senior Management and Trustees have been working pro-actively in dialogue with funders and commissioners. We have been collaborating on a more robust system for informing Commissioners where there are needs arising, and working with the VCSE to target resources more effectively.

2023/2024 marked the final year of the three-year Grant Funding Deed. This has enabled us to work in partnership with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Durham County Council, including Public Health. The Grant Funding Deed (GFD) has been brought together by public sector commissioning partners as an investment into VCSE infrastructure support and development. This is intended to enable a more collaborative and trust-based approach to funding the sector in County Durham. A further three-year grant funding agreement secured for 2024-27 is testament to the value placed upon VCSE infrastructure support.

During 2023/2024, DCA continued to operate a hybrid policy that enabled staff to split their time between home and office-based working, providing greater operational flexibility and directly benefiting DCA through savings on office running costs.

Demand for the charity's services remained high throughout the year, reflecting the continued need to support community groups, volunteers, and volunteering infrastructure organisations to deal with and overcome the challenges posed in the aftermath of the Covid pandemic. DCA's Trustees are continuing to meet on a bi-monthly basis, to review budgets, cashflows and to act if required to continue within the parameters of the agreed budget.

DCA will also explore opportunities to secure additional funding that are a comfortable fit with the charity's remit and forward work plan.

Structure, governance and management
Durham Community Action Limited is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The charity is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association that were adopted on 17 October 2013.

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission. Membership is open to any individual or organisation that meets the criteria specified in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

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

Professor SJ Banks
Mrs LC Bird
Mrs P Buckley-Atkins
Mrs J Flynn MBE (Resigned 9 November 2023)
Mrs A Hawkes
Mrs E Kilgannon MBE
Mr MJ Litchfield
Mr J Robinson
Professor JFF Robinson
Mrs CA Smith
Mrs JM Worters MBE

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees
The Trustees as charity trustees have control of the Charity and its property and funds, however there is no individual exercising significant control (PSC). All the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £10 in the event of a winding up. There must be a minimum of five Trustees and a maximum of 20 Trustees.

All the charity's Trustees are volunteers and provide their time freely. Expenses are offered to cover travel costs. Trustees attending appropriate conferences and networking activities for the charity may also be reimbursed for travel costs, conference fees and occasional accommodation when an overnight stay is necessary. No Trustees benefit financially, contractually, or materially from their roles.

Our Trustees have continued to work with the Senior Management Team to monitor our policies and procedures, and to undertake a review of our Business Continuity Plan.

Officers
The honorary posts of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer are elected by serving Trustees immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

Organisation
Currently membership of the Board of Trustees stands at 10. The Executive Committee meets bi-monthly, and on an ad hoc basis if the necessity arises. There is the facility to establish ad hoc task and finish sub-groups; for example Trustees and Staff are currently collaborating on a review of DCA's policies and procedures.

Pay policy for senior staff
Salary scales for senior staff are determined by the Trustees, having due regard to remuneration for similar roles within the VCSE sector. No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

Induction and training of new trustees
New Trustees undergo orientation meetings to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Executive Committee and decision-making process, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other Trustees. All Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external and internal training events.

Key management remuneration
The Trustees hold overall responsibility for management of the organisation, its assets, staff, and funds. Responsibility for day-to-day management of the organisation, finance, employment of staff, and for providing support and resources to the Trustees to enable strategic planning, is delegated to the Executive Director. She is appointed by the Trustees to manage the operations of the charity and is an employee of the company. Despite the title, the Executive Director is neither a Director of the Company nor a Trustee of the Charity.

The Executive Director manages the charity with the support of a small Senior Management Team, comprising the Managers for Community Partnerships, Community Support, and Volunteering. Governance and finance support are provided by an external contractor, with a good working knowledge of the business. Details of the Key Management Personnel and their costs applicable during 2023-2024 are included in the accounts.

Related parties
The charity's work programme is primarily determined by the needs of the communities that it serves.

Wherever possible, DCA aligns its work with prevailing national, and local policies and priorities. We achieve this by working closely with a range of partners, including ACRE, County Durham Partnership, Durham County Council, the Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner, and the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

DCA also works responsively with our colleagues in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector within County Durham, and in various community-based networks and partnerships. As a result, close working relationships are maintained with a range of other organisations, although none meet the related parties' criteria as defined in company law:

- During 2023/24 DCA maintained a Funding Agreement with Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) to provide intelligence and information for Defra about areas of policy, as it affects rural communities on a regional and county-wide basis, with respect to economic development, digital and broadband access, housing, transport, health and wellbeing, loneliness, and access to services.

- The charity maintains a strong relationship with Durham County Council and is recognised by the Council as the primary VCSE infrastructure support organisation for County Durham. This provides the council with a single conduit for public sector investment into VCSE support services. During the year DCA worked particularly closely with Public Health, both Adult and Children's Services, Environment, and the Transformation & Partnerships team at Durham County Council. The Office of County Durham's Police & Crime Commissioner also contributed funds to support work with front line community groups and organisations.

- Physical and mental health and wellbeing was an important theme during 2023/24. Working with the Integrated Care Board, and wider Integrated Care System (ICS) partners, we developed a programme of work to reinforce VCSE engagement in new and emerging governance structures for primary and secondary care.

- We were represented on and supported a range of networks and partnerships including the County Durham Partnership Board, County Durham Economic Partnership, the Better Together VCSE Forum, and the Advice in County Durham Partnership.

- The Community Growing and Food Network comprising 152 organisations and individuals, and the Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum (comprising 518 organisations engaged in volunteering across the North East) were amongst the networks and organisations that we chaired or supported during the year.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of Durham Community Action Limited for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Robson Laidler Accountants Limited be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

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

Mrs JM Worters MBE
Trustee

19 September 2024

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

Opinion

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

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

The comparative results were not audited, as there was no requirement to do so.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

The risk of material misstatement due to error or fraud has been assessed in conjunction with how internal controls may mitigate any such risk. These controls are reviewed as part of the audit by performing systems walkthroughs to ensure they are operating effectively. Analytical review and substantive testing is also performed on all material balances and therefore any instances of non-compliance should be identified or considered as insignificant. In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team;

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the industry and sector, including the legal and regulatory framework, in which the charity operates and how the charity complies with that legal and regulatory framework
- inquired with management and those charged with governance about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any know actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud
- discussed with management and those charged with governance any non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessments of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

The risk of management override of controls was also considered an area of potential misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included testing of manual journal entries and other adjustments and evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud rests with management. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal controls.

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

Other matters

The corresponding figures are unaudited.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

NC

Nicholas Cunningham FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Robson Laidler Accountants Limited

25-9-2024

Statutory Auditor

Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
England
NE2 1TJ

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:					
Charitable activities	3	-	1,194,890	1,194,890	815,791
Other trading activities	4	32,866	-	32,866	18,010
Investments		34,206	-	34,206	13,630
Total income		67,072	1,194,890	1,261,962	847,431
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	59,603	898,210	957,813	936,197
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		7,469	296,680	304,149	(88,766)
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		483,711	108,412	592,123	680,889
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		491,180	405,092	896,272	592,123

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:				
Charitable activities	3	-	815,791	815,791
Other trading activities	4	18,010	-	18,010
Investments		13,630	-	13,630
Total income		31,640	815,791	847,431
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	5	150,991	785,206	936,197
Gross transfers between funds		160,659	(160,659)	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		41,308	(130,074)	(88,766)
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		442,403	238,486	680,889
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		483,711	108,412	592,123

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	**11**		1,680		-
Tangible assets	**12**		20,806		20,623
			22,486		20,623
Current assets					
Debtors	**13**	46,207		7,002	
Cash at bank and in hand		875,207		616,340	
		921,414		623,342	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**14**	(47,628)		(51,842)	
Net current assets			873,786		571,500
Total assets less current liabilities			896,272		592,123
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	**15**		405,092		108,412
Unrestricted funds			491,180		483,711
			896,272		592,123

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 19 September 2024

Janice M. Worters

Mrs JM Worters MBE
Trustee

Company registration number 00309329 (England and Wales)

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	22		232,265		(263,056)
Investing activities					
Purchase of intangible assets		(1,680)		-	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(5,924)		(23,653)	
Investment income received		34,206		13,630	
Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities			26,602		(10,023)
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			258,867		(273,079)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			616,340		889,419
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			875,207		616,340

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Durham Community Action Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 8 St. Stephens Court, Low Willington, Crook, County Durham, DL15 0BF, England.

1.1 Accounting convention

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

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

Durham Community Action Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity entry under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have considered a period of 12 months from the balance sheet date and consider no further disclosures relating to the charity's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made.

1.2 Charitable funds

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

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

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.3 Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income received by way of grants, donations and gifts is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant;
- Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance;
- Rental & other income are recognised on a receivable basis;
- 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.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.4 Expenditure

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

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure includes VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:
- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income;
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

1.5 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

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

Volunteering website	25% straight line

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

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

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

Leasehold land and buildings	25% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% reducing balance

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

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

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

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.9 Taxation

As a charity, the company is exempt from tax on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

1.10 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the charity has a legal or constructive present obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the charity will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting end date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value. When a provision is measured at present value, the unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in net income/(expenditure) in the period in which it arises.

1.11 Debtors/creditors due within one year

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectation of future events that are believed to be reasonable under circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

Critical areas of judgement

In categorising leases as finance leases or operating leases, the Trustees make judgements as to whether significant risk and rewards or ownership have transferred to the charity as lessee.

In recognising income from projects, the trustees make judgements as to whether the conditions of income have been met.

3 Charitable activities

	Support & Advisory 2024	Community Development 2024	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Income from Charitable Activities	675,239	519,651	1,194,890	815,791
Income from Charitable Activities				
ACRE	-	66,579	66,579	42,585
Durham County Council	358,467	225,000	583,467	458,304
Durham Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
National Lottery Community Fund - RC North East and Cumbria Region	-	-	-	116,200
Soil Association	-	-	-	2,000
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board	52,000	200,000	252,000	15,000
MHLDF	-	-	-	116,000
County Durham Community Foundation	75,289	3,510	78,799	41,750
Community Action Northumberland	90,000	-	90,000	-
VONNE	41,479	-	41,479	-
Other	48,004	24,562	72,566	13,952
	675,239	519,651	1,194,890	815,791

Other includes grants totalling £1,500 (2023: £8,500) from NAVCA, £nil (2023: £525) from Weardale Area Action Partnership, £10,000 (2023: £nil) from Consett Advice Hub, £7,660 (2023: £nil) from BASH Volunteer Passport, £14,344 (2023: £nil) from Innovate UK, £10,000 (2023: £nil) from Citizens Advice, £23,062 (2023: £nil) from The Ballinger Trust and £6,000 (2023: £4,927) from sundry funders.

4 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023
	£	£
Consultancy	32,866	18,010

5 Charitable activities

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Staff costs	639,957	567,439
Consultancy	78,189	66,246
Meeting expenses	6,003	3,687
Grants to small communities	123,777	194,718
	847,926	832,090
Share of support costs (see note 6)	103,076	97,881
Share of governance costs (see note 6)	6,811	6,226
	957,813	936,197

6 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2024	Support costs	Governance costs	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Depreciation	5,741	-	5,741	7,465	-	7,465
Office rent	27,149	-	27,149	27,126	-	27,126
Marketing and promotion	89	-	89	856	-	856
Cleaning and welfare	3,699	-	3,699	3,654	-	3,654
Electricity, gas and water	14,984	-	14,984	11,421	-	11,421
Repairs and renewals	988	-	988	443	-	443
Insurance	2,264	-	2,264	2,689	-	2,689
Staff travel and training	4,960	-	4,960	2,732	-	2,732
Printing, postage and telephone	8,676	-	8,676	9,083	-	9,083
Publications and subscriptions	8,374	-	8,374	8,044	-	8,044
Computer costs	25,374	-	25,374	24,308	-	24,308
Sundries	778	-	778	60	-	60
Independent examination	-	-	-	-	3,564	3,564
Legal and professional	-	311	311	-	2,662	2,662
Auditors remuneration	-	6,500	6,500	-	-	-
	103,076	6,811	109,887	97,881	6,226	104,107
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	103,076	6,811	109,887	97,881	6,226	104,107

7 Net movement in funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	-	3,564
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	5,741	6,951
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	514
Operating lease charges	27,149	27,126

8 Trustees

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

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

9 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Executive director	1	1
Field workers	14	14
Administrator	1	1
Total	16	16

Employment costs	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	566,990	499,067
Social security costs	47,947	46,033
Other pension costs	25,020	22,339
	639,957	567,439

Key management remuneration

The key management of the charity comprise the Executive Director, Community Support Manager, Community Partnerships Manager and the Volunteering Development Manager. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £193,540 (2023 : £185,624).

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

10 Taxation

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

11 Intangible fixed assets

	Volunteering website
	£
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	18,000
Additions - separately acquired	1,680
At 31 March 2024	19,680
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	18,000
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	1,680
At 31 March 2023	-

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	9,539	73,724	83,263
Additions	-	5,924	5,924
At 31 March 2024	9,539	79,648	89,187
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 April 2023	9,539	53,101	62,640
Depreciation charged in the year	-	5,741	5,741
At 31 March 2024	9,539	58,842	68,381
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2024	-	20,806	20,806
At 31 March 2023	-	20,623	20,623

13 Debtors

	2024	2023
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	46,207	7,002

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other taxation and social security	837	193
Other creditors	31,127	-
Accruals and deferred income	15,664	51,649
	47,628	51,842

Included within accruals and deferred income is deferred income of £198 (2023: £44,358) relating to project income received in advance of entitlement.

15 Restricted funds

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

		Movement in funds		
	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
ACRE / Defra Rural Housing Enabler	-	23,994	(13,554)	10,440
AiCD Referral Pathways Investigation	-	10,000	(7,980)	2,020
BEEP (Business Energy Efficency Project)	-	8,917	-	8,917
Community Buildings Energy Audit Small Grant Fund	-	225,000	(40,000)	185,000
Community Spaces Partnership	-	90,000	(75,763)	14,237
County Durham Diabetes Initiative	-	10,000	(10,000)	-
Covid-19 Vaccination Centre Volunteer Expenses	912	-	(10)	902
Destination Capacity to support Mental Health Transformation	-	150,000	-	150,000
Engaging Diverse Communities in Health and Wellbeing Research	-	3,510	(3,510)	-
Healthy Communities & Social Prescribing place-based engagement & support	-	41,479	(41,479)	-
Know Your Neighbourhood	-	60,289	(60,289)	-
MHLDF Right Care Right Place Community Resilience Support	100,000	-	(100,000)	-
NE&NC ICB Volunteer Delivery Framework to support community transformation	7,500	-	(7,500)	-
NE&NC ICB Pro-active Social Prescribing	-	50,000	(50,000)	-
Poverty Truth Commission	-	15,000	(7,424)	7,576
Social Prescribing Development & Support	-	52,000	(26,000)	26,000
UKRI Community Research Networks	-	14,344	(14,344)	-
Volunteering & Infrastructure Support	-	339,550	(339,550)	-
ACRA (Defra)	-	42,585	(42,585)	-
Grouped restricted funds	-	58,222	(58,222)	-
	108,412	1,194,890	(898,210)	405,092

15 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

ACRE / Defra Rural Housing Enabler
This Defra funded initiative aims to boost the supply of new rural affordable housing by providing access to a service that supports landowners and communities to identify sites, and works with housing associations and local authorities to deliver high quality homes that meet local housing need through small scale schemes.

AiCD Referral Pathways Investigation
The project is undertaking research to better understand the Information, Advice & Guidance Referral Pathways of AiCD (Advice in County Durham) partner organisations within County Durham.

BEEP (Business Energy Efficiency Project)
This project is providing funding for an assessor to undertake energy efficiency audits for small community organisations.

Community Buildings Energy Audit Small Grant Fund
Small grant scheme that will assist community buildings groups to implement energy audit improvements recommended by Durham County Council's BEEP energy audit team.

Community Spaces Partnership
This partnership project, supported by the Communities Fund is supporting DCA to provide community buildings in County Durham with information, advice, and guidance, and grant funding to assist with building improvements.

County Durham Diabetes Initiative
Supported by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, this project is providing grants to organisations to offer small scale awareness raising and engagement activities, amongst people at risk of diabetes with poor mental health and / or a learning disability.

Covid-19 Vaccination Centre Volunteer Expenses
Administration of a fund to provide travel expenses to volunteers assisting at Covid-19 vaccination and lateral testing centres.

Destination Capacity to support Mental Health Transformation
Funded by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, this aims to provide a dedicated resource in each new community Mental Health hub area to increase the capacity of VCSE organisations to deliver interventions.

Engaging Diverse Communities in Health and Wellbeing Research
Organisation of, and VCSE participation in a workshop 'Engaging Diverse Communities in Research' held in March 2024. The event was held in partnership with VONNE, National Institute for Health & Care Research, and The Institute of Medical Humanities, Durham University, and funded by Wellcome.

Healthy Communities & Social Prescribing place-based engagement & support
Funded by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, and administered by VONNE, this project is building sustainable community-centred approaches that connect and promote public health messages, support communities, enhance relationships with the voluntary sector, and provide local intelligence to inform planning.

Know Your Neighbourhood
This project is building the confidence of volunteer involving organisations, so that they are more confident to recruit and retain locally based volunteers who might otherwise be experiencing loneliness.

MHLDF Right Care Right Place Community Resilience Support
Provision of funding to the VCSE to support the provision of services that address community mental health needs.

15 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

NE&NC ICB Volunteer Delivery Framework to support community transformation
This is funded by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board to support the development of a volunteering framework, a quality assurance method to ensure volunteering best practice within Mental Health Hubs, and mentoring / support for each hub.

NE&NC Integrated Care Board – Pro-active Social Prescribing grants
This is supported by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board to provide small seed fund grants to local organisations that deliver activities which can be made available through social prescription, to improve health outcomes for local residents.

Poverty Truth Commission
This project aims to better understand the challenges faced by residents living in poverty in County Durham, and to come up with practical changes and solutions to some of those challenges. It aims to bring about changes for individuals and organisations at a policy and systems level, and alter the ways people think about poverty.

Social Prescribing Development & Support
This initiative, funded by the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, supports DCA to develop and expand the Social Prescribing Link Worker (SPLW) network, providing peer support for SPLW's, raising awareness, and embedding social prescribing into teams working across and within GP practices.

UKRI Community Research Networks
The Community Research Network (CRN) is a way for communities to be actively involved in setting research agendas, contributing experiences, and collecting relevant information, that in turn can help to influence changes in practice & policy. This project is funded by UK Research & Innovation via Innovate UK.

Volunteering & Infrastructure Support
Grant funding agreement with Durham County Council for the provision of support services to the Voluntary & Community Sector across County Durham.

ACRE (Defra)
Provision of strategic support to rural communities, sharing learning on sustainable funding models, and providing access to local intelligence. £42,585 of new income was received and expended in 2023/24. There is no carry forward balance.

Grouped Restricted Funds

Ballinger Trust community micro-grants
Micro-grants initiative for groups in County Durham, supported by The Ballinger Charitable Trust. £23,062 of new income was received and expended in 2023/24. There is no carry forward balance.

BASH Volunteer Passport
Accredited volunteer passport training initiative for Bishop Auckland and Shildon Area Action Partnership.

Consett Advice Hub
Development of a welfare advice hub in Consett (DCA acting as an agent to receive and distribute income from Derwent Valley AAP to the Advice in County Durham Partnership)

Durham Police, Crime & Victims Commissioner grant
Provision of advice and signposting to organisations providing specialist support for people, including volunteering, mutual aid groups, link workers, and assistance with liaison meetings & on-line training. £10,000 of new income was received and expended in 2023/24. There is no carry forward balance.

NAVCA Cost of Living Fund
This project is supported by NAVCA. It is providing funding for DCA to advise and support for front-line community organisations to access grant funding to ease the hardship caused by the increased cost of living.

15 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

VCS Emergencies Partnership preparedness
Administered via the British Red Cross Society, this is funding DCA to help local organisations ensure they are prepared to work together to assist local emergencies. £6,000 of new income was received and expended in 2023/24. There is no carry forward balance.

16 Unrestricted funds

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

	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	483,711	67,072	(59,603)	-	491,180

Previous year:	At 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	442,403	31,640	(150,991)	160,659	483,711

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024
	£	£	£
At 31 March 2024:			
Intangible fixed assets	1,680	-	1,680
Tangible assets	20,806	-	20,806
Current assets/(liabilities)	468,694	405,092	873,786
	491,180	405,092	896,272

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£
At 31 March 2023:			
Tangible assets	20,623	-	20,623
Current assets/(liabilities)	463,088	108,412	571,500
	483,711	108,412	592,123

18 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	1,759	-
Between two and five years	7,035	-
In over five years	16,708	-
	25,502	-

19 Retirement Benefits

Durham Community Action participates in The Pension Trust's Flexible Retirement Plan, a defined contribution scheme. The plan is funded and contracted out of the state scheme.

The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The contributions payable by the charity expensed to income and expenditure amounted to £25,020 (2023: £22,339).

Contributions totalling £nil (2023: £nil) were payable to the fund at the year end.

20 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

21 Legal Status of the Charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

22 Cash generated from operations

	2024	2023
	£	£
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	304,149	(88,766)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(34,206)	(13,630)
(Gain)/loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	514
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	5,741	6,951
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(39,205)	11,132
(Decrease) in creditors	(4,214)	(179,257)
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	232,265	(263,056)

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 229119

Accounts

Charity registration number 229119

Company registration number 00309329 (England and Wales)

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Professor SJ Banks Mrs LC Bird Mrs P Buckley-Atkins Mrs J Flynn MBE Mrs A Hawkes Mrs E Kilgannon MBE Mr MJ Litchfield Mr J Robinson Professor JFF Robinson Mrs CA Smith Mrs JM Worters MBE
Secretary	Mrs KJ Burrows
Charity number	229119
Company number	00309329
Registered office	8 St. Stephens Court Low Willington Crook County Durham England DL15 0BF
Independent examiner	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle Upon Tyne Tyne and Wear England NE2 1TJ
Bankers	Lloyds Bank 54 Fawcett St Sunderland SR1 1SF
Solicitors	Muckle LLP Time Central 32 Gallowgate Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 4BF Swinburne Maddison LLP Venture House Aykley Heads Business Centre Durham DH1 5TS

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

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DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Chair's report

The end of this financial year falls as the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector continues to battle with inflationary and service demand pressures, but it is clear that the strong contribution by sector colleagues in supporting our communities with the needs they face is never more needed. The VCSE continues to enable community led action as trusted sources of practical and emotional support to their communities underpinning community resilience.

In response to this landscape, Durham Community Action has maintained our close collaborative work with colleagues in the sector, and across the Public Sector. We continued to keep in touch with the organisations and groups that played such a key role in sustaining community support networks during and in the immediate aftermath of the Covid pandemic. Building on lessons learned, 2022/23 was about supporting our communities to reopen, rebuild and to begin grasping new opportunities.

Colleagues in the VCSE (large and small organisations) are continuing to face many challenges adapting service provision to meet community needs within increasingly strained funding and rising delivery costs. Alongside this, even where funding and investment is secured, colleagues report continued difficulties with the recruitment and retention of staff.

The ongoing effects of Covid-19, poor health outcomes and financial pressures on communities, and on the VCSE's reach, their workforce, volunteering, and their growth / development did weaken capacity. The conflict in Ukraine and its direct impact on energy prices and the resultant cost of living crisis, dealt a further body blow to an already fragile sector.

In the light of all this, there are increasingly complex challenges for both the VCSE and our partners in the public sector with respect to equitable provision of public services, including health, social care, and education.

These challenges include the undermining impacts of poverty, poor and worsening mental health and the escalating rate of the cost of living. We continue to see increases in the numbers using food and fuel banks, and the growing number of new faces queuing for food and debt advice. These challenges are very evident and highly visible, and there seems little prospect of any improvement in the coming year.

Any one of the challenges which we are facing would be difficult to respond to with stretched workforces across all sectors, however the range and depth of these challenges coming together in the wake of the pandemic and cost of living crisis remains a very real concern.

Our work during the year has been responsive in nature. We were able to collaborate with our colleagues in the VCSE, and in the public sector, to support communities with information, advice, and training, as we responded to the cost-of-living crisis, and its impact on vulnerable individuals and communities.

Addressing this broad spectrum of issues, our work themes continued to prioritise:

- Health and wellbeing, including mental health
- Volunteering
- Representation, advocacy, and voice for the VCSE
- Policy and implications for communities: housing, access to services, enterprise, carbon reduction and energy, digital infrastructure and reach, and loneliness.

The three key themes that remain consistent for us, year on year, are Volunteering Support, Community Asset building, and collaborations and alignment with key VCSE support organisations.

Supporting networks and partnerships within the VCSE continued to be of crucial importance to us. As a VCSE infrastructure support provider, we play a key role in representing and championing the sector. Multi-sector partnerships in County Durham have proved to be highly effective conduits for information exchanges, problem solving, consultation and co-production in shaping new approaches to services, and never more so than during the past year.

Chair's report (continued)

Over the course of the year, we worked closely with a diverse range of funders, including commissioners, the Community Foundation and charitable grant giving trusts. Working collaboratively, funders have been hugely supportive to the sector, enabling greater flexibility, and supporting the sector as organisations adapted the ways in which they reach their beneficiaries. Through this support a lot of VCSE organisations and groups have been able to sustain, and to start the process of reshaping their income streams and activities.

Alongside many organisations in the VCSE who are reliant on a broad portfolio of funding support, we were very fortunate and grateful to have the overwhelming support of Durham County Council, Defra, the National Lottery Communities Fund, North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, the Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner, County Durham Community Foundation, and all our other funders.

Our Trustees have continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis to review income and cash flow and ensure DCA remains a proactive well run organisation which is able to respond to the needs of our beneficiaries.

Financially, we are grateful that DCA can once again look forward to the coming year with a degree of confidence, despite the continuing challenges, and the climate in which we continue to operate.

This report outlines the charity's objectives and achievements during the year to 31 March 2023 and details the arrangements that are in place to protect and develop resources.

2022/23 was a year that continued to challenge and stretch community resilience, with the cost-of-living crisis adding to the pressures that many already face in the aftermath of Covid. For DCA, our longevity in County Durham has helped us to work responsively and supportively, however the challenges on all sectors will continue to be exceptional. Alongside all our colleagues in public service, we are continuing to adapt and respond to new and emerging needs as we go.

During the year, we were awarded the Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation, a quality mark for organisations delivering volunteer centre functions. It provides assurance to volunteer centre stakeholders of the quality of our provision, and our success in being one of the first three organisations to receive the award is testament to the commitment and dedication of our Team.

As Chair, I would once again like to express my thanks and appreciation to our Staff and Trustees, who are without doubt Durham Community Action's most valuable assets. 2022 was a year of significant change, marked by the retirement of Jo Laverick as our Executive Director in September. Jo was a huge asset to DCA during 18 years of service; however, we are very fortunate that our work continues in the capable and experienced hands of Kate Burrows, who has stepped up to the Executive Director's role, having previously been DCA's Communities Manager.

On behalf of all the Members, Staff and Trustees I would also like to express special thanks and appreciation to our funders and all those who placed their faith in us to continue our support for the sector.

Mrs Jan Worters MBE
Chair of Executive Committee

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

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

Objectives and activities

The purpose of the charity is 'to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of County Durham and the surrounding areas without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions, by associating together the said inhabitants and the statutory authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance the welfare of the said inhabitants with the object of improving their conditions of life, through any or all of the following:

(a) the relief of poverty.
(b) the advancement of education.
(c) the advancement of health.
(d) the relief of unemployment.
(e) the promotion of urban and rural regeneration; and
(f) such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined.'

ABOUT DCA AND OUR VALUES

Durham Community Action (DCA) works with and for communities across County Durham. We believe County Durham is a better place for having thriving community organisations. We run DCA well, so we can support community organisations by:

- Providing expertise and advice which is tailored to needs and circumstances.
- Supporting and nurturing new community initiatives
- Enabling good volunteering practice and opportunities.
- Representing and providing a voice for the community and voluntary sector in County Durham.

Our values	About us
Objectivity, honesty & integrity **Do the right thing** **Set high standards for the sector** **Encourage a can-do culture** **Accountability and responsibility** **Professional pride** **Enabling leadership** **Learning the lessons and sharing them** **Listening, reflecting** **Analysis and problem solving**	**Providing Expertise and Advice:** We support community organisations to do their work effectively, by providing advice, training, resources, and help to tackle challenges, and to realise their aspirations. **Supporting new initiatives:** We work with networks and communities of interest to track opportunities and challenges for the sector, and to innovate and test new approaches which strengthen our social and community infrastructure. **Enabling good volunteering:** We provide brokerage and resources to develop volunteering opportunities and good practice in volunteer involving organisations. We champion volunteering across all sectors in County Durham, and support people who are new to volunteering to find the right opportunities for them. **Providing a voice:** We apply our knowledge and expertise within the VCSE (Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector) into sector led networks, and multi-agency partnerships in County Durham, the North East and nationally. We achieve this, through effective leadership, and representing sector interests and the issues that affect communities in County Durham. Through championing the interests of our local VCSE sector, we can influence and help shape public sector policy, and the design and commissioning of local services.

Objectives and activities

Objectives, performance, and achievements
The Trustees consider the Charity Commission's guidelines on public benefit, including 'Public benefit: running a charity' (PB2) when shaping and planning the charity's objectives and activities.

We have placed an emphasis on supporting and sustaining community assets, with an objective to support the resilience of our social and community infrastructure in County Durham. Our work streams were focused primarily on three objectives:

Good progress was made in delivering against each of the three themes during the year, producing a range of outcomes that provided clear public benefits:

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations: Keeping in touch, providing support and help (information, advice, and guidance) for community organisations and groups, particularly for volunteer led groups. Supporting development and public access to community spaces and services.

Priorities	• Keeping in touch with volunteer led community groups, and providing a range of information, updates & news, advice, and guidance. • Supporting groups with funding and training, • Providing opportunities for networking and training, plus on-going support for the wider VCSE. • Supporting community groups providing informal mental health support through the Cree network • Assisting local groups planning for community-led housing initiatives.
Achievements	• 871 VCSE groups and organisations were supported with information, advice, and guidance. • The Share and Learn Network for community organisations and groups continued to thrive on-line and we provided a fully subscribed programme of networking and training activities. Membership of the network increased to 339 organisations and groups. • 809 people participated in themed workshops, including Meet the Funder, Community Buildings, Themed Meetings & Good Food Network • Collaborating with colleagues in the VCSE, we continued to provide information and training, particularly promoting safeguarding and risk awareness for staff and volunteers in the sector. We also contributed to Adult Safeguarding Awareness Week in November 2022 through a series of on-line activities and events. • We delivered the Community Hubs Development Programme, supporting a cohort of 68 community organisations through consultancy, case work and training for volunteer trustees, to put governance and business planning into place particularly focusing on energy efficiency measures. We also provided funding advice and access to small grants. • 39 organisations in the Cree network were supported, with developmental workshops and support to access grant aid.

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations (continued)

Public benefit	• As a broker and information point for the VCSE, we were able to ensure the sector had rapid access to relevant, timely guidance and advice as they built back up after Covid restrictions. We supported and advised community services about how they could manage the issues and problems which emerged for volunteer led groups, such as sustaining their volunteer base, and dealing with fuel costs and increasing demands on services. • Advice, guidance, and interventions helped to sustain community-based services delivered by volunteers, and community buildings managed by local people, helping them to establish, grow and develop the resources they need (staff, volunteers, and funding) to continue supporting their beneficiaries. • Peer to peer networks for volunteer trustees were expanded and supported, ensuring greater shared learning, problem solving and confidence building to plan and to sustain their offer. • Knowledge, understanding and access to a changed funding climate were improved within the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector. • Volunteers and front-line staff were able to work together across sectors, to develop good practice and help them to provide stronger support for their clients and user groups. Lessons learned and intelligence were shared and disseminated, to ensure a clear view of social infrastructure issues arising through cost-of-living pressures and through longer term adjustments to different ways of working and the tools required e.g., digital services and reach for the most vulnerable and isolated people.

Objective 2 - Volunteering: Support for volunteers and the volunteering infrastructure in County Durham (groups and organisations that work with volunteers, mutual aid groups, individual volunteers supporting health and wellbeing programmes, and local community action).

Priorities	• Sustaining our online County Durham Volunteering platform for recruiting volunteers and promoting opportunities. • Supporting networking with the Volunteer Co-ordinators Network membership. • Sustaining, developing and evaluating the Volunteer Bank for Covid vaccinations and immunisations approach; the development of closer relationships with Social Prescribing Link Workers and the Primary Care Networks (PCNs), so they are better connected to the Volunteer Bank to inform longer term opportunities for development. • Support and training for volunteer led groups, advice, funding and access to resources and training. • Supporting organisations with volunteers, with advice and training, particularly regarding safeguarding. • Collaboration with partners to support the on-going development of a scheme for Employee Supported Volunteering (ESV). • To ensure that volunteer involving organisations have the resources and skills they need to support volunteers and their beneficiaries safely and in full compliance with their legal obligations.

Achievements	• We were one of the first three organisations nationally to be awarded the Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (VCQA); this is the quality mark for organisations delivering volunteer centre functions and the assurance to volunteer centre stakeholders of the quality of our provision (administered by NAVCA). • 681 people, new to volunteering, were supported via the Centre for Volunteering, with advice, information, and guidance. • We developed and expanded training and support sessions and provided good practice support for organisations that are run by, and support volunteers in: volunteer recruitment & management, volunteers and the law, safeguarding, and with new workshops on Disclosure and Barring, and Cyber Security. • 46 training sessions attracted 434 delegates from 149 organisations and groups, with 71 organisations attending more than one training session. • The Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum ended the year with a membership of 239 organisations that work with volunteers. We organised and hosted 4 meetings of the Forum on-line, attracting increased participation from the membership. • We continued to inform and consult with the VCSE Safeguarding Network and provided representation on both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards in County Durham. Contributions from the Network are fed through to Safeguarding Board meetings and training events, helping to inform and shape resources. • We sustained contact and support for spontaneous and emergency volunteering activity, and assisted Town and Parish Councils with support for development of Community Resilience Planning.
Public benefit	• As a result of this work, volunteer involving organisations in County Durham are more effectively networking, sharing good practice, and offering mutual support for tackling and finding solutions to problems. • There are improved pathways for volunteers to access opportunities, develop their experience, and make contributions that are both valued and add value to civil society. • There is now a robust and efficient system of communication and collaboration between front line staff in the NHS and the VCSE sector with respect to recruitment, support, and placements for volunteers. • Volunteer led groups and organisations have support and ready access to advice and help when they need it. They are better informed and have the resources on hand that help them to ensure that their volunteers are well trained and supported.

Objective 3 - Voice: Representing and championing the VCSE (Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector) voice, through the range of strategic multi sector partnerships, and through continuing reviews of partnership working across the sector.

Priorities	• Health and wellbeing - to sustain, and ensure that a social and community infrastructure is in place, and has access to resources which help it to thrive and re-build. • Consulting VCSE organisations and service providers to build stronger local connections with Primary Care Networks and supporting Social Prescribing models and new systems for access to health care. • Consulting, surveying, and analysis of intelligence gathered from the VCSE sector and disseminating it through partnerships. • Representing community and voluntary sector interests as a member of the County Durham Together Partnership, and as a member of the Board of the County Durham Partnership (CDP). This enables DCA to collaborate with public sector colleagues to promote a joined-up policy for commissioning and funding, engaging with communities of interest in the development of new funding programmes, and influencing the provision of key services by engagement with Heads of Services. • Consulting and surveying VCSE sector service providers to gather and share intelligence about needs, and issues arising from support work in the community. Disseminating important information and best practice through multi sector partnerships. • Ensuring that the VCSE sector is fully engaged with co-production on responsive services to support mental health, access to advice providers and health care. • Ensuring that Advice in County Durham (AiCD) and 'Better Together' are mobilised to share insights and experience, as networks of countywide VCSE and specialist providers, and contributing to development and delivery of objectives arising from the Poverty Action Group. • Chairing and supporting the development of the Advice in County Durham multi-agency network as the 'go to' practitioner network for all advice agencies to come together and join up services. Network members provide advice and one to one casework support across County Durham. • Continued development of a shared approach to system and workforce development in order that front line staff and volunteers have access to the training and support they will be needing remained critical (plus the tools to provide support e.g., access to referral pathways and link workers, funding for initiatives, and for addressing needs highlighted by people in crises, triggered through health, financial or housing related issues).

Achievements	• During the year, we continued to Chair the Better Together Network, including two policy forums, and the Advice in County Durham Partnership. We also continued to contribute to the County Durham Partnership Board from a VCSE perspective. These roles have helped to inform strategic agendas for partnership working in County Durham, and for emerging new models of commissioning services. • Representing the sector on the Regional Funders Network, we helped inform and shape funders approaches to supporting the sector through recovery from the shocks of Covid and then winter storms. Working in collaboration with the County Durham Community Foundation, we also administered a micro grants scheme to support mutual aid groups with supplies, and a small grant scheme for community buildings. • We continued with development of a Connector commissioning model, to target funding into the VCSE sector more effectively, and consulted with VCSE and commissioning colleagues through a Better Together Policy Forum. • We represented VCSE interests in multi-sector Task Groups, tackling mental health, economic and community regeneration, funding and investment, and volunteering. We collaborated with partners from the local authority and NHS/ Public Health to co-ordinate communications, resources and reach into communities and responding to local needs. • Co-ordinating and managing information exchanges for the VCSE and health & social care providers about good practice particularly in rural areas, regarding social isolation, health, and wellbeing services. • Health and Wellbeing cross sector networking continues to increase in complexity and importance, with key changes in primary care, access to mental health services and the firming up of the 'wiring' of the ICS. Our focus has been on evolving changes in community based mental health support, access to and building strong social prescribing linkages with the VCSE (through the delivery of a Social Prescribing Link Workers Network), and providing representation for the VCSE into strategic governance models for the new health management systems and commissioning. • We have been working in partnership with colleagues at the Rural Design Centre to establish the architecture needed to enable Community Research Networks in rural County Durham. We have also been cross linking this with CDP and academic colleagues to assure alignment to the strategic goals of both the County Durham Health & Wellbeing Board, County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy, and the strategic vision of both the County Durham Care Partnership and the regional Integrated Care Board. Through County Durham Together, the Better Together Forum and AiCD Partnerships we continue to build collaborative responses to key themes facing our communities, including responses to the Cost-of-Living crisis, opportunities for the delivery of the Household Support Fund, and supporting the Poverty & Health Alliance feasibility group. • The ongoing development of a clearer governance framework and strategic work plan for AiCD continues to support the strength and impact of this partnership.

Public benefit	• Voluntary and community sector led partnerships are collaborating to shape community services. This will enable them to be responsive to the needs of communities that are struggling in the wake of the pandemic, and with the impacts emerging because of the economic downturn, particularly regarding mental health, food and fuel poverty and access to support and advice services. This in turn ensures that the voluntary sector is actively engaged and represented within key public sector led networks. • Collaborative coalitions are working to influence the design and delivery of public service contracts. • Front line VCS organisations are better informed and trained about the issues that affect them and the people they work with. • Funding and investment into the VCSE sector are becoming more responsive, streamlined, and targeted, and more enabling in terms of sustaining a community infrastructure through the pandemic. • The VCSE in County Durham has a strong representational base that is influencing the ways in which public services are shaped.

Volunteers

The charity provides a comprehensive range of services that promote and support volunteering across County Durham. These services are provided through a Volunteer Centre (County Durham Volunteering). The priorities and achievements for volunteering services are set out in Objective 2 above.

The charity's work is directly supported through the Trustees, all of whom are volunteers. The recruitment and management of casual volunteers is handled through the Volunteer Centre, and there are appropriate policies, procedures, and agreements in place to cover both their recruitment, and their roles and engagement with the charity's staff and work.

Our primary role regarding volunteers in any setting, is one of brokerage and advice. We support groups and organisations in the VCSE sector to recruit and support volunteers, and provide training and resources to ensure that they have compliant policies and procedures in place. Significantly, we provide training, resources, guidance, and advice about Safeguarding for volunteers and for VCSE beneficiaries.

Achievements and performance

Financial review

The result for the financial year ended 31 March 2023 showed a deficit of £88,766, compared to a surplus of £220,559 in 2022. This was split between a £41,308 unrestricted surplus from the charity's core activities, and a deficit of £130,074 on its restricted activities.

The deficit on restricted funds relates to year-on-year differences in the timing between funds being received and expended on project activity. The surplus in our day-to-day activities was encouraging, especially when viewed in the context of the ongoing challenges in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic that continued to impact our operations during the year. We are grateful that funders and partners maintained pragmatic policies. This ensured that the VCSE sector remained sufficiently resourced to maintain support, as communities began to rebuild following the prolonged periods of closure at the peak of the Covid pandemic. We ended the year with healthy reserves that will hold us in good stead to maintain delivery at current levels, when funding inevitably becomes more constrained due to the wider financial pressures within the economy.

Our proven track record of delivery enabled us to continue attracting and delivering additional fully funded activities using our existing staff resources. We were also able to plan for additional staff resources to meet increasing levels of need, and developing work to adapt and design new systems for joined up working between the VCSE and public sector services.

Financial procedures
Our financial planning follows an annual cycle, linked into the business planning and reporting rounds. The draft annual budget for organisational core costs is usually set by the Board of Trustees at the start of each financial year. Income and projected expenditure for programmes / projects and work streams during the year are factored into the budget.

The charity operates an accounting system that ring fences project / programme funding within the accounts, ensuring that monitoring and auditing systems are transparent. The Executive Committee undertakes regular monitoring of the budget on a bi-monthly basis.

Durham Community Action's accounts are subject to a full external inspection on an annual basis. The charity complies with Charity Law by lodging all accounts with the Charities Commission. The accounts are authorised and approved by the Board of Trustees and presented to members for adoption at the Annual General Meeting each Autumn.

We aim to maintain a diverse portfolio of funding sources. Forms of investment in services are also varied and include a balance of income from grants, commissions and earned income. Sources of funding include:

- Charitable Trusts: County Durham Community Foundation
- Government: Defra
- Health: North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Local Authorities: Durham County Council, Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner
- National Lottery Community Fund

Details of incoming resources for project-based activities are listed in Note 3 to the accounts.

Surplus cash balances are invested on deposit to earn interest at the best available rate having due regard to the balance between risk and reward.

Reserves policy
On 31 March 2023, the Charity's free reserves were £463,088 with an additional £108,412 held in restricted funds that are ring fenced to support specific projects.

DCA starts from a position of relative strength, with healthy reserves that we built up thanks to the support of our funders during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, DCA hasn't been immune to the wider cost pressures within the economy, and we continue to look for savings through the careful management of running costs.

The calculation of our free reserves, and the amounts that have been allocated against each category are:

Description	**Amount**
Total reserves (comprising Restricted and Unrestricted Funds)	£592,123
Deduct Restricted Funds (which are ring fenced to support specific projects)	(£108,412)
Deduct fixed assets (which are necessary for the operation of the charity)	(£20,623)
Free reserves	**£463,088**
Free reserves are ring-fenced for the following:	
Six months' core costs and estimated redundancy costs	£243,692
To cover the projected shortfall in DCA's budget for the current year	£30,000
Designated investment to implement a rural catalyst project in County Durham	£27,000
Designated fund for future organisational development	£30,000
Designated fund for the provision of services in the next business planning cycle (2024-27)	£100,000
Contingency fund	£32,396
Total	**£463,088**

In accordance with DCA's Reserves Policy, our Trustees have addressed the following priorities when determining how our reserves should be designated:

- Six months core costs and estimated redundancy costs. This is the amount that we estimate would be needed to cover staff costs, redundancy costs, and essential running costs for up to 6 months in the event of the unplanned closure of DCA. This would allow time for an orderly wind down or transfer of activities to other providers, thereby offering some protection for beneficiaries, staff and volunteers.
- Budget shortfall – this is the amount required to cover the projected shortfall in DCA's budget for the current year, so that we can continue to maintain delivery of essential services,
- Designated investment of £27k during 2023/24 to implement a rural catalyst project in County Durham, in partnership with the Rural Design Centre (RDC), and the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE). One of the existing RDC Innovation and Design Associates will be assigned to work specifically with our team for 12 months as a one-off investment. This work can not be funded by other means, and is regarded as a necessary investment to support the exploration of in-depth rural community economic development in County Durham, providing evidence to influence better policy and support for rural businesses. Community engagement and a true place-based approach, aimed at building capacity within rural communities rather than delivering things to communities, is the only viable way to deliver on economic and social objectives for rural development. This means that engagement directly with rural groups (also providing ways to engage disenfranchised individuals outside the usual groups) is essential.
- The designated fund for future organisational development will allow DCA to ramp up investment in staff training and development, and allocate extra resources to improve IT facilities and, digitise services etc. over the next 12 – 18 months. Greater use of online training and development is attracting more participants, and freeing up valuable staff time for more specialised one to one interventions.
- There are growing pressures on all community support services, and DCA's support will be under additional and significant demand by the VCSE over the next 2-3 years. Designating funds for the provision of services in the next business planning cycle (2024-27) will provide a buffer through the anticipated contraction and difficulties, when we expect to see a reduction in income whilst maintaining expenditure to continue our current range of support services.
- The contingency fund provides a hedge against inflationary cost pressures and unforeseen costs.

Investment policy and objectives

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees have the power to deposit or invest funds in any manner, including establishment of a trading arm (but to invest only after obtaining advice from a financial expert and having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification). They have adopted a conservative policy on depositing funds and choose only low risk deposits.

Risk management

The Executive Committee of Trustees has a risk management strategy that comprises:

- A Business Continuity Plan incorporating an annual review of the risks that the charity may face.
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should any of the risks materialise.

Key risks for the coming 2-3 years considered relevant to this report, together with mitigating actions that have already been taken, or which are planned for, are outlined in the table below.

These are also further considered as part of the reserves allocation policy (detailed earlier), which offsets the actual and contingent liabilities of the organisation against the combined value of all unrestricted funds.

This policy allows the charity to continue to operate on a reduced basis until alternative funding arrangements can be put in place.

Risk management (continued)

Nature of risk	Details	Mitigation
Loss of income	• Over-reliance on a small number of significant funders	• Work to secure multi-year grant funding resources from a range of key funders e.g., National Lottery Communities Fund, to provide greater security and reduce dependency on short term income. • Reduce reliance on any single funder by broadening and diversifying income streams e.g., through the development of income generating activities such as bespoke consultancy, training etc that build on the strengths of the staff team. • Support the above objective by continuing to develop niche specialities within the staff team that enable DCA to respond to need, increase its reach and to fill gaps in service provision that open up, ensuring that services are cost effective & relevant.
	• Diminishing opportunities to fund infrastructure, policy, and support services for community organisations.	• Continued close working with thematic partnerships (Volunteering and Advice) to address needs and develop improved collaboration in service provision (shared resources, co-locations, and shared intelligence).
	• Public service priorities focused on crisis interventions and removed from preventative community initiatives / development.	• Review and consolidate partnership working where possible to streamline and build capacity for shared resources with partner organisations/service providers.
Large scale transfers of public sector services and contracts	• Lack of capacity and resources to bid for large contracts. • Payment by results • Bankrolling • TUPE implications	• Ensuring formal, relevant, and bid ready consortia are in place with Memoranda of Understanding and partnership agreements. • Spread the risk and share resources and liabilities with a balance of larger and smaller, niche organisations and partners. • Ensure that Durham Community Action retains organisational scale and resources that are sufficient to deliver realistic levels of service, whilst also reacting responsively to opportunities.
Business interruption	• Impact of pandemic e.g., Covid-19 • Loss of use of office premises due to flood, fire, storm damage, terrorism, vandalism etc • Loss of IT services	• Business Continuity Plan updated with details of actions to be taken, and regularly tested. • Health & Safety Risk Assessments, and Staff provided with appropriate equipment to enable remote working. • Use of IT systems e.g., video conferencing etc to maintain regular contact with clients, partners, and team members. • Use of cloud services, and IT back-up systems and procedures to ensure that services can be quickly restored in the event of problems.

Risk management (continued)

Loss of key Trustees, and loss of key staff and skills (in the face of reduced levels of funding, or because of illness / pandemic)	• Capacity for sustaining key relationships, and ability to work responsively. • Resources to build intelligence and sustain the evidence base for influencing and shaping new work. • Inability to fulfil key contractual obligations, resulting in possible reputational damage. • Impact on strategic decision making and day to day activities	• Adopt smarter, less labour-intensive approaches to communications, information sharing and making resources available for beneficiaries. • Ensure staff engagement and training programmes are in place, optimising specialist skills and experience within the delivery team, ensuring that experienced staff are available to fill gaps in the event of the loss of key personnel. • Use of trusted contractors to fulfil tasks on a temporary basis if required. • Enabling closer co-working and collaboration between the charity's staff and partner staff members, thereby adding value to resources, and consolidating working relationships.

Plans for future periods

The charity will continue to adapt and respond in a manner that is designed to meet our primary objectives. Objectives are reviewed annually, based on shared intelligence with our colleagues and partners in the VCSE, and regarding an evolving face of public services, local government, and policy. A Stakeholder / Customer survey is currently being undertaken, which will help to shape our work, ensuring that our priorities remain focused on needs and achieving positive impacts.

As set out in the Reserves Policy, the Trustees have considered the implications for a changing landscape of public services, especially for health care, and the continuing evolution of systems for integrating health and social health care services. This is in the context of rebuilding civil society in the aftermath of Covid-19, coupled with a continuing fall back in confidence, and a more protracted than anticipated recovery period.

Over the course of the last three years, Senior Management and Trustees have been working pro-actively in dialogue with funders and commissioners. We have been collaborating on a more robust system for informing Commissioners where there are needs arising, and working with the VCSE to target resources more effectively.

2022/2023 marked the second year of the three-year Grant Funding Deed. This enables us to work in partnership with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Durham County Council, including Public Health. The Grant Funding Deed (GFD) has been brought together by public sector commissioning partners as an investment into VCSE infrastructure support and development. This is intended to enable a more collaborative and trust-based approach to funding the sector in County Durham.

During 2022/2023, DCA continued to operate a hybrid policy that enabled staff to split their time between home and office-based working, providing greater operational flexibility and directly benefiting DCA through savings on office running costs.

Demand for the charity's services remained high throughout the year, reflecting the continued need to support community groups, volunteers, and volunteering infrastructure organisations to deal with and overcome the challenges posed by the Covid pandemic. DCA's Trustees are continuing to meet on a bi-monthly basis, to review budgets, cashflows and to act if required to continue within the parameters of the agreed budget.

DCA will also explore opportunities to secure additional funding that are a comfortable fit with the charity's remit and forward work plan.

Structure, governance and management
Durham Community Action Limited is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The charity is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association that were adopted on 17 October 2013.

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission. Membership is open to any individual or organisation that meets the criteria specified in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

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

Professor SJ Banks
Mrs LC Bird
Mrs P Buckley-Atkins
Mrs J Flynn MBE
Mrs A Hawkes
Mrs E Kilgannon MBE
Mr MJ Litchfield
Mr J Robinson
Professor JFF Robinson
Mrs CA Smith
Mrs JM Worters MBE

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees
The Trustees as charity trustees have control of the Charity and its property and funds, however there is no individual exercising significant control (PSC). All the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £10 in the event of a winding up. There must be a minimum of five Trustees and a maximum of 20 Trustees.

All the charity's Trustees are volunteers and provide their time freely. Expenses are offered to cover travel costs. Trustees attending appropriate conferences and networking activities for the charity may also be reimbursed for travel costs, conference fees and occasional accommodation when an overnight stay is necessary. No Trustees benefit financially, contractually, or materially from their roles.

Our Trustees have continued to work with the Senior Management Team to monitor our policies and procedures, and to undertake a review of our Business Continuity Plan.

Officers
The honorary posts of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer are elected by serving Trustees immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

Organisation
Currently membership of the Board of Trustees stands at 11. The Executive Committee meets bi-monthly, and on an ad hoc basis if the necessity arises. There is the facility to establish ad hoc task and finish sub-groups; for example Trustees and Staff are currently collaborating on a review of DCA's policies and procedures.

Pay policy for senior staff
Salary scales for senior staff are determined by the Trustees, having due regard to remuneration for similar roles within the VCSE sector. No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

Induction and training of new trustees
New Trustees undergo orientation meetings to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Executive Committee and decision-making process, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other Trustees. All Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external and internal training events.

Key management remuneration
The Trustees hold overall responsibility for management of the organisation, its assets, staff, and funds. Responsibility for day-to-day management of the organisation, finance, employment of staff, and for providing support and resources to the Trustees to enable strategic planning, is delegated to the Executive Director. She is appointed by the Trustees to manage the operations of the charity and is an employee of the company. Despite the title, the Executive Director is neither a Director of the Company nor a Trustee of the Charity.

The Executive Director manages the charity with the support of a small Senior Management Team, comprising the Managers for Community Partnerships, Community Support, and Volunteering. Governance and finance support are provided by an external contractor, with a good working knowledge of the business. Details of the Key Management Personnel and their costs applicable during 2022-2023 are included in the accounts.

Related parties
The charity's work programme is primarily determined by the needs of the communities that it serves.

Wherever possible, DCA aligns its work with prevailing national, and local policies and priorities. We achieve this by working closely with a range of partners, including ACRE, County Durham Partnership, Durham County Council, the Office of the Durham Police & Crime Commissioner, and the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

DCA also works responsively with our colleagues in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector within County Durham, and in various community-based networks and partnerships. As a result, close working relationships are maintained with a range of other organisations, although none meet the related parties' criteria as defined in company law:

- During 2022/23 DCA maintained a Funding Agreement with Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) to provide intelligence and information for Defra about areas of policy, as it affects rural communities on a regional and county-wide basis, with respect to economic development, digital and broadband access, housing, transport, health and wellbeing, loneliness, and access to services.

- The charity maintains a strong relationship with Durham County Council and is recognised by the Council as the primary VCSE infrastructure support organisation for County Durham. This provides the council with a single conduit for public sector investment into VCSE support services. During the year DCA worked particularly closely with Public Health, both Adult and Children's Services, Environmental and the Transformation & Partnerships team at Durham County Council. The Office of County Durham's Police & Crime Commissioner also contributed funds to support work with front line community groups and organisations.

- Physical and mental health and wellbeing was an important theme during 2022/23. Working with the Integrated Care Board, and wider Integrated Care System (ICS) partners, we developed a programme of work to reinforce VCSE engagement in new and emerging governance structures for primary and secondary care.

- We were represented on and supported a range of networks and partnerships including the County Durham Partnership Board, County Durham Economic Partnership, the Better Together VCSE Forum, and the Advice in County Durham Partnership.

- The Food Durham Partnership, and the Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum (comprising 239 organisations engaged in volunteering across the North East) were amongst the networks and organisations that we chaired or supported during the year.

Independent Examiner

The members appoint the Independent Examiner at the Annual General Meeting. A resolution recommending reappointment for 2023/24 will be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

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

Mrs JM Worters MBE
Trustee

Date: 21 September 2023

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Durham Community Action Limited (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or

2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3 the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or

4 the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

N.C

Nick Cunningham FCCA
Robson Laidler Accountants Limited

Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE2 1TJ
England

Dated: 21-9-2023

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:					
Charitable activities	3	-	815,791	815,791	858,931
Other trading activities	4	18,010	-	18,010	28,631
Investments		13,630	-	13,630	525
Total income		31,640	815,791	847,431	888,087
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	150,991	785,206	936,197	667,528
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(119,351)	30,585	(88,766)	220,559
Gross transfers between funds		160,659	(160,659)	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		41,308	(130,074)	(88,766)	220,559
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		442,403	238,486	680,889	460,330
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		483,711	108,412	592,123	680,889

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:				
Charitable activities	3	-	858,931	858,931
Other trading activities	4	28,631	-	28,631
Investments		525	-	525
Total income		29,156	858,931	888,087
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	5	97,160	570,368	667,528
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(68,004)	288,563	220,559
Gross transfers between funds		216,969	(216,969)	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		148,965	71,594	220,559
Fund balances at 1 April 2021		293,438	166,892	460,330
Fund balances at 31 March 2022		442,403	238,486	680,889

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		20,623		4,435
Current assets					
Debtors	12	7,002		18,134	
Cash at bank and in hand		616,340		889,419	
		623,342		907,553	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(51,842)		(231,099)	
Net current assets			571,500		676,454
Total assets less current liabilities			592,123		680,889
Income funds					
Restricted funds	14		108,412		238,486
Unrestricted funds			483,711		442,403
			592,123		680,889

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The director acknowledges her responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 21 September 2023

Janice M. Worters

Mrs JM Worters MBE
Trustee

Company Registration No. 00309329

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	19		(263,056)		345,889
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(23,653)		-	
Investment income received		13,630		525	
Net cash (used in)/generated from investing activities			(10,023)		525
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents			(273,079)		346,414
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			889,419		543,005
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			616,340		889,419

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Durham Community Action Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 8 St. Stephens Court, Low Willington, Crook, County Durham, DL15 0BF, England.

1.1 Accounting convention

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

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

Durham Community Action Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity entry under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have considered a period of 12 months from the balance sheet date and consider no further disclosures relating to the charity's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made.

1.2 Charitable funds

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

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

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.3 Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income received by way of grants, donations and gifts is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant;
- Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance;
- Rental & other income are recognised on a receivable basis;
- 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.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.4 Expenditure

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

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure includes VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:
- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income;
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

1.5 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

CRM system assets	25% straight line

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

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

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

Leasehold land and buildings	25% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% reducing balance

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

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

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

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.9 Taxation

As a charity, the company is exempt from tax on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.10 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the charity has a legal or constructive present obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the charity will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting end date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value. When a provision is measured at present value, the unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in net income/(expenditure) in the period in which it arises.

1.11 Debtors/creditors due within one year

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectation of future events that are believed to be reasonable under circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

Critical areas of judgement

In categorising leases as finance leases or operating leases, the Trustees make judgements as to whether significant risk and rewards or ownership have transferred to the charity as lessee.

In recognising income from projects, the trustees make judgements as to whether the conditions of income have been met.

3 Charitable activities

	Support & Advisory 2023 £	Community Development 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from Charitable Activities	521,756	294,035	815,791	858,931
Income from Charitable Activities				
ACRE	-	42,585	42,585	42,585
Durham County Council	338,304	120,000	458,304	308,069
Durham Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
National Lottery Community Fund - RC North East and Cumbria Region	-	116,200	116,200	100,386
Soil Association	2,000	-	2,000	18,000
County Durham CCG	-	-	-	79,970
MHLDF	116,000	-	116,000	116,000
County Durham Community Foundation	35,000	6,750	41,750	15,000
Supporting Community Buildings	-	-	-	123,000
Other	20,452	8,500	28,952	37,336
	521,756	294,035	815,791	858,931

Other includes grants totalling £nil (2022: £5,780) from VONNE, £nil (2022: £15,000) from Communities CAN, £8,500(2022: £5,500) from NAVCA, £525 (2022: £nil) from Weardale Area Action Partnership, £15,000 (2022: £Nil) from North East & Cumbria Integrated Care Board and £4,927 (2022: £11,056) from sundry funders.

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Consultancy	18,010	28,631

5 Charitable activities

	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£
Staff costs	567,439	471,414
Consultancy	66,246	40,675
Meeting expenses	3,687	744
Grants to small communities	194,718	69,249
	832,090	582,082
Share of support costs (see note 6)	97,881	81,833
Share of governance costs (see note 6)	6,226	3,613
	936,197	667,528

6 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	Support costs	Governance costs	2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Depreciation	7,465	-	7,465	1,554	-	1,554
Operating lease charges	27,126	-	27,126	27,126	-	27,126
Marketing and promotion	856	-	856	2,430	-	2,430
Cleaning and welfare	3,654	-	3,654	2,539	-	2,539
Electricity, gas and water	11,421	-	11,421	5,635	-	5,635
Repairs and renewals	443	-	443	2,846	-	2,846
Insurance	2,689	-	2,689	3,250	-	3,250
Staff travel and training	2,732	-	2,732	1,654	-	1,654
Printing, postage and telephone	9,083	-	9,083	7,523	-	7,523
Publications and subscriptions	8,044	-	8,044	7,700	-	7,700
Computer costs	24,308	-	24,308	19,519	-	19,519
Sundries	60	-	60	57	-	57
Independent examination	-	3,564	3,564	-	3,360	3,360
Legal and professional	-	2,662	2,662	-	253	253
	97,881	6,226	104,107	81,833	3,613	85,446
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	97,881	6,226	104,107	81,833	3,613	85,446

7 Trustees

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

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

8 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Executive director	1	1
Field workers	14	14
Administrator	1	1
Total	16	16

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	499,067	417,492
Social security costs	46,033	35,904
Other pension costs	22,339	18,018
	567,439	471,414

Key management remuneration
The key management of the charity comprise the Executive Director, Community Support Manager, Community Partnerships Manager and the Volunteering Development Manager. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £185,624 (2022 : £139,736).

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

9 Taxation

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

10 Intangible fixed assets

	CRM system assets
	£
Cost	
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	18,000
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	18,000
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	-
At 31 March 2022	-

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	9,539	52,955	62,494
Additions	-	23,653	23,653
Disposals	-	(2,884)	(2,884)
At 31 March 2023	9,539	73,724	83,263
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 April 2022	9,539	48,520	58,059
Depreciation charged in the year	-	6,951	6,951
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	(2,370)	(2,370)
At 31 March 2023	9,539	53,101	62,640
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2023	-	20,623	20,623
At 31 March 2022	-	4,435	4,435

12 Debtors

	2023	2022
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	-	734
Prepayments and accrued income	7,002	17,400
	7,002	18,134

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other taxation and social security	193	-
Accruals and deferred income	51,649	231,099
	51,842	231,099

Included within accruals and deferred income is deferred income of £44,358 (2022: £224,827) relating to project income received in advance of entitlement.

14 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
CDCF Mental Health Emergency Welfare	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
CDCF Pathways to Accessible Volunteering	-	30,000	(30,000)	-	-
Community Buildings Energy Audit	-	120,000	(120,000)	-	-
Community Hubs Project	22,081	116,200	(138,281)	-	-
County Durham Community Foundation	3,000	6,750	(9,750)	-	-
Covid 19 Vaccination Centre	22,912	-	(22,000)	-	912
Crook hall Community Development Project	-	4,927	(4,927)	-	-
DCC - Volunteering and Infastructure Support	-	338,304	(177,645)	(160,659)	-
Defra - ACRE Funding	-	42,585	(42,585)	-	-
Durham PCVC Fund	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
MHLDF Right Care Right Place Support	120,000	116,000	(136,000)	-	100,000
NAVCA VCS Emergencies Partnership	-	8,500	(8,500)	-	-
North East & Cumbria ICB	-	15,000	(7,500)	-	7,500
Sport England TIF Fund	201	-	(201)	-	-
Supporting Community Buildings	52,292	-	(52,292)	-	-
Sustainable Food Places Phase 3	18,000	2,000	(20,000)	-	-
Weardale Area Action Partnership	-	525	(525)	-	-
	238,486	815,791	(785,206)	(160,659)	108,412

The transfers between funds reflect the cross-charging of staff costs.

14 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

CDCF Mental health Emergency Welfare
Funding to advise and support 5 front-line organisations distributing emergency cash payments for people experiencing poor mental health and financial shock.

CDCF Pathways to Accessible Volunteering
Funding to research and map current opportunities for formal and informal neighbourhood volunteering across County Durham and accessibility into those opportunities.

Community Buildings Energy Audit
Funding to aid community organisations to carry out energy efficiency audits.

Community Hubs Project
National Lottery funded 3 year project to develop community hubs.

Durham County Council - Mutual Aid & VCS Emergency Support
This project is funded by Durham County Council. It is focused on the volunteer bank, and developmental support for mutual aid groups.

Covid-19 Vaccination Centre Volunteer Expenses
Administration of a fund to provide travel expenses to volunteers assisting at Covid-19 vaccination and lateral testing centres.

Crook Hall Community Development Project
Funding for the development of Crook Community Hall.

Durham County Council Volunteering and Infrastructure Structure
Grant funding agreement with Durham County Council for the provision of support services to the Voluntary & Community Sector across County Durham.

Defra - ACRE funding
Provision of strategic support to rural communities, sharing learning on sustainable funding models, and providing access to local intelligence.

Durham Police, Crime & Victims Commissioner (PCVC) Fund
Provision of advice and signposting to organisations providing specialist support for people, including volunteering, mutual aid groups, link workers, and assistance with liaison meetings & on-line training.

MHLDF Right Care Right Place Community Resilience Support
Provision of funding to the VCSE to support the provision of services that address community mental health needs.

NAVCA VCS Emergencies Partnership
Provision of local intelligence and knowledge to NAVCA re volunteering during Covid-19.

NE & NC ICB
Funding to support the development of a volunteering framework, a quality assurance method to ensure volunteering best practice with Mental Health Hubs.

Sport England Gypsy Romany Travellers TIF Fund
Administration of a fund to provide sports / training equipment to support and promote the health and wellbeing of the Gypsy, Romany & Traveller community within County Durham.

Supporting Community Buildings
Grant initiative to enable Durham Community Action and East Durham Trust to practical advice, funding, and support to assist community buildings emerging from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

14 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

Sustainable Food Places Phase 3 Good Food Movement
Pilot Soil Association funded initiative to develop an online 'Community Good Food Forum' that will engage the public to facilitate greater involvement in good food, new partnerships, information sharing and policy influencing.

Weardale Area Action Partnership
Provision of resilience training to prepare community volunteers to assist in local emergencies.

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	20,623	-	20,623	4,435	-	4,435
Current assets/(liabilities)	463,088	108,412	571,500	437,968	238,486	676,454
	483,711	108,412	592,123	442,403	238,486	680,889

16 Retirement Benefits

Durham Community Action participates in The Pension Trust's Flexible Retirement Plan, a defined contribution scheme. The plan is funded and contracted out of the state scheme.

The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The contributions payable by the charity expensed to income and expenditure amounted to £22,339 (2022: £18,018).

Contributions totalling £nil (2022: £nil) were payable to the fund at the year end.

17 Related party transactions

Mr John Robinson was an elected member of Durham County Council when DCA's three-year grant funding deed was approved, however he was not involved in the decision to grant funding. There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

18 Legal Status of the Charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

19 Cash generated from operations

	2023	2022
	£	£
(Deficit)/surpus for the year	(88,766)	220,559
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(13,630)	(525)
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	514	-
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	6,951	1,554
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	11,132	(9,722)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(179,257)	134,023
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	(263,056)	345,889

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 229119

Accounts

Charity registration number 229119

Company registration number 00309329 (England and Wales)

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Professor SJ Banks	
	Mrs LC Bird	
	Mrs P Buckley-Atkins	
	Mrs J Flynn MBE	
	Mrs A Hawkes	(Appointed 23 September 2021)
	Mrs E Kilgannon MBE	(Appointed 23 September 2021)
	Mr MJ Litchfield	
	Mr J Robinson	
	Professor JF F Robinson	(Appointed 23 September 2021)
	Mrs CA Smith	
	Mrs JM Worters MBE	
Secretary	Mrs K Burrows	
Charity number	229119	
Company number	00309329	
Registered office	8 St. Stephens Court Low Willington Crook County Durham England DL15 0BF	
Independent examiner	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle Upon Tyne Tyne and Wear England NE2 1TJ	
Bankers	Lloyds Bank 54 Fawcett St Sunderland SR1 1SF	
Solicitors	Muckle LLP Time Central 32 Gallowgate Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 4BF	
	Swinburne Maddison LLP Venture House Aykley Heads Business Centre Durham DH1 5TS	

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

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DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

CHAIR'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Emerging from the extended periods of lockdown during 2021, we have been taking stock and building on the close collaborative work with our colleagues in the VCSE (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise) sector, and in the Public Sector.

Having adjusted to working remotely, we continued to prioritise keeping in touch with organisations and groups that were sustaining community support networks at whatever levels they and we could. The last year was a time for re-setting and building on lessons learned. It was also a time for shining more of a light on the ramifications of the pandemic for communities and people.

The effects of Covid on communities, and on the VCSE's reach, their workforce, volunteering, and their growth / development did weaken capacity. Our social and community infrastructure was undermined, and we expect recovery to take shape over a much longer than anticipated period, years rather than months.

This vulnerability was compounded by a succession of Winter storms, with an expectation that severe weather and the impacts it has on community infrastructure is being designated a 'new normal,' as climate change has become more tangible in the public eye.

There are increasingly complex challenges for both the VCSE and our partners in the public sector with respect to equitable provision of public services, including health, social care, and education.

These challenges include the undermining impacts of poverty, poor and worsening mental health and the escalating rate of the cost of living. We are already seeing discomfiting increases in the numbers using food and fuel banks, and the growing number of new faces queuing for food and debt advice. These challenges are now even more evident, highly visible, and will become more acute in the coming year.

Any one of the challenges which we are facing would be difficult to respond to with tired and dispirited workforces across all sectors, however the range and depth of these challenges coming together in the wake of the pandemic and cost of living crisis is a very real concern.

Our work during the year was responsive in nature. We were able to collaborate with our colleagues in the VCSE, and in the public sector, to support communities with information, advice, and training, as volunteers responded to the fall out of the Winter storms and increasing levels of isolation.

Addressing this broad spectrum of issues, our work themes prioritised:

- Health and wellbeing, including mental health
- Volunteering
- Representation, advocacy, and voice for the VCSE
- Policy and implications for communities: housing, access to services, enterprise, carbon reduction and energy, digital infrastructure and reach, and loneliness.

The three key themes that remained consistent for us, year on year were Volunteering Support, Community Asset building, and collaborations and alignment with key VCSE support organisations.

Supporting networks and partnerships within the VCSE continued to be of crucial importance to us. As a VCSE infrastructure support provider, we play a key role in representing and championing the sector. Multi-sector partnerships in County Durham have proved to be highly effective conduits for information exchanges, problem solving, consultation and co-production in shaping new approaches to services, and never more so than during the past year.

Over the course of the year, we worked closely with a diverse range of funders, including commissioners, the Community Foundation and charitable grant giving trusts. Working collaboratively, funders have been hugely supportive to the sector, enabling greater flexibility, and supporting the sector as organisations adapted the ways in which they reach their beneficiaries. Through this support a lot of VCSE organisations and groups have been able to sustain, and to start the process of rebuilding their income streams and activities.

CHAIR'S STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Alongside many organisations in the VCSE who are reliant on a broad portfolio of funding support, we were very fortunate and grateful to have the overwhelming support of Durham County Council, Defra, the National Lottery Communities Fund, County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Office of the County Durham Police, Crime & Victims Commissioner, County Durham Community Foundation, and all our other funders.

In terms of the future of Durham Community Action (DCA) as a going concern, our Trustees have continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis to review income and cash flow.

We were delighted to welcome three new Trustees to our Board during the year, bringing experience and insight from local community action, health and wellbeing, strategic management, and social research perspectives.

We reviewed working arrangements for our staff as we moved out of lockdown, and, through collaboration with the staff group and Trustees, we developed a hybrid working policy that enables a mix of both home and office-based working. All staff have continued to work highly effectively and have maintained their support work.

Financially, we are grateful that DCA can look forward to the coming year with a degree of confidence, despite the continuing challenges, and the climate in which we continue to operate.

This report outlines the charity's objectives and achievements during the year to 31 March 2022 and details the arrangements that are in place to protect and develop resources.

2021/2022 was a year that continued to challenge and stretch community resilience over and beyond embarkation on the road to recovery from Covid. For DCA, our longevity in County Durham has helped us to work responsively and supportively, however the challenges on all sectors will continue to be exceptional. Alongside all our colleagues in public service, we are continuing to work with the ramifications of the pandemic and to adapt and respond to new and emerging needs as we go.

As Chair, I would once again like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Staff and Trustees, who are without doubt Durham Community Action's most valuable assets.

On behalf of all the Members, Staff and Trustees I would also like to express special thanks and appreciation to our funders and all those who placed their faith in us to continue our support for the sector.

Mrs Jan Worters MBE
Chair of Executive Committee

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

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

Objectives and activities

The purpose of the charity is 'to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of County Durham and the surrounding areas without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions, by associating together the said inhabitants and the statutory authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance the welfare of the said inhabitants with the object of improving their conditions of life, through any or all of the following:

(a) the relief of poverty.
(b) the advancement of education.
(c) the advancement of health.
(d) the relief of unemployment.
(e) the promotion of urban and rural regeneration; and
(f) such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined.'

ABOUT DCA AND OUR VALUES

Durham Community Action works with and for communities across County Durham. We believe County Durham is a better place for having thriving community organisations. We run DCA well, so we can support community organisations by:

- Providing expertise and advice which is tailored to needs and circumstances.
- Supporting and nurturing new community initiatives
- Enabling good volunteering practice and opportunities.
- Representing and providing a voice for the community and voluntary sector in County Durham.

Our values	About us
Objectivity, honesty & integrity **Do the right thing** **Set high standards for the sector** **Encourage a can-do culture** **Accountability and responsibility** **Professional pride** **Enabling leadership** **Learning the lessons and sharing them.** **Listening, reflecting** **Analysis and problem solving**	**Providing Expertise and Advice:** We support community organisations to do their work effectively, by providing advice, training, resources, and help to tackle challenges, and to realise their aspirations. **Supporting new initiatives:** We work with networks and communities of interest to track opportunities and challenges for the sector, and to innovate and test new approaches which strengthen our social and community infrastructure. **Enabling good volunteering:** We provide brokerage and resources to develop volunteering opportunities and good practice in volunteer involving organisations. We champion volunteering across all sectors in County Durham, and support people who are new to volunteering to find the right opportunities for them. **Providing a voice:** We apply our knowledge and expertise within the VCS into sector led networks, and multi-agency partnerships in County Durham, the North East and nationally. We achieve this, through effective leadership, and representing sector interests and the issues that affect communities in County Durham. Through championing the interests of our local VCSE sector, we can influence and help shape public sector policy, and the design and commissioning of local services.

Objectives, performance, and achievements
The Trustees consider the Charity Commission's guidelines on public benefit, including 'Public benefit: running a charity' (PB2) when shaping and planning the charity's objectives and activities.

We have placed an emphasis on supporting and sustaining community assets, with an objective to support the resilience of our social and community infrastructure in County Durham. Our work streams were focused primarily on three objectives:

Good progress was made in delivering against each of the three themes during the year, producing a range of outcomes that provided clear public benefits:

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations: Keeping in touch, providing support and help (information, advice, and guidance) for community organisations and groups, particularly for volunteer led groups. Supporting development and public access to community spaces and services.

Priorities	• Keeping in touch with volunteer led community groups, and providing a range of information, updates & news, advice, and guidance. • Supporting groups with funding and training, • Providing opportunities for networking and training, plus on-going support for the wider Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE). • Supporting community groups providing informal mental health support through the Cree network • Assisting local groups planning for community-led housing initiatives.
Achievements	• 766 VCSE groups and organisations were supported with information, advice, and guidance. • The Share and Learn Network for community organisations and groups continued to thrive on-line and we provided a fully subscribed programme of networking and training activities. Membership of the network increased to 327 organisations and groups. The network has a closed Facebook page that now has an active membership of 115 organisations. • 414 people participated in themed workshops, including three Meet the Funder events, and Community Buildings. • Collaborating with colleagues in the VCSE, we continued to provide information and training, particularly promoting safeguarding and risk awareness for staff and volunteers in the sector. We also contributed to Adult Safeguarding Awareness Week in November through a series of on-line activities and events. • We continued with developmental support for the Community Hubs Programme, supporting a cohort of 47 community organisations through consultancy, case work and training for volunteer trustees, to put governance and business planning into place. We also provided funding advice and access to small grants. • 39 organisations in the Cree network were supported, with developmental workshops and support to access grant aid.

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations (continued)

Public benefit	• As a broker and information point for the VCSE, we were able to ensure the sector had rapid access to relevant, timely guidance and advice as they sought resources to re-open and/or to re-build their activity programmes after being closed due to Covid. We supported and advised community services about how they could manage and ensure their continuing compliance and safety within new and rapidly changing guidelines and regulations. • Advice, guidance, and interventions helped to sustain community-based services delivered by volunteers, and community buildings managed by local people, helping them to re-establish the resources they need (staff, volunteers, and funding) to continue supporting their beneficiaries. • Peer to peer networks for volunteer trustees were expanded and supported, ensuring greater shared learning, problem solving and confidence building to plan and to sustain their offer. • Knowledge, understanding and access to a changed funding climate were improved within the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector. • Volunteers and front-line staff were able to work together across sectors, to develop good practice and help them to provide stronger support for their clients and user groups. • Lessons learned and intelligence were shared and disseminated, to ensure a clear view of social infrastructure issues arising through recovery, further crises (triggered by impacts of Winter storms), and then through longer term adjustments to different ways of working and the tools required e.g., digital services and reach for the most vulnerable and isolated people.

Objective 2. Volunteering: Support for volunteers and the volunteering infrastructure in County Durham (groups and organisations that work with volunteers, mutual aid groups, individual volunteers supporting health and wellbeing programmes, and local community action).

Priorities	• Managing our on-line Volunteering Platform for recruiting volunteers and promoting opportunities, • Supporting and training for volunteer led groups, including support for mutual aid groups: advice, funding and access to resources and training, • Supporting organisations working with volunteers, with advice and training, particularly regarding safeguarding. • Collaboration with partners to coordinate a voluntary support offer for people struggling under Covid restrictions, • Establishing, recruiting, and managing a volunteer bank to assist with Covid vaccination and testing programmes. • To ensure that volunteer involving organisations have the resources and skills they need to support volunteers and their beneficiaries safely and in full compliance with their legal obligations.
Achievements	• 705 people, new to volunteering, were supported via the Centre for Volunteering, with advice, information, and guidance. • 247 volunteers were actively volunteering with the Volunteer Bank at the end of the year, all of whom we recruited and provided induction training for. • We developed and expanded training and support sessions on-line and provided good practice support for organisations that are run by, and support volunteers in: remote working practices, safeguarding, volunteer recruitment, and supporting younger volunteers. Specific developmental sessions included volunteers and the law and safeguarding. • 42 training sessions attracted 342 delegates from 120 organisations and groups. During the year 49 new volunteer led groups linked with us through our training programme. • The Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum ended the year with a membership of 270 organisations that work with volunteers. We organised and hosted 4 meetings of the Forum on-line, attracting increased participation from the membership. • We continued to inform and consult with the VCSE Safeguarding Network and provided representation on both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards in County Durham. Contributions from the Network are fed through to Safeguarding Board meetings and training events, helping to inform and shape resources. • We sustained contact and support for mutual aid groups across County Durham, picking up messages from their contacts with vulnerable people, and assisting Town and Parish Councils with support for development of Community Resilience Planning.
Public benefit	• As a result of this work, volunteer involving organisations in County Durham are more effectively networking, sharing good practice, and offering mutual support for tackling and finding solutions to problems. • There are improved pathways for volunteers to access opportunities, develop their experience and make contributions that are both valued and add value to civil society. • There is now a robust and efficient system of communication and collaboration between front line staff in the NHS and the VCSE sector with respect to recruitment, support, and placements for volunteers. • Volunteer led groups and organisations have support and ready access to advice and help when they need it. They are better informed and have the resources on hand that help them to ensure that their volunteers are well trained and supported.

Objective 3 - Voice: Representing and championing the VCSE (Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector) voice, through the range of strategic multi sector partnerships, and through continuing reviews of partnership working across the sector.

Priorities	• Health and wellbeing - to sustain and ensure a social and community infrastructure is in place and has access to resources which help it to thrive and re-build. • Consulting VCSE organisations and service providers to build stronger local connections with Primary Care Networks and supporting planning for revised Social Prescribing models and new systems for access to health care. • Consulting, surveying, and analysis of intelligence gathered from the VCSE sector and disseminating it through partnerships. • Representing community and voluntary sector interests as a member of the County Durham Together Partnership, various Task groups (Funding and Volunteering) and as a member of the Board of the County Durham Partnership. This enables DCA to collaborate with public sector colleagues to promote a joined-up policy for commissioning and funding, engaging with communities of interest in the development of new funding programmes, and influencing the provision of key services by engagement with Heads of Services. • Consulting and surveying VCSE sector service providers to gather and share intelligence about needs, and issues arising from support work in the community. Disseminating important information and best practice through multi sector partnerships. • Ensuring that the VCSE sector is fully engaged with co-production on responsive services to support mental health, access to advice providers and health care • Ensuring that Advice in County Durham and 'Better Together' are mobilised to share insights and experience, as networks of countywide VCSE and specialist providers, and contributing to development and delivery of objectives arising from the Poverty Action Group. • Chairing and supporting the review and development of the Advice in County Durham multi-agency network as the 'go to' practitioner network for all agencies to come together and join up services. Network members provide advice and one to one casework support across County Durham.

Objective 3 - Voice (continued)

Achievements	• During the year, we continued to Chair the Better Together Network, including two policy forums, and the Advice in County Durham Partnership. We also continued to contribute to the County Durham Partnership Board from a VCS perspective. These roles have helped to inform strategic agendas for partnership working in County Durham, and for emerging new models of commissioning services. • Representing the sector on the Regional Funders Network, we helped inform and shape funders approaches to supporting the sector through recovery from the shocks of Covid and then winter storms. Working in collaboration with the County Durham Community Foundation, we also administered a micro grants scheme to support mutual aid groups with supplies, and a small grant scheme for community buildings. • We continued with development of a Connector commissioning model, to target funding into the VCSE sector more effectively, and consulted with VCSE and commissioning colleagues through a Better Together Policy Forum. • We represented VCSE interests in multi-sector Task Groups, tackling mental health, funding and investment, and volunteering. We collaborated with partners from the local authority and NHS/Public Health to coordinate communications, resources and reach into communities and responding to local needs. We also represented the VCSE into the Community Cell for County Durham, providing regular updates on issues and impacts for the sector. • Co-ordinating and managing information exchanges for the VCSE and health & social care providers about good practice particularly in rural areas, regarding social isolation, health, and wellbeing services. This included leadership of workshops about the VCSE in County Durham, for NHS staff based in Primary Care practices and Hospital Foundation Trusts. • Under our leadership, the Advice in County Durham Partnership compiled and supported a successful three-year funding bid to develop the partnership. We also consulted and drew up plans for a membership survey and a plan for surveying debt advice providers services in the County. We refreshed and confirmed a governance model for the Advice Partnership, so that partners are robust enough to manage future investment opportunities, together with any future resultant conflicts of interest that may arise.
Public benefit	• Voluntary and community sector led partnerships are collaborating to shape community services. This will enable them to be responsive to the needs of communities that are struggling in the wake of the pandemic, and with the impacts emerging because of the economic downturn, particularly regarding mental health, food and fuel poverty and access to support and advice services. This in turn ensures that the voluntary sector is actively engaged and represented within key public sector led networks. • Collaborative coalitions are working to influence the design and delivery of public service contracts. • Front line VCS organisations are better informed and trained about the issues that affect them and the people they work with. • Funding and investment into the VCSE sector are becoming more responsive, streamlined, and targeted, and more enabling in terms of sustaining a community infrastructure through the pandemic. • The VCSE in County Durham has a strong representational base that is influencing the ways in which public services are shaped.

Volunteers

The charity provides a comprehensive range of services that promote and support volunteering across County Durham. These services are provided through a Volunteer Centre (County Durham Volunteering). The priorities and achievements for volunteering services are set out in Objective 2 above.

The charity's work is directly supported through the Trustees, all of whom are volunteers. The recruitment and management of casual volunteers is handled through the Volunteer Centre, and there are appropriate policies, procedures, and agreements in place to cover both their recruitment, and their roles and engagement with the charity's staff and work.

Our primary role regarding volunteers in any setting, is one of brokerage and advice. We support groups and organisations in the VCSE sector to recruit and support volunteers and provide training and resources to ensure that they have compliant policies and procedures in place. Significantly, we provide training, resources, guidance, and advice about Safeguarding for volunteers and for VCSE beneficiaries.

Financial review

The result for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 showed a surplus of £220,559, compared to a surplus of £142,258 in 2021. This was split between a £148,965 unrestricted surplus from the charity's core activities, and a surplus of £71,594 on its restricted activities.

The surplus on restricted funds relates to year-on-year differences in the timing between funds being received and expended on project activity. The surplus in our day-to-day activities was encouraging, especially when viewed in the context of the continuing challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic that impacted our operations throughout the year. We are grateful that funders and partners maintained pragmatic policies. This ensured that the VCSE sector remained sufficiently resourced to maintain support, as communities began to rebuild following prolonged periods of closure during the peak of the Covid pandemic. We ended the year with a healthy surplus which bolstered our reserves. This will hold us in good stead to maintain delivery at current levels, when funding inevitably becomes more constrained due to the wider financial pressures within the economy.

Our proven track record of delivery enabled us to continue attracting and delivering additional fully funded activities using our existing staff resources. We were also able to plan for additional staff resources to meet increasing levels of need and developing work to adapt and design new systems for joined up working between the VCS and public sector services.

Financial procedures
Our financial planning follows an annual cycle, linked into the business planning and reporting rounds. The draft annual budget for organisational core costs is usually set by the Board of Trustees at the start of each financial year. Income and projected expenditure for programmes / projects and work streams during the year are factored into the budget.

The charity operates an accounting system that ring fences project / programme funding within the accounts, ensuring that monitoring and auditing systems are transparent. The Executive Committee undertakes regular monitoring of the budget on a bi-monthly basis.

Durham Community Action's accounts are subject to a full external inspection on an annual basis. The charity complies with Charity Law by lodging all accounts with the Charities Commission. The accounts are authorised and approved by the Board of Trustees and presented to members for adoption at the Annual General Meeting each Autumn.

We aim to maintain a diverse portfolio of funding sources. Forms of investment in services are also varied and include a balance of income from grants, contracts, commissions and earned income. Sources of funding include:

- Charitable Trusts: County Durham Community Foundation
- Government: Defra
- Health: Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's)
- Local Authorities: Durham County Council, Office of the Durham Police, Crime & Victims' Commissioner
- National Lottery Community Fund

Details of incoming resources for project-based activities are listed in Note 4 to the accounts.

Surplus cash balances are invested on deposit to earn interest at the best available rate having due regard to the balance between risk and reward.

Reserves policy
On 31 March 2022, the Charity's free reserves were £437,968 with an additional £238,486 held in restricted funds that are ring fenced to support specific projects.

DCA starts from a position of relative strength, with healthy reserves that we have built up thanks to the support of our funders during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, coupled with savings from reduced running costs during enforced office closures.

These reserves provide us with a buffer and will be very important to see us through the anticipated contraction and difficulties of the next 2 - 3 years, when we expect to see a reduction in income whilst maintaining expenditure to continue our current range of support services.

Trustees are aware of growing pressures on all community support services, and DCA's support will be under additional and significant demand by the VCSE during the challenges faced by our sector over the two-three years ahead.

The Trustees have forecast that the level of free reserves required to sustain the operations of the charity will be equivalent to a minimum of six months' core costs and redundancy costs, being organisational, management and administrative support costs. Details are provided in the table below:

Description	Amount
Total reserves	£680,889
Comprising:	
Restricted funds (ring fenced to support specific projects)	£238,486
Unrestricted funds (see note 16)	£442,403
Less fixed assets	(£4,435)
Free reserves	**£437,968**
Free reserves are ring-fenced for the following:	
Six months' core costs and estimated redundancy costs	£139,579
Contribution to meet projected shortfall in the 2022/2023 budget	£26,688
Designated fund to support upgrade of DCA's IT facilities	£30,000
Designated fund for the provision of services in 2023/2024 and future years	£100,000
Unallocated reserves	£141,701
Total	**£437,968**

Reserves policy (continued)
DCA's financial situation is expected to remain stable during 2022/2023, with an anticipated modest deficit of £27k. DCA's Trustees have decided to invest £30k from reserves to further digitise DCA's services, and to upgrade IT equipment. Although this will result in an overall reduction in DCA's reserves, it is regarded as a necessary investment to ensure that DCA remains competitive and able to provide a full range of services cost effectively.

Looking ahead we anticipate that economic constraints and the cost-of-living crisis will have an impact on the availability of any new resources from our principal funders in 2023/24, and more particularly from 2024/25 onwards. We have therefore designated £100k within our reserves to ensure that service provision can be maintained in the event of a shortfall in income. We are taking steps to add resilience and contingency to strengthen our operational efficiency and will be seeking new income streams to broaden our funding mix.

Investment policy and objectives
Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees have the power to deposit or invest funds in any manner, including establishment of a trading arm (but to invest only after obtaining advice from a financial expert and having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification). They have adopted a conservative policy on depositing funds and choose only low risk deposits.

Risk management
The Executive Committee of Trustees has a risk management strategy that comprises:

- A Business Continuity Plan incorporating an annual review of the risks that the charity may face.
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should any of the risks materialise.

DCA's Business Continuity Plan was reviewed during the year, particularly regarding mitigation of the key risks arising from managing through the pandemic and subsequent development of remote working practices, IT and data use, and adoption of a Hybrid Working Policy for our staff.

These are also further considered as part of the reserves allocation policy (detailed earlier), which offsets the actual and contingent liabilities of the organisation against the combined value of all unrestricted funds.

This policy allows the charity to continue to operate on a reduced basis until alternative funding arrangements can be put in place.

The Senior Management Team and Trustees will continue to review our Business Continuity Plan on an annual basis and to remain responsive to any emerging factors in the course of our work throughout the year, which may present as a potential risk to our continuity of services.

Risk management (continued)
A table outlining our main risks and mitigating tools is provided below.

Nature of risk	Details	Mitigation
Loss of income	• Over-reliance on a small number of significant funders	• Work to secure multi-year grant funding resources from a range of key funders e.g., National Lottery Community Fund to provide greater security and reduce dependency on short term income. • Reduce reliance on any single funder by broadening and diversifying income streams e.g., through the development of income generating activities such as bespoke consultancy, training etc that build on the strengths of the staff team. • Support the above objective by continuing to develop niche specialities within the staff team that enable DCA to respond to need, increase its reach and to fill gaps in service provision that open up, ensuring that services are cost effective & relevant.
	• Diminishing opportunities to fund infrastructure, policy, and support services for community organisations.	• Continued close working with thematic partnerships (Volunteering and Advice) to address needs and develop improved collaboration in service provision (shared resources, co-locations, and shared intelligence).
	• Public service priorities focused on crisis interventions and removed from preventative community initiatives / development.	• Review and consolidate partnership working where possible to streamline and build capacity for shared resources with partner organisations/service providers.
Large scale transfers of public sector services and contracts	• Lack of capacity and resources to bid for large contracts. • Payment by result • Bankrolling • TUPE implications	• Ensuring formal, relevant, and bid ready consortia are in place with Memoranda of Understanding and partnership agreements. • Spread the risk and share resources and liabilities with a balance of larger and smaller, niche organisations and partners. • Ensure that Durham Community Action retains organisational scale and resources that are sufficient to deliver realistic levels of service, whilst also reacting responsively to opportunities.
Business interruption	• Impact of pandemic e.g., Coronavirus • Loss of use of office premises due to flood, fire, storm damage, terrorism, vandalism etc • Loss of IT services	• Business Continuity Plan updated with details of actions to be taken, and regularly tested. • Health & Safety Risk Assessments, and Staff provided with appropriate equipment to enable remote working. • Use of IT systems e.g., video conferencing etc to maintain regular contact with clients, partners, and team members. • Use of cloud services, and IT back-up systems and procedures to ensure that services can be quickly restored in the event of problems.

Risk management (continued)

Nature of risk	Details	Mitigation
Loss of key Trustees, and loss of key staff and skills (in the face of reduced levels of funding, or because of illness / pandemic)	• Capacity for sustaining key relationships, and ability to work responsively. • Resources to build intelligence and sustain the evidence base for influencing and shaping new work. • Inability to fulfil key contractual obligations, resulting in possible reputational damage. • Impact on strategic decision making and day to day activities	• Adopt smarter, less labour-intensive approaches to communications, information sharing and making resources available for beneficiaries. • Ensure staff engagement and training programmes are in place, optimising specialist skills and experience within the delivery team, ensuring that experienced staff are available to fill gaps in the event of the loss of key personnel. • Use of trusted contractors to fulfil tasks on a temporary basis if required. • Enabling closer co-working and collaboration between the charity's staff and partner staff members, thereby adding value to resources, and consolidating working relationships.

Plans for future periods

The charity will continue to adapt and respond in a manner that is designed to meet our primary objectives. Objectives are reviewed annually, based on shared intelligence with our colleagues and partners in the VCSE, and regarding an evolving face of public services, local government, and policy. A Stakeholder / Customer survey will be undertaken during the coming year, which will help to shape our work, ensuring that our priorities remain focused on needs and achieving positive impacts.

As set out in the Reserves Policy, the Trustees have considered the implications for a changing landscape of public services, especially for health care and the continuing evolution of systems for integrating health and social health care services. This is in the context of rebuilding civil society in the aftermath of Coronavirus, coupled with a continuing fall back in confidence, and a more protracted than anticipated recovery period.

Over the course of the last three years, Senior Management and Trustees have been working pro-actively in dialogue with funders and commissioners. We have been collaborating on a more robust system for informing commissioners where there are needs arising and working with the VCSE to target resources more effectively.

2021/2022 marked the second year of the three-year Grant Funding Deed. This enables us to work in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Durham County Council, including Public Health, to develop a 'Connector Model' for commissioning. This is intended to enable a more collaborative and trust-based approach to funding the sector in County Durham.

The temporary office closure early in 2021/2022 resulted in cost savings on day to day running costs, and more recently DCA has been operating a hybrid policy that enables staff to split their time between home and office-based working.

Demand for the charity's services remained high throughout the year, reflecting the continued need to support community groups, volunteers, and volunteering infrastructure organisations to deal with and overcome the challenges posed by the Covid pandemic. DCA's Trustees are continuing to meet on a bi-monthly basis, to review budgets, cashflows and to act if required to continue within the parameters of the agreed budget.

DCA will also explore opportunities to secure additional funding that are a comfortable fit with the charity's remit and forward work plan.

Structure, governance and management

Durham Community Action Limited is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The charity is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association that were adopted on 17 October 2013.

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission. Membership is open to any individual or organisation that meets the criteria specified in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

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

Professor SJ Banks	
Mrs LC Bird	
Mrs P Buckley-Atkins	
Mrs J Flynn MBE	
Mrs A Hawkes	(Appointed 23 September 2021)
Mrs E Kilgannon MBE	(Appointed 23 September 2021)
Mr MJ Litchfield	
Mr J Robinson	
Professor JF F Robinson	(Appointed 23 September 2021)
Mrs CA Smith	
Mrs JM Worters MBE	

Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees
The Trustees as charity trustees have control of the Charity and its property and funds, however there is no individual exercising significant control (PSC). All the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £10 in the event of a winding up. There must be a minimum of five Trustees and a maximum of 20 Trustees.

All the charity's Trustees are volunteers and provide their time freely. Expenses are offered to cover travel costs. Trustees attending appropriate conferences and networking activities for the charity may also be reimbursed for travel costs, conference fees and occasional accommodation when an overnight stay is necessary. No Trustees benefit financially, contractually, or materially from their roles.

In June 2021 we conducted an open recruitment process to attract new Trustees to our Board. Targeted advertising was undertaken via specialist websites including trustees-unlimited.co.uk, VONNE, and through our local networks. The process proved to be successful, and we were pleased to welcome three new Trustees bringing experience and insight from local community action, health and wellbeing, strategic management, and social research perspectives.

Our Trustees have continued to work with the Senior Management Team to review and refresh our policies and procedures, and to undertake a review of our Business Continuity Plan.

Induction and training of new Trustees
New Trustees undergo orientation meetings to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Executive Committee and decision-making process, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other Trustees. All Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external and internal training events.

Officers
The honorary posts of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer are elected by serving Trustees immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

Organisation
Currently membership of the Board of Trustees stands at 11. The Executive Committee meets bi-monthly, and on an ad hoc basis if the necessity arises. There is the facility to establish ad hoc task and finish sub-groups.

Key management remuneration
The Trustees hold overall responsibility for management of the organisation, its assets, staff, and funds. Responsibility for day-to-day management of the organisation, finance, employment of staff, and for providing support and resources to the Trustees to enable strategic planning, is delegated to the Executive Director. She is appointed by the Trustees to manage the operations of the charity and is an employee of the company. Despite the title, the Executive Director is neither a Director of the Company nor a Trustee of the Charity.

The Executive Director manages the charity with the support of a small Senior Management Team, comprising the Managers for Community Partnerships, Community Support, and Volunteering. Governance and finance support are provided by an external contractor, with a good working knowledge of the business. Details of the Key Management Personnel and their costs applicable during 2021-2022 are included in the accounts.

Pay policy for senior staff
Salary scales for senior staff are determined by the Trustees, having due regard to remuneration for similar roles within the VCSE sector. No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

Related parties
The charity's work programme is primarily determined by the needs of the communities that it serves.

Wherever possible, DCA aligns its work with prevailing national, and local policies and priorities. We achieve this by working closely with a range of partners, including ACRE, County Durham Partnership, Durham County Council, the Office of the Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner, and County Durham's Clinical Commissioning Group.

DCA also works responsively with our colleagues in the voluntary and community sector within County Durham, and in various community-based networks and partnerships. As a result, close working relationships are maintained with a range of other organisations, although none meet the related parties' criteria as defined in company law:

- During 2021/22 DCA maintained a Funding Agreement with Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) to provide intelligence and information for Defra about areas of policy, as it affects rural communities on a regional and county-wide basis, with respect to economic development, digital and broadband access, housing, transport, health and wellbeing, loneliness, and access to services.

- The charity maintains a strong relationship with Durham County Council and is recognised by the Council as the primary VCSE infrastructure support organisation for County Durham. This provides the council with a single conduit for public sector investment into VCSE support services. During the year DCA worked particularly closely with Public Health, both Adult and Children's Services, Environmental and the Transformation & Partnerships team at Durham County Council. The Office of County Durham's Commissioner for Police, Crime and Victims also contributed funds to support work with front line community groups and organisations.

- Physical and mental health and wellbeing was an important theme during 2021/22. Working with the CCG, and the Hospital Foundation Trusts, we developed a programme of work to support the VCSE with emerging needs through the period of lockdown and in planning ahead to reinforce VCSE engagement in new and emerging governance structures for primary and secondary care.

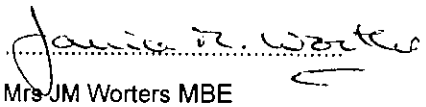
- We were represented on and supported a range of networks and partnerships including the County Durham Partnership Board, County Durham Economic Partnership, the Better Together VCSE Forum, and the Advice in County Durham Partnership.

- The Food Durham Partnership, and the Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum (comprising 270 organisations engaged in volunteering across the North East) were amongst the networks and organisations that we chaired or supported during the year.

Independent examiner
The members appoint the Independent Examiner at the Annual General Meeting. A resolution recommending reappointment for 2022/23 will be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 22 September 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



Mrs JM Worters MBE
Trustee

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Durham Community Action Limited (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or

2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3 the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or

4 the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

N.C

Nick Cunningham FCCA
Robson Laidler Accountants Limited

Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE2 1TJ
England

Dated: 26-9-2022

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income from:					
Charitable activities	3	-	858,931	858,931	777,440
Other trading activities	4	28,631	-	28,631	19,091
Investments		525	-	525	308
Total income		29,156	858,931	888,087	796,839
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	97,160	570,368	667,528	654,581
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(68,004)	288,563	220,559	142,258
Gross transfers between funds		216,969	(216,969)	-	-
Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds		148,965	71,594	220,559	142,258
Fund balances at 1 April 2021		293,438	166,892	460,330	318,072
Fund balances at 31 March 2022		442,403	238,486	680,889	460,330

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Income from:				
Charitable activities	3	52,585	724,855	777,440
Other trading activities	4	19,091	-	19,091
Investments		308	-	308
Total income		71,984	724,855	796,839
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	5	29,296	625,285	654,581
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		42,688	99,570	142,258
Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds		42,688	99,570	142,258
Fund balances at 1 April 2020		250,750	67,322	318,072
Fund balances at 31 March 2021		293,438	166,892	460,330

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	£	2021 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10		4,435		5,989
Current assets					
Debtors	11	18,134		8,412	
Cash at bank and in hand		889,419		543,005	
		907,553		551,417	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(231,099)		(97,076)	
Net current assets			676,454		454,341
Total assets less current liabilities			680,889		460,330
Income funds					
Restricted funds	13		238,486		166,892
Unrestricted funds			442,403		293,438
			680,889		460,330

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

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

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

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 22 September 2022.

Mrs JM Worters MBE
Trustee

Company Registration No. 00309329

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	£	2021 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	18		345,889		185,371
Investing activities					
Investment income received		525		308	
Net cash generated from investing activities			525		308
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			346,414		185,679
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			543,005		357,326
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			889,419		543,005

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Durham Community Action Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 8 St. Stephens Court, Low Willington, Crook, County Durham, DL15 0BF, England.

1.1 Accounting convention

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

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

Durham Community Action Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity entry under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have considered a period of 12 months from the balance sheet date and consider no further disclosures relating to the charity's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made.

1.2 Charitable funds

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

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

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.3 Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income received by way of grants, donations and gifts is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant;
- Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance;
- Rental & other income are recognised on a receivable basis;
- 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.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.4 Expenditure

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

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure includes VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:
- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income;
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

1.5 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

CRM system assets	25% straight line

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

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

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

Leasehold land and buildings	25% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% reducing balance

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

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

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

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.9 Taxation

As a charity, the company is exempt from tax on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.10 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the charity has a legal or constructive present obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the charity will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting end date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value. When a provision is measured at present value, the unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in net income/(expenditure) in the period in which it arises.

1.11 Debtors/creditors due within one year

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectation of future events that are believed to be reasonable under circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

Critical areas of judgement

In categorising leases as finance leases or operating leases, the Trustees make judgements as to whether significant risk and rewards or ownership have transferred to the charity as lessee.

In recognising income from projects, the trustees make judgements as to whether the conditions of income have been met.

3 Charitable activities

	Support & Advisory 2022	Community Development 2022	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£
Income from Charitable Activities	584,375	274,556	858,931	777,440
Analysis by fund				
Unrestricted funds	-	-	-	52,585
Restricted funds	584,375	274,556	858,931	724,855
Income from Charitable Activities				
ACRE	-	42,585	42,585	42,585
Durham County Council	308,069	-	308,069	170,000
Durham Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
National Lottery Community Fund RC North East & Cumbria	-	56,219	56,219	98,049
Soil Association	18,000	-	18,000	4,000
County Durham CCG	79,970	-	79,970	88,236
MHLDF	116,000	-	116,000	106,000
County Durham Community Foundation	15,000	-	15,000	33,900
Ballinger Trust	-	8,585	8,585	-
Supporting Community Buildings	-	123,000	123,000	-
Other	37,336	44,167	81,503	224,670
	584,375	274,556	858,931	777,440

Other includes grants totalling £5,780 (2021: £11,494) from VONNE, £15,000 (2021: £Nil) from Communities CAN, £5,500 (2021: £Nil) from NAVCA, £Nil (2021: £57,500) from Stanley Town Council and £Nil (2021: £84,239) from Groundwork UK.

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021
	£	£
Consultancy	28,631	18,475
Training and other services	-	616
Other trading activities	28,631	19,091

5 Charitable activities

	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£
Staff costs	471,414	407,378
Consultancy	40,675	45,090
Meeting expenses	744	34
Stanley Town Council	-	57,500
Spennymoor Town Council	-	21,713
Grants to small communities	69,249	39,956
	582,082	571,671
Share of support costs (see note 6)	81,833	74,674
Share of governance costs (see note 6)	3,613	8,236
	667,528	654,581

6 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2022	Support costs	Governance costs	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Depreciation	1,554	-	1,554	7,167	-	7,167
Operating lease charges	27,126	-	27,126	27,109	-	27,109
Marketing and promotion	2,430	-	2,430	1,623	-	1,623
Cleaning and welfare	2,539	-	2,539	1,849	-	1,849
Electricity, gas and water	5,635	-	5,635	5,492	-	5,492
Repairs and renewals	2,846	-	2,846	2,332	-	2,332
Insurance	3,250	-	3,250	2,743	-	2,743
Staff travel and training	1,654	-	1,654	1,467	-	1,467
Printing, postage and telephone	7,523	-	7,523	5,918	-	5,918
Publications and subscriptions	7,700	-	7,700	7,000	-	7,000
Computer costs	19,519	-	19,519	11,601	-	11,601
Sundries	57	-	57	373	-	373
Independent examination	-	3,360	3,360	-	3,360	3,360
Legal and professional	-	253	253	-	4,876	4,876
	81,833	3,613	85,446	74,674	8,236	82,910
Analysed between Charitable activities	81,833	3,613	85,446	74,674	8,236	82,910

7 Trustees

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

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

8 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2022 Number	2021 Number
Executive director	1	1
Field workers	14	13
Administrator	1	1
Total	16	15

Employment costs	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	417,492	362,817
Social security costs	35,904	30,321
Other pension costs	18,018	14,240
	471,414	407,378

Key management remuneration
The key management of the charity comprise the Executive Director, Community Support Manager, Community Partnerships Manager and the Volunteering Development Manager. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £139,736 (2021: £133,584).

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

9 Intangible fixed assets

	CRM system assets £
Cost	
At 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022	18,000
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022	18,000
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2022	-
At 31 March 2021	-

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2021	9,539	52,955	62,494
At 31 March 2022	9,539	52,955	62,494
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 April 2021	9,539	46,966	56,505
Depreciation charged in the year	-	1,554	1,554
At 31 March 2022	9,539	48,520	58,059
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2022	-	4,435	4,435
At 31 March 2021	-	5,989	5,989

11 Debtors

	2022	2021
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	734	1,106
Prepayments and accrued income	17,400	7,306
	18,134	8,412

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	231,099	97,076

Included within accruals and deferred income is deferred income of £224,827 (2021: £63,952) relating to project income received in advance of entitlement.

13 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Community Hubs Project	35,951	97,386	(90,218)	(21,038)	22,081
Sustainable Food Places Phase 3	1,217	19,000	(2,217)	-	18,000
Sport England TIF Fund	646	-	(445)	-	201
MHLDF Right Care Right Place Support	106,000	116,000	(102,000)	-	120,000
Covid-19 Vaccination Centre	23,078	1,000	(1,166)	-	22,912
Supporting Community Buildings	-	123,000	(70,708)	-	52,292
County Durham Community Foundation	-	18,000	(15,000)	-	3,000
Ballinger Trust Community Grants	-	8,585	(8,585)	-	-
DCC - Volunteering and Infrastructure Support	-	304,000	(108,069)	(195,931)	-
VONNE - Safeguarding Training Fund	-	5,780	(5,780)	-	-
NAVCA VCS Emergencies Partnership	-	5,500	(5,500)	-	-
County Durham CCG - Outreach Fund	-	45,970	(45,970)	-	-
Durham PCVC Fund	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
DCC - Mutual Aid and VCS Emergency Support	-	37,069	(37,069)	-	-
Bloom Procurement - Horden Minewater Project	-	10,056	(10,056)	-	-
Communities CAN Housing Support Project	-	15,000	(15,000)	-	-
Defra - ACRE funding	-	42,585	(42,585)	-	-
	166,892	858,931	(570,368)	(216,969)	238,486

The transfers between funds reflect the cross-charging of staff costs.

13 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

Ballinger Trust Community Grants
Micro-grant initiative for groups based in Teesdale, Wear Valley and rural Derwentside, supported by The Ballinger Charitable Trust.

Bloom Procurement - Horden Minewater Project
This project is providing community development and engagement support for Durham County Council's Low Carbon Economy Team to develop a potential warm mine-water horticulture project in Horden.

CDCF Caseworker Support for South Stanley Partnership
Provision of dedicated support for the South Stanley Partnership Revive project to improve governance, systems, procedures to help the charity secure funding & attract volunteers.

CDCF Volunteer Support Fund - Kitemark
Development of an on-line Kitemark resource to help organisations overcome barriers to volunteering, and to recognise the value of recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Communities CAN Housing Support project
Promotion, co-ordination, and support for community led housing initiatives in the South of Tyne Area, in partnership with Communities CAN.

Community Hubs Project
3 year project to develop community hubs, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund RC North East and Cumbria Region.

County Durham CCG - Outreach Funding
Provision of funding to provide outreach support for people with serious mental impairment.

Covid-19 Vaccination Centre Volunteer Expenses
Administration of a fund to provide travel expenses to volunteers assisting at Covid-19 vaccination and lateral testing centres.

Defra - ACRE funding
Provision of strategic support to rural communities, sharing learning on sustainable funding models, and providing access to local intelligence.

Durham County Council Infrastructure
Grant funding agreement with Durham County Council for the provision of support services to the Voluntary & Community Sector across County Durham.

Durham County Council - Mutual Aid & VCS Emergency Support
This project is funded by Durham County Council. It is focused on the volunteer bank, and developmental support for mutual aid groups.

Durham Police, Crime & Victims Commissioner (PCVC) Fund
Provision of advice and signposting to organisations providing specialist support for people, including volunteering, mutual aid groups, link workers, and assistance with liaison meetings & on-line training.

MHLDF Right Care Right Place Community Resilience Support
Provision of funding to the VCSE to support the provision of services that address community mental health needs.

NAVCA VCS Emergencies Partnership
Provision of local intelligence and knowledge to NAVCA re volunteering during Covid-19.

Safeguarding Training Fund
Collaborative safeguarding training initiative delivered as a regional partnership across Durham, Northumberland, Tees Valley & Tyneside co-ordinated by VONNE.

13 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

Sport England Gypsy Romany Travellers TIF Fund
Administration of a fund to provide sports / training equipment to support and promote the health and wellbeing of the Gypsy, Romany & Traveller community within County Durham.

Supporting Community Buildings
Grant initiative to enable Durham Community Action and East Durham Trust to practical advice, funding, and support to assist community buildings emerging from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sustainable Food Places Phase 3 Good Food Movement
Pilot Soil Association funded initiative to develop an online 'Community Good Food Forum' that will engage the public to facilitate greater involvement in good food, new partnerships, information sharing and policy influencing.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2022	**Restricted funds 2022**	**Total 2022**	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
	£	**£**	**£**	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2022 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	4,435	-	4,435	5,989	-	5,989
Current assets/(liabilities)	437,968	238,486	676,454	287,449	166,892	454,341
	442,403	238,486	680,889	293,438	166,892	460,330

15 Retirement Benefits

Durham Community Action participates in The Pension Trust's Flexible Retirement Plan, a defined contribution scheme. The plan is funded and contracted out of the state scheme.

The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The contributions payable by the charity expensed to income and expenditure amounted to £18,018 (2021: £14,240).

Contributions totalling £nil (2021: £nil) were payable to the fund at the year end.

16 Related party transactions

Mr John Robinson was an elected member of Durham County Council when DCA's three-year grant funding deed was approved, however he was not involved in the decision to grant funding. There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

17 Legal Status of the Charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

18	**Cash generated from operations**	**2022**	**2021**
		£	**£**
	Surplus for the year	220,559	142,258
	Adjustments for:		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(525)	(308)
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	1,554	7,167
	Movements in working capital:		
	(Increase) in debtors	(9,722)	(1,713)
	Increase in creditors	134,023	37,967
	Cash generated from operations	345,889	185,371

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 229119

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 00309329 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 229119

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND

UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

FOR

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

Robson Laidler Accountants Limited
Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 1TJ

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

TRUSTEES	Professor S J Banks Mrs L C Bird (appointed 26.11.20) Mrs P Buckley-Atkins – Treasurer Mrs J Flynn MBE - Vice chair Mrs A Hawkes (appointed 23.09.21) Mr G C Hepburn OBE (resigned 26.11.20) Mrs E Kilgannon (appointed 23.09.21) Mr M J Litchfield (appointed 16.7.20) Professor JF Robinson (appointed 23.09.21) Mr J Robinson Mrs C A Smith Mrs J M Worters MBE - Chair of Executive Committee
COMPANY SECRETARY	Mrs J Laverick
REGISTERED OFFICE	8 St. Stephens Court Low Willington Crook Co. Durham DL15 0BF
REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER	00309329 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER	229119
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 1TJ
BANKERS	Lloyds Bank PLC 54 Fawcett St Sunderland SR1 1SF
SOLICITORS	Muckle LLP Time Central 32 Gallowgate Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 4BF Swinburne Maddison LLP Venture House Aykley Heads Business Centre Durham DH1 5TS

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Chair's report

Coronavirus swept over all of us in February 2020, just a month before the end of our previous financial year. Within a period of less than three weeks, we all found ourselves living and working in circumstances that were completely new and unpredicted.

All our work, throughout the entire year, has been orientated in response to the impacts that Covid-19 is continuing to have on our communities, staff, partners, and society in the round.

Having made rapid adjustments in the face of the first lockdown in March 2020, we re-focused our priorities and built our work around them. Key areas of our work focused on:

- Support for groups in isolation, locked down and unable to open their centres or carry out activities.
- Advice, support and help for groups which diversified, and set up initiatives to provide community support, food, and deliveries.
- Support and advice for volunteers, particularly with regard to safeguarding, managing risks and for those involved in the Mutual Aid groups that sprung up in the wake of the Coronavirus lockdown.
- Surveying the sector to check on their immediate and longer-term needs and championing the response through the strategic and cross sector working groups that were established to manage the crisis, and the subsequent recovery period.

The three key themes to our work with communities lie in Volunteering support, Community Asset building, and collaborations and alignment with key VCS support organisations.

Supporting networks and partnerships within the VCS continues to be of crucial importance to us. As a VCS infrastructure support provider, we play a key role in representing and championing the sector. Multi-sector partnerships in County Durham have proved to be highly effective conduits for information exchanges, problem solving, consultation and co-production in shaping new approaches to services, and never more so than over the last year.

Maintaining contact with community groups and volunteers also assumed critical importance during lockdown. Many volunteer community activists, subjected to isolation or shielding, needed access to advice, help and funding, in order to sustain their community assets and provide capacity to continue beyond lockdown and into recovery.

Our work continued to concentrate on responding to their needs, with information, resources, advice, support, bespoke training, and lots of practical help.

Over the course of the year, we worked closely with a diverse range of funders, including commissioners, the Community Foundation and charitable grant giving trusts. Working collaboratively, funders have been hugely supportive to the sector, enabling greater flexibility, and supporting the sector as organisations adapted the ways in which they reach their beneficiaries. Through this support a lot of VCS organisations and groups have been able to sustain and to plan ahead, for when they can re-open re-build their income streams and activities.

Alongside many organisations in the VCS who are reliant on a broad portfolio of funding support, we were very fortunate and grateful to have the overwhelming support of Durham County Council, Defra, the National Lottery Communities Fund, County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Office of the County Durham Police, Crime & Victims Commissioner, County Durham Community Foundation, and all of our other funders, who responded so quickly and effectively to the crisis.

Chair's report (continued)

In terms of DCA's future as a going concern, our Trustees have continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis to review income and cash flow. We undertook regular reviews of staff, workloads, home based working capacity, and funding over the course of the year. In March 2020, we concluded that we did not need to furlough any staff through the Government funded 'Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme'. All staff are needed to maintain their support work, and we are fortunate in having sufficient confirmed funding resources to sustain this arrangement throughout the current financial year. Financially, we are grateful that DCA can look forward to the coming year with a degree of confidence, despite the continuing challenges and the climate in which we continue to operate.

This report outlines the charity's objectives and achievements during the year to 31 March 2021 and details the arrangements that are in place to protect and develop resources.

2020/2021 was a year which was truly exceptional. Alongside all our colleagues in public service, we are continuing to work with the ramifications of the pandemic and adapt and respond to new and emerging needs as we go.

As Chair, I would once again like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Staff and Trustees, who are without doubt Durham Community Action's most valuable assets. Without them, it would not be possible to generate the income that supports the community development activities.

On behalf of all the Members, Staff and Trustees I would also like to express special thanks and appreciation to our funders and all those who placed their faith in us to support the sector during this time of crisis.

Mrs Jan Worters MBE
Chair of Executive Committee

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The Trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The purpose of the charity is 'to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of County Durham and the surrounding areas without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions, by associating together the said inhabitants and the statutory authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance the welfare of the said inhabitants with the object of improving their conditions of life, through any or all of the following:

(a) the relief of poverty.
(b) the advancement of education.
(c) the advancement of health.
(d) the relief of unemployment.
(e) the promotion of urban and rural regeneration; and
(f) such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined.'

ABOUT DCA AND OUR VALUES

Durham Community Action works with and for communities across County Durham. We believe County Durham is a better place for having thriving community organisations. We run DCA well, so we can support community organisations by:

- Providing expertise and advice which is tailored to needs and circumstances.
- Supporting and nurturing new community initiatives
- Enabling good volunteering practice and opportunities.
- Representing and providing a voice for the community and voluntary sector in County Durham.

Our Values	About Us
Objectivity, honesty & integrity **Do the right thing** **Set high standards for the sector** **Encourage a can-do culture** **Accountability and responsibility** **Professional pride** **Enabling Leadership** **Learning the lessons and sharing them.** **Listening, reflecting** **Analysis and problem solving.**	**Providing Expertise and Advice:** We support community organisations to do their work effectively, by providing advice, training, resources, and help to tackle challenges, and to realise their aspirations. **Supporting new Initiatives:** We work with networks and communities of interest to track opportunities and challenges for the sector, and to innovate and test new approaches which strengthen our social and community infrastructure. **Enabling good Volunteering:** We provide brokerage and resources to develop volunteering opportunities and good practice in volunteer involving organisations. We champion volunteering across all sectors in the County, and support people who are new to volunteering to find the right opportunities for them. **Providing a Voice:** We apply our knowledge and expertise within the VCS into sector led networks, and multi-agency partnerships in County Durham, the north east and nationally. We achieve this, through effective leadership, and representing sector interests and the issues which affect communities in County Durham. Through championing the interests of our local VCS, we can influence and help shape public sector policy, and the design and commissioning of local services.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives, performance and achievements

The Trustees consider the Charity Commission's guidelines on public benefit, including 'Public benefit: running a charity' (PB2) when shaping and planning the charity's objectives and activities.

This year, we have been working in exceptional circumstances, and we adjusted our objectives to be responsive to needs which arose from the pressures placed on communities and volunteers as a result of the pandemic.

We have placed an emphasis on supporting and sustaining community assets, with an objective to support the resilience of our social and community infrastructure in County Durham. Our work streams focused primarily on:

1. Supporting Community Organisations: Keeping in touch, support and help for community organisations and groups, particularly for volunteer led groups.

2. Volunteering: Support for volunteers and the volunteering infrastructure in County Durham (groups and organisations that work with volunteers, mutual aid groups, individual volunteers supporting the Covid vaccination and testing programmes, and local community action).

3. Voice: Representing and championing the VCS voice, through the range of strategic multi sector partnerships, and through continuing reviews of partnership working across the sector.

We are still managing through the continuing impacts that Covid brings to the ways we can work and re-prioritise services and will need to continue with this set of priorities well into 2021.

Good progress was made in delivering against each of the three themes during the year, producing a range of outcomes that provide clear public benefits:

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations: Keeping in touch, support and help for community organisations and groups, particularly for volunteer led groups.

Priorities	• Keeping in touch with volunteer led community groups, and providing a range of information, updates & news, advice, and guidance. • Supporting groups with funding and training, • Providing opportunities for networking and training, plus on-going support for the wider Voluntary & Community Sector. • Supporting community groups providing informal mental health support through the Cree network • Assisting local groups planning for community led housing initiatives.
Achievements	• 789 VCS groups and organisations were supported with information, advice, and guidance. • DCA's Share and Learn Network for community organisations and groups moved on-line and continued to provide a fully subscribed programme of networking and training activities. Membership of the network increased to 273 organisations and groups. The network has a closed Facebook page that now has an active membership of 116 organisations. • 448 people participated in practical, on-line workshops (community development). • Working with colleagues in the VCS, DCA continued delivery of an action plan for training, particularly promoting safeguarding and risk awareness for staff and volunteers working remotely. DCA also contributed to Adult Safeguarding Awareness Week in November through a series of on-line activities and events. • DCA launched our Community Hubs Programme and provided tailored support for a cohort of 47 community organisations through consultancy, case work and training for volunteer trustees to put governance and business planning into place. We also provided funding advice and access to small grants. • 24 organisations in the Cree network were supported, 20 of which we helped to plan for and secure Winter Resilience Funding (supporting 330 Cree members).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objective 1 - Supporting Community Organisations (continued): Keeping in touch, support and help for community organisations and groups, particularly for volunteer led groups.

Public benefit	• As a broker and information point for the VCS, DCA was able to ensure the sector had rapid access to relevant, timely guidance and advice as national and local Covid regulations were introduced and adjusted. Working with Public Health on communications and messaging, DCA supported and advised community services about how they could manage safely and ensure their continuing compliance and safety within new and rapidly changing guidelines and regulations. • Advice, guidance, and interventions helped to sustain community-based services delivered by volunteers and community buildings managed by local people, helping to adjust and modify the ways in which they continued to support vulnerable beneficiaries. • Peer to peer networks for volunteer trustees were expanded and supported, ensuring greater, shared learning, problem solving and confidence building to manage through lockdown and survive through recovery to sustain their offer. • Knowledge and understanding of the current funding climate were improved within the Voluntary and Community Sector. • Volunteers and front-line staff were able to work together, across sectors, to develop good practice and help them to provide stronger support for their clients and user groups. • Lessons learned and intelligence were shared and disseminated, to ensure a clear view of infrastructure issues arising through the initial crisis, and then through longer term adjustments to different ways of working and the tools required e.g., digital services and reach for the most vulnerable and isolated people.

Objective 2: Volunteering: Support for volunteers and the volunteering infrastructure in County Durham (groups and organisations that work with volunteers, mutual aid groups, individual volunteers supporting the Covid vaccination and testing programmes, and local community action)

Priorities	• Consolidating our on-line Volunteering Platform for recruiting volunteers and promoting opportunities, • Tracking and supporting mutual aid groups with advice, funding and access to resources and training, • Supporting organisations working with volunteers, with advice and training. • Collaboration with partners to coordinate a voluntary support offer for people struggling under Covid restrictions, • Establishing, recruiting and managing a volunteer bank to assist with Covid vaccination and testing programmes. • To ensure that volunteer involving organisations have the resources and skills they need to support volunteers and their beneficiaries safely and in full compliance with their legal obligations.
Achievements	• 1,270 new volunteers were supported via the Centre for Volunteering, with advice, information, and guidance, an increase of 381 from the previous year. • 365 volunteers were recruited and received induction training between January and March 2021, specifically to support the vaccination and testing programmes. • We migrated training and support sessions on-line and provided good practice support for organisations which are run by, and support volunteers in: remote working practices, safeguarding, volunteer recruitment (in a pandemic) and supporting younger volunteers. Specific developmental sessions included volunteers and the law and safeguarding. • The Volunteer Co-ordinators forum ended the year with a membership of 270 organisations that work with volunteers. We organised and hosted 4 meetings of the Forum on-line, attracting increased participation from the membership.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objective 2: Volunteering (continued): Support for volunteers and the volunteering infrastructure in County Durham (groups and organisations that work with volunteers, mutual aid groups, individual volunteers supporting the Covid vaccination and testing programmes, and local community action)

Achievements	• During national Volunteers Week in June 2020, DCA organised a series of on-line networking activities and training, with a particular focus on volunteer trustees. • We continued to inform and consult with the VCS Safeguarding Network and providing representation on both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards in County Durham. Contributions from the Network are fed through to Safeguarding Board meetings and training events, helping to inform and shape resources. • We sustained contact and support for 108 mutual aid groups across County Durham, picking up messages from their contacts with vulnerable people, assisting with micro grants to purchase supplies (food and activities for households in need) and with advice and information about scams and scam alerts.
Public benefit	• As a result of this work, volunteer involving organisations in County Durham are more effectively networking, sharing good practice, and offering mutual support for tackling and finding solutions to problems. • There is an increased and more diverse range of opportunities for volunteering and an increase in the diversity and range of people volunteering their time because of furloughs or unemployment. • There are improved pathways for volunteers to access opportunities, develop their experience and make contributions that are both valued and add value to civil society. • There is now a robust and efficient system of communication and collaboration between front line staff in the NHS and VCS with respect to recruitment, support, and placements for volunteers. • Volunteer led groups and organisations have support and ready access to advice and help when they need it. They are better informed and have the resources to hand that help them to ensure that their volunteers are well trained and supported.

Objective 3 - Voice: Representing and championing the VCS (Voluntary & Community Sector) voice, through the range of strategic multi sector partnerships, and through continuing reviews of partnership working across the sector.

Priorities	• Health and wellbeing - to sustain and ensure a social and community infrastructure is in place as we emerge from lockdown, • Consulting the VCS organisations and service providers to build stronger local connections with Primary Care Networks and supporting planning for revised Social Prescribing models post Covid. • Consulting, surveying, and analysis of intelligence gathered from the VCS and disseminating it through partnerships. • Representing community and voluntary sector interests as a member of the Covid Community Cell and various Task groups (Funding and Volunteering) and as a member of the Board of the County Durham Partnership. This enables DCA to collaborate with public sector colleagues to promote joined up policy for commissioning and funding, engaging with communities of interest in the development of new funding programmes, and influencing the provision of key services by engagement with Heads of Services. • Consulting and surveying VCS service providers to gather and share intelligence about needs and issues arising from support work in the community. Disseminating important information and best practice through multi sector partnerships. • Ensuring that the VCS is fully engaged with co-production on responsive services to support mental health, access to advice providers and health care.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objective 3 – Voice (continued): Representing and championing the VCS (Voluntary & Community Sector) voice, through the range of strategic multi sector partnerships, and through continuing reviews of partnership working across the sector.

Priorities	• Ensuring that Advice in County Durham and 'Better Together' are mobilised to share insights and experience, as networks of countywide VCS and specialist providers. • Chairing and supporting the review and development of the Advice in County Durham multi-agency network as the 'go to' practitioner network for all agencies to come together and join up services. Network members provide advice and one to one casework support across County Durham.
Achievements	• During the year, DCA continued to Chair the Better Together Network, including two policy Forums, and the Advice in County Durham Partnership. We also continued to contribute to the County Durham Partnership Board from a VCS perspective. These roles have helped to inform strategic agendas for partnership working in County Durham, and for emerging new models of commissioning services. • DCA designed, coordinated, wrote up and disseminated three surveys in the early part of the year, to track how the sector was faring under Covid restrictions and any contingency planning, which could be shared with the Voluntary Emergency Liaison Group (VELG). • Representing the sector on the Regional Funders Network, we helped inform and shape funders approaches to supporting the sector through the Covid crisis. Working in collaboration with the County Durham Community Foundation, we also administered a micro grants scheme to support mutual aid groups with supplies, and a small grant scheme for community buildings. • Developed ideas and a paper for a Connector Model for commissioners, to target funding into the VCS more effectively, and proofed the strategy to be responsive to Covid impacts. • We represented VCS interests in both the Funding and Volunteering Covid Task Groups, working with partners from the local authority and health to coordinate communications, resources and reach into communities and responding to local needs. We also represented the VCS into the Covid Community Cell for County Durham, providing regular updates on issues and impacts for the sector. • Co-ordinating and managing information exchanges for the VCS and health & social care providers about good practice particularly in rural areas, regarding social isolation, health, and wellbeing services. • DCA brokered 3 sets of funding via Service Level Agreements commissioned by Stanley Town Council, Derwentside Area Action Partnership and Spennymoor Area Action Partnership on behalf of a partnership of organisations (Citizens Advice and Money Advice) to collaborate in providing money and debt advice services in Stanley, Consett and Spennymoor. • Led by DCA, the Advice in County Durham Partnership also carried out risk assessments and development of a governance model for the Advice Partnership, so that partners are robust enough to manage future investment opportunities, together with any future resultant conflicts of interest that may arise.
Public benefit	• Voluntary and community sector led partnerships are collaborating to shape community services so they can be responsive to the impacts of the Covid pandemic. This in turn ensures that the voluntary sector is actively engaged and represented within key public sector led networks. • Collaborative coalitions are working to influence the design and delivery of public service contracts. • Front line VCS organisations are better informed and trained about the issues that affect them and the people they work with. • Funding and investment into the VCS are becoming more responsive, streamlined, and targeted, and is more enabling in terms of sustaining a community infrastructure through the pandemic. • The VCS in County Durham has a strong representational base that is influencing the ways in which public services are shaped.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Result

The result for the financial year ended 31 March 2021 showed a surplus of £142,258, compared to a surplus of £82 in 2020. This was split between a £42,688 unrestricted surplus from the charity's core activities, and a surplus of £99,570 on its restricted activities.

The surplus on restricted funds relates to year-on-year differences in the timing between funds being received and expended on project activity. The surplus in our day-to-day activities was encouraging, especially when viewed in the context of the substantial operational challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the start of the year in April, and at a time when the first period of Covid lockdown was commencing, funders and partners adopted pragmatic policies to ensure the VCS remained sufficiently resourced to continue with community support activities. We were able to secure a portfolio of funding for the year at an early stage, together with additional offers of funding to enable extra activity and reach, and for adjustments to remote and on-line models of working with our partners.

This, combined with a proven track record of delivery, enabled us to continue attracting and delivering additional fully funded activities using our existing staff resources. We were also able to plan ahead for additional staff resources to meet increasing levels of need and developing work to adapt and design new systems for joined up working between the VCS and public sector services.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial procedures

Our financial planning follows an annual cycle, linked into the business planning and reporting rounds. The draft annual budget for organisational core costs is usually set by the Board of Trustees at the start of each financial year. Income and projected expenditure for programmes / projects and work streams during the year are factored into the budget.

The charity operates an accounting system that ring fences project / programme funding within the accounts, ensuring that monitoring and auditing systems are transparent. The Executive Committee undertakes regular monitoring of the budget on a bi-monthly basis.

Durham Community Action's accounts are subject to a full external inspection on an annual basis. The charity complies with Charity Law by lodging all accounts with the Charities Commission. The accounts are authorised and approved by the Board of Trustees and presented to members for adoption at the Annual General Meeting each Autumn.

We aim to maintain a diverse portfolio of funding sources. Forms of investment in services are also varied and include a balance of income from grants, contracts, commissions and earned income. Sources of funding include:

- Charitable Trusts: County Durham Community Foundation
- Government: Defra
- Health (CCG's)
- Local Authorities: Durham County Council, Police, Crime Victims Commissioner's Office
- National Lottery Community Fund

Details of incoming resources for project-based activities are listed in Note 4 to the accounts (page 23).

Surplus cash balances are invested on deposit to earn interest at the best available rate having due regard to the balance between risk and reward.

Investment policy and objectives
Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees have the power to deposit or invest funds in any manner, including establishment of a trading arm (but to invest only after obtaining advice from a financial expert and having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification). They have adopted a conservative policy on depositing funds and choose only low risk deposits.

Volunteers
The charity provides a comprehensive range of services that promote and support volunteering across County Durham. These services are provided through a Volunteer Centre (County Durham Volunteering). The priorities and achievements for volunteering services are set out in Objective 2 above.

The charity's work is directly supported through the Trustees, all of whom are volunteers. The recruitment and management of casual volunteers is handled through the Volunteer Centre, and there are appropriate policies, procedures, and agreements in place to cover both their recruitment, and their roles and engagement with the charity's staff and work.

Our primary role regarding volunteers in any setting, is one of brokerage and advice. We support groups and organisations in the VCS to recruit and support volunteers and provide training and resources to ensure that they have compliant policies and procedures in place. Significantly, we provide training, resources, guidance, and advice about Safeguarding for volunteers and for VCS beneficiaries.

The charity's work is directly supported through the Trustees, all of whom are volunteers. The recruitment and management of casual volunteers is handled through the Volunteer Centre, and there are appropriate policies, procedures, and agreements in place to cover both their recruitment, and their roles and engagement with the charity's staff and work.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reserves policy

At 31 March 2021, the Charity's free reserves were £287,449 with an additional £166,892 held in restricted funds that are ring fenced to support specific projects.

The Trustees have forecast that the level of free reserves required to sustain the operations of the charity will be equivalent to a minimum of six months' core costs and redundancy costs, being organisational, management and administrative support costs. Details are provided in the table below:

Description	Amount
Total reserves	£460,330
Comprising:	
Restricted funds (ring fenced to support specific projects)	£166,892
Unrestricted funds (see note 16)	£293,438
Less fixed assets	(£5,989)
Free reserves	**£287,449**
Free reserves are ring-fenced for the following:	
Six months' core costs and estimated redundancy costs	£146,896
Provision of services in 2021-22	£140,553
Total	**£287,449**

The Trustees recognise the changing landscape for funding and investment into the charity's work. They have looked closely at the factors that influence change, in particular the shifting landscape for funding post Coronavirus, and the opportunities and challenges it will place for us. Trustees take into consideration how changes in funding regimes and access to funding may affect the priorities and future of the organisation e.g., partnership working, changes in professional networks and public policy, reductions in funding for public services, uncertainty about new programmes, and the potential impacts of national or strategic policy changes. The Trustees review the Reserves Policy on an annual basis.

REVIEW OF 2020/2021 & FUTURE PLANS

The charity will continue to adapt and respond in a manner that is designed to meet our primary objectives. Objectives are reviewed annually, on the basis of shared intelligence with our colleagues and partners in the VCS, and with regard to an evolving face of public services, local government, and policy. Development work will be maintained over the coming year with colleagues and stakeholders relating to shaping our work, so that our priorities are focused on needs and making positive impacts.

As set out in the Reserves Policy, the Trustees have considered the implications for an estimated protracted period of uncertainty, that will be exacerbated by the continuing uncertainty of recovery and rebuilding civil society in the aftermath of Coronavirus. Since the emergence of the Coronavirus pandemic, Senior Management and Trustees have been pro-active in dialogue with funders and commissioners, particularly with regard to collaborating on a more robust system for informing commissioners where there are needs arising and working with the VCS to target resources more effectively.

At the start of the year, DCA was awarded a three-year Grant Funding Deed, via a partnership with the CCG and Durham County Council, including Public Health, to work with the CCG and County Council in development of a "Connector Model". This is intended to enable a more collaborative and trust-based approach to funding the sector in County Durham.

In the first half of the year, we accessed Durham County Council's business grant support scheme, secured additional grant funding from the Communities Fund, and County Durham Community Foundation, and took advantage of an office rent holiday. This helped to conserve cash to support the charity during the depths of first lockdown period and is continuing through the pandemic.

The temporary office closure has also resulted in cost savings on day to day running costs. Demand for the charity's services has never been higher, and with sufficient cash resources available to support activities throughout 2020/2021, the decision was taken not to furlough any staff through the Government's Coronavirus Employment Retention Scheme. Given the continuing difficulties in planning ahead, DCA's Trustees are continuing to meet on a bi-monthly basis, to review budgets, cashflows and to act if required in order to continue within the parameters of the agreed budget. DCA will also explore opportunities to secure additional funding that are considered to be a comfortable fit with the charity's remit and forward work plan.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

Durham Community Action Limited is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The charity is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association that were adopted on 17 October 2013.

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission. Membership is open to any individual or organisation that meets the criteria specified in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

The Trustees as charity trustees have control of the Charity and its property and funds, however there is no individual exercising significant control (PSC). There must be a minimum of five Trustees and a maximum of 20 Trustees.

All the charity's Trustees are volunteers and provide their time freely. Expenses are offered to cover travel costs. Trustees attending appropriate conferences and networking activities for the charity may also be reimbursed for travel costs, conference fees and occasional accommodation when an overnight stay is necessary. No Trustees benefit financially, contractually, or materially from their roles.

During this year, we recruited two new Trustees to our Board, with a further three new Trustees joining the board after the year end. They have been working with the senior management team to review and refresh our policies and procedures and carry out a review of our Business Continuity Plan.

Induction and training of new trustees

New Trustees undergo orientation meetings to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Executive Committee and decision-making process, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other Trustees. All Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external and internal training events.

Officers

The honorary posts of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer are elected by serving Trustees immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

Organisation

Currently membership of the Board of Trustees stands at 11. The Executive Committee meets bi-monthly, and on an ad hoc basis if the necessity arises. There is the facility to establish ad hoc task and finish sub-groups.

Key management remuneration

The Trustees hold overall responsibility for management of the organisation, its assets, staff, and funds. Responsibility for day-to-day management of the organisation, finance, employment of staff, and for providing support and resources to the Trustees to enable strategic planning, is delegated to the Executive Director. She is appointed by the Trustees to manage the operations of the charity and is an employee of the company. Despite the title, the Executive Director is neither a Director of the Company nor a Trustee of the Charity.

The Executive Director manages the charity through a small senior management team, comprising the Managers for Community Support, and for Volunteering. Governance and finance support are provided by an external contractor, with a good working knowledge of the business. Details of the Key Management Personnel and their costs applicable during 2020-2021 are included in note 9 (page 25).

Pay policy for senior staff

Salary scales for senior staff are determined by the Trustees, having due regard to remuneration for similar roles within the voluntary and community sector. No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Related parties

The charity's work programme is first and foremost determined by the needs of the communities that it serves.

Wherever possible, DCA aligns its work with prevailing national, and local policies and priorities. We achieve this by working closely with a range of partners, including ACRE, County Durham Partnership, Durham County Council, the Office of the Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner, and County Durham's Clinical Commissioning Group.

DCA also works responsively with our colleagues in the voluntary and community sector within County Durham, and in various community-based networks and partnerships. As a result, close working relationships are maintained with a range of other organisations, although none meet the related parties' criteria as defined in company law:

- During 2020/21 DCA maintained a Funding Agreement with Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) to provide intelligence and information for Defra about particular areas of policy, as it affects rural communities on a regional and county-wide basis, with respect to economic development, housing, transport, and access to services.

- The charity maintains a strong relationship with Durham County Council and is recognised by the Council as the primary voluntary and community sector infrastructure support organisation for County Durham. This provides the council with a single conduit for public sector investment into VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) support services. During the year DCA worked particularly closely with Public Health, both Adult and Children's Services, Environmental and the Transformation & Partnerships team at Durham County Council. County Durham Constabulary also contributed funds to support work with front line community groups and organisations.

- Physical and mental health was an important theme during 2020/21. Working with the CCG, and the Hospital Foundation Trusts, DCA developed a programme of work to support the VCS with emerging needs through the period of lockdown and in planning ahead to reinforce VCS engagement in new and emerging governance structures for primary and secondary care.

- The charity was represented on and supported a range of networks and partnerships including the County Durham Partnership Board, County Durham Economic Partnership, the Better Together VCS Forum, and the Advice in County Durham Partnership.

- The Food Durham Partnership, and the Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum (comprising 270 organisations engaged in volunteering across the North East) were amongst the networks and organisations chaired or supported by the charity during the year.

Risk management
The Executive Committee of Trustees has a risk management strategy that comprises:

- A Business Continuity Plan incorporating an annual review of the risks that the charity may face.
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should any of the risks materialise.

Key risks for the coming 2-3 years considered relevant to this report, together with mitigating actions that have already been taken, or which are planned for, are outlined in the table below.

These are also further considered as part of the Reserves allocation policy (detailed earlier), which offsets the actual and contingent liabilities of the organisation against the combined value of all unrestricted funds.

This policy allows the charity to continue to operate on a reduced basis until alternative funding arrangements can be put in place.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 23 September 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Mrs J M Worters MBE - Trustee

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Durham Community Action Limited ('the Company')
I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report
As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement
Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a registered member of Association of Chartered Certified Accountants which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

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

Nick Cunningham FCCA
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
Robson Laidler Accountants Limited
Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 1TJ

Date: 21-10-2021

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Charitable activities	4				
Core		**52,585**	-	**52,585**	42,585
Support & Advisory		**-**	**373,377**	**373,377**	336,867
Community Development		**-**	**351,478**	**351,478**	200,465
Other trading activities	2	**19,091**	-	**19,091**	34,876
Investment income	3	**308**	-	**308**	1,902
Total		**71,984**	**724,855**	**796,839**	616,695
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	5				
Core		**29,296**	-	**29,296**	113,381
Support & Advisory		**-**	**350,527**	**350,527**	376,956
Community Development		**-**	**274,758**	**274,758**	127,176
Total		**29,296**	**625,285**	**654,581**	617,513
Net gains on investments		-	-	-	900
NET INCOME		**42,688**	**99,570**	**142,258**	82
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		**250,750**	**67,322**	**318,072**	317,990
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**293,438**	**166,892**	**460,330**	318,072

The notes form part of these financial statements

BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Intangible assets	11	-	4,500
Tangible assets	12	**5,989**	8,656
		5,989	13,156
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	13	**8,412**	6,699
Cash at bank and in hand		**543,005**	357,326
		551,417	364,025
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	14	**(97,076)**	(59,109)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		**454,341**	304,916
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		**460,330**	318,072
NET ASSETS		**460,330**	318,072
FUNDS	16		
Unrestricted funds		**293,438**	250,750
Restricted funds		**166,892**	67,322
TOTAL FUNDS		**460,330**	318,072

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

(a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and

(b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The notes form part of these financial statements

continued...

BALANCE SHEET - continued
31 MARCH 2021

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

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 23 September 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:

Mrs J M Worters MBE - Trustee

DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION LIMITED

CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	**185,371**	(28,647)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		**185,371**	(28,647)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Sale of fixed asset investments		**-**	1,000
Interest received		**308**	1,902
Net cash provided by investing activities		**308**	2,902
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		**185,679**	(25,745)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		**357,326**	383,071
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		**543,005**	357,326

The notes form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2021 £	2020 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	**142,258**	82
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	**7,167**	9,572
Losses on investments	**-**	(900)
Interest received	**(308)**	(1,902)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	**(1,713)**	3,073
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**37,967**	(38,572)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operations	**185,371**	(28,647)

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1.4.20 £	Cash flow £	**At 31.3.21 £**
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	**357,326**	**185,679**	**543,005**
	357,326	**185,679**	**543,005**
Total	**357,326**	**185,679**	**543,005**

The notes form part of these financial statements

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements
The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

Statement of compliance
Durham Community Action Limited is an incorporated charity (charity number: 229119) registered in England & Wales. The registered office and other statutory information is shown on the contents page.

Durham Community Action Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity entry under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial accounts are prepared in Sterling (£).

The company has applied the following accounting policies:

Going Concern
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have considered a period of 12 months from the balance sheet date and consider no further disclosures relating to the charity's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty
Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectation of future events that are believed to be reasonable under circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements
The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

Critical areas of judgement
In categorising leases as finance leases or operating leases, the Trustees make judgements as to whether significant risk and rewards or ownership have transferred to the charity as lessee.

In recognising income from projects, the trustees make judgements as to whether the conditions of income have been met.

Income
All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:
- Voluntary income received by way of grants, donations and gifts is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.
- Rental & other income are recognised on a receivable basis
- 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

continued...

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Expenditure
All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources. Expenditure includes VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Intangible assets
Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

CRM system assets	- 25% straight line

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Short leasehold	- 25% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	- 25% on reducing balance

Fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount of such assets may not be recoverable. Impairment losses are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Taxation
As a charity, the company is exempt from tax on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

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

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

continued...

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Leasing commitments
Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the profit and loss on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	2021	2020
	£	£
Consultancy	18,475	28,287
Training and office services	616	6,589
	19,091	34,876

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2021	2020
	£	£
Deposit account interest	308	1,902

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Core	Support & Advisory	Community Development	2021 Total activities	2020 Total activities
	£	£	£	£	£
ACRE	42,585	-	-	42,585	42,585
Durham County Council	-	170,000	-	170,000	172,170
Durham Police, Crime & Victims Commissioner	-	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Tudor Trust	-	29,290	-	29,290	29,177
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	-	-	-	-	19,489
Communities Fund	-	-	98,049	98,049	120,507
Big Lottery Fund / European Social Fund	-	-	-	-	1,866
Stanley Town Council	-	57,500	-	57,500	87,500
Soil Association	-	-	4,000	4,000	8,051
Community Activities	-	4,144	6,290	10,434	15,006
Durham County Council Covid 19 support	10,000	-	-	10,000	-
Durham County Council Spennymoor AAP	-	21,713	-	21,713	-
County Durham CCG	-	64,236	24,000	88,236	56,000
MHLDF	-	-	106,000	106,000	-
VONNE	-	11,494	-	11,494	-
Groundwork UK	-	-	84,239	84,239	-
County Durham Community Foundation	-	5,000	28,900	33,900	17,566
	52,585	373,377	351,478	777,440	579,917

continued...

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support Costs £	Total £
Charitable activity costs	571,671	82,910	**654,581**

	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs	**407,378**	382,748
Consultancy	**45,090**	30,735
Meeting expenses	**34**	4,431
Stanley Town Council	**57,500**	87,500
Grants to small communities	**39,956**	2,716
Spennymoor Town Council	**21,713**	-
	571,671	508,130

6. SUPPORT COSTS

	2021 £	2020 £
Marketing and promotion	**1,623**	6,990
Cleaning and welfare	**1,849**	4,913
Electricity and gas	**4,648**	3,255
Repairs and renewals	**2,332**	2,302
Insurance	**2,743**	3,321
Rents payable	**27,109**	27,941
Water	**844**	919
Travel costs	**251**	9,568
Staff training	**1,216**	12,340
Printing, postage and telephone	**5,918**	6,825
Computer costs	**11,601**	5,035
Publications and subscriptions	**1,600**	4,025
Sundries	**373**	969
Independent examiners fees	**3,360**	4,740
Legal fees	**10,276**	6,668
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**7,167**	9,572
	82,910	109,383

continued...

7. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2021	2020
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	**2,667**	5,072
CRM system assets amortisation	**4,500**	4,500
Independent examination fee	**3,360**	4,740
Operating lease rentals	**27,109**	28,986

8. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Trustees' expenses

There were no Trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

9. STAFF COSTS

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Salaries and wages	**362,817**	340,271
Social security costs	**30,321**	27,641
Pension costs	**14,240**	12,895
Restructuring costs	**-**	1,941
	407,378	382,748

Staff restructuring costs comprise redundancy payments of £nil (2020: £1,941).

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2021	2020
Executive director	**1**	1
Field workers	**13**	12
Administration	**1**	1
	15	14

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

During the year, the amount paid to key management totalled £133,584 (2020: £121,861).

continued...

10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Charitable activities			
Core	42,585	-	42,585
Support & Advisory	-	336,867	336,867
Community Development	-	200,465	200,465
Other trading activities	34,876	-	34,876
Investment income	1,902	-	1,902
Total	79,363	537,332	616,695
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Core	71,906	41,475	113,381
Support & Advisory	21,353	355,603	376,956
Community Development	20,122	107,054	127,176
Total	113,381	504,132	617,513
Net gains on investments	-	900	900
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(34,018)	34,100	82
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	284,768	33,222	317,990
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	250,750	67,322	318,072

11. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	CRM system assets £
COST	
At 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	**18,000**
AMORTISATION	
At 1 April 2020	**13,500**
Charge for year	**4,500**
At 31 March 2021	**18,000**
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2021	-
At 31 March 2020	4,500

continued...

12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Short leasehold £	Fixtures and fittings £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	**9,539**	**52,955**	**62,494**
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2020	**8,944**	**44,894**	**53,838**
Charge for year	**595**	**2,072**	**2,667**
At 31 March 2021	**9,539**	**46,966**	**56,505**
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2021	**-**	**5,989**	**5,989**
At 31 March 2020	595	8,061	8,656

13. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021 £	2020 £
Other debtors	**1,106**	-
Prepayments and accrued income	**7,306**	6,699
	8,412	6,699

14. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021 £	2020 £
Accruals and deferred income	**97,076**	59,109

Included in accrued expenses is deferred income totalling £63,952 (2020: £54,189) which represents incoming resources for project income received in advance of entitlement.

Deferred Income

	2021 £	2020 £
Balance at 1 April	**54,189**	89,169
Amounts released to incoming resources	**(54,189)**	(89,169)
Amounts deferred in the year	**63,952**	54,189
Balance at 31 March	**63,952**	54,189

continued...

15. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted funds	2021 Total funds	2020 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	5,989	-	5,989	13,156
Current assets	384,525	166,892	551,417	364,025
Current liabilities	(97,076)	-	(97,076)	(59,109)
	293,438	166,892	460,330	318,072

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.20	Net movement in funds	At 31.3.21
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	250,750	42,688	293,438
Restricted funds			
Community Growing Development Fund	2,091	(2,091)	-
Community Hubs Project	40,353	(4,402)	35,951
Food Durham Strategy & Governance Development	22,073	(22,073)	-
County Durham Volunteer Gateway	2,805	(2,805)	-
Sustainable Food Places Phase 3	-	1,217	1,217
Sport England TIF Fund	-	646	646
MHLDF Right Care Right Place Support	-	106,000	106,000
Covid-19 Vaccination Centre	-	23,078	23,078
	67,322	99,570	166,892
TOTAL FUNDS	318,072	142,258	460,330

continued...

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	71,984	(29,296)	42,688
Restricted funds			
Durham County Council Infrastructure	180,000	(180,000)	-
Community Growing Project	29,290	(29,290)	-
Community Growing Development Fund	-	(2,091)	(2,091)
Voluntary & Community Sector Engagement	64,236	(64,236)	-
Veg Cities	5,000	(5,000)	-
Advice Services in Stanley	57,500	(57,500)	-
Community Hubs Project	98,049	(102,451)	(4,402)
Food Durham Strategy & Governance Development	-	(22,073)	(22,073)
County Durham Volunteer Gateway	-	(2,805)	(2,805)
Safeguarding Training Fund	11,494	(11,494)	-
Community Led Homes Enabler Hub Project	84,239	(84,239)	-
Covid-19 CDCF Guidance & Advice	5,000	(5,000)	-
Covid-19 CDCF Volunteering	3,900	(3,900)	-
Spennymoor Advice Hub	21,713	(21,713)	-
Sustainable Food Places Phase 3	4,000	(2,783)	1,217
CDCF Winter Resilience Fund	25,000	(25,000)	-
Sport England TIF Fund	2,434	(1,788)	646
MHLDF Right Care Right Place Support	106,000	-	106,000
Covid-19 Vaccination Centre	24,000	(922)	23,078
NAVCA VCS Emergencies Partnership	3,000	(3,000)	-
	724,855	(625,285)	99,570
TOTAL FUNDS	796,839	(654,581)	142,258

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16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.20 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	284,768	(34,018)	250,750
Restricted funds			
Hallmark Scheme	278	(278)	-
County Durham Food Partnership	1,231	(1,231)	-
Durham County Council Infrastructure	460	(460)	-
Fuel Poverty Fund	18,631	(18,631)	-
Wellbeing for Life	1,811	(1,811)	-
Community Growing Project	1,932	(1,932)	-
County Durham Volunteering Celebration	13	(13)	-
Community Growing Development Fund	2,490	(399)	2,091
Reaching Out Across Durham	1,577	(1,577)	-
Durham Local Food Hub	1,070	(1,070)	-
Healthy Communities - Gilesgate Edible Estates	3,729	(3,729)	-
Community Hubs Project	-	40,353	40,353
Food Durham Strategy & Governance Development	-	22,073	22,073
County Durham Volunteer Gateway	-	2,805	2,805
	33,222	34,100	67,322
TOTAL FUNDS	317,990	82	318,072

continued...

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	79,363	(113,381)	-	(34,018)
Restricted funds				
Hallmark Scheme	-	(278)	-	(278)
County Durham Food Partnership	-	(1,231)	-	(1,231)
Durham County Council Infrastructure	180,000	(180,460)	-	(460)
Fuel Poverty Fund	-	(18,631)	-	(18,631)
Wellbeing for Life	-	(1,811)	-	(1,811)
Community Growing Project	29,135	(31,067)	-	(1,932)
County Durham Volunteering Celebration	3,647	(3,660)	-	(13)
Community Growing Development Fund	2,091	(2,490)	-	(399)
Reaching Out Across Durham	1,866	(3,443)	-	(1,577)
Durham Local Food Hub	19,489	(21,459)	900	(1,070)
Healthy Communities - Gilesgate Edible Estates	17,566	(21,295)	-	(3,729)
Crook Hall Community Development Project	(356)	356	-	-
Voluntary & Community Sector Engagement	56,000	(56,000)	-	-
Community Learning	2,754	(2,754)	-	-
Club Durham Programme	5,200	(5,200)	-	-
SFC Co-ordination Fund	5,632	(5,632)	-	-
Veg Cities	2,896	(2,896)	-	-
Advice Services in Stanley	87,500	(87,500)	-	-
Community Hubs Project	66,579	(26,226)	-	40,353
Food Durham Strategy & Governance Development	48,202	(26,129)	-	22,073
County Durham Volunteer Gateway	3,405	(600)	-	2,805
Safeguarding Training Fund	5,726	(5,726)	-	-
	537,332	(504,132)	900	34,100
TOTAL FUNDS	616,695	(617,513)	900	82

Unrestricted funds
The General reserve represents the free funds of the charity, which are not designated for particular purposes.

Restricted Funds
Comprises income to be used for specific projects. Restricted funds may have negative balances at the year-end if a claim for funding is due to be submitted but staff costs have occurred constantly throughout the project. Further explanations on each restricted fund are below:

Advice Services in Stanley
Agency arrangement to receive and disburse funding for the provision of Advice in County Durham Services to the community in Stanley.

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16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

CDCF Winter Resilience Fund Cree Network Project
Funding from County Durham Community Foundation to support the Cree network through the Covid-19 pandemic, ensuring the continuation of services to support the health and wellbeing of participants.

Community Growing Development Fund
Development fund to support the community growing schemes project.

Community Growing Project
Creating a network of new and diverse community growing schemes that will help to improve access to fresh vegetables, herbs and fruit. Supported by the Tudor Trust, County Durham Community Foundation and Durham County Council (Derwent Valley and Durham City Area Action Partnerships).

Community Hubs Project
National Lottery funded 3 year project to develop community hubs.

Community Led Homes Enabler Hub Project
Durham Community Action was the lead agency for Community Homes on the Map for the south of Tyne area. The funding paid for specialist staff to help community led housing initiatives, and to broker technical help and expertise as required.

County Durham Volunteer Gateway
Development of a volunteering platform and associated training activities and materials.

Covid-19 CDCF Guidance & Advice
Provision of guidance and advice to community groups and organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic, and support for other organisations to do so professionally.

Covid-19 CDCF Volunteering / Mutual Aid
Supporting newly emerging Covid-19 volunteer groups with specialist information, advice and guidance, and access to micro grants that enable best practice volunteering and support.

Covid-19 Vaccination Centre Volunteer Expenses
Administration of a fund to provide travel expenses to volunteers assisting at Covid-19 vaccination and lateral testing centres.

Crook Hall Community Development Project
This project is funding a part-time worker to provide community development support for the Crook Hall Community Association, near Consett. The Worker is supporting a range of activities including governance, funding and business plan development

Durham County Council Infrastructure
Grant funding agreement with Durham County Council for the provision of support services to the Voluntary & Community Sector across County Durham.

Food Durham Strategy & Governance Development
Lottery funding to develop the Food Durham Partnership and Local Food Strategy.

MHLDF Right Care Right Place Community Resilience Support
Provision of funding to the VCSE to support the provision of services that address community mental health needs.

NAVCA VCS Emergencies Partnership
Provision of local intelligence and knowledge to NAVCA re volunteering during Covid-19.

Safeguarding Training Fund
Collaborative safeguarding training initiative delivered as a regional partnership across Durham, Northumberland, Tees Valley & Tyneside co-ordinated by VONNE.

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Spennymoor Advice Hub & Outreach Service
Development of a welfare advice hub in Consett with Durham Community Action acting as an agent to receive and distribute income from Derwent Valley AAP to the Advice in County Durham Partnership.

Sport England Gypsy Romany Travellers TIF Fund
Administration of a fund to provide sports / training equipment to support and promote the health and wellbeing of the Gypsy, Romany & Traveller community within County Durham.

Sustainable Food Places Phase 3 Good Food Movement
Pilot Soil Association funded initiative to develop an online 'Community Good Food Forum' that will engage the public to facilitate greater involvement in good food, new partnerships, information sharing and policy influencing.

Veg Cities
Working with local authorities, food groups and organisation to encourage local people to grow, cook and sell more vegetables. Funded through Phase 3 of the Sustainable Food Cities programme supported by Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

Voluntary & Community Sector Engagement Project
Working with Durham Dales, Easington & Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning Group, and the North Durham Clinical Commissioning Groups to provide VCS engagement into the integration of health and social care agenda. An adjustment for staff costs will be made at year end.

17. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Mr John Robinson was an elected member of Durham County Council when DCA's three-year grant funding deed was approved, however he was not involved in the decision to grant funding. There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for year ended 31 March 2020.

18. ULTIMATE CONTROLLING PARTY

The charity is under the control of the board of trustees.

19. LEGAL STATUS OF THE CHARITY

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

20. RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Durham Community Action participates in The Pension Trust's Flexible Retirement Plan, a defined contribution scheme. The plan is funded and contracted out of the state scheme.

The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The contributions payable by the charity expensed to income and expenditure amounted to £14,240 (2020: £12,895). No contributions were due at the either the current or prior year end.