

A photograph of a man and a woman in front of a brick building. The man, on the left, is wearing a grey sweater and is leaning forward with his hands raised in a playful gesture. The woman, on the right, is wearing a dark, patterned coat and is smiling back at him. The background is a brick building with white window frames. A blue rectangular box with a yellow and orange corner graphic is overlaid on the bottom left, containing the title text.

2023/2024 Trustees Annual Report and Accounts



Welcome from Malcolm McCaig

As I complete my sixth year as Chair of the Board of Trustees for United Response, I am honoured to lead this remarkable charity.

It is a particularly significant year as United Response celebrates its 50th anniversary. Our mission remains as relevant today as it did in October 1973 when the charity was first formed.

We are grateful to the National Lottery, which awarded us a significant grant from its Heritage Lottery Fund, to mark our anniversary milestone. We have used the funding to deliver a commemorative project, titled "Our Life Stories". In conjunction with the British Library, over two years we will develop a collection of peer-to-peer histories which captures, preserves, and celebrates the rich and diverse life stories of people with learning disabilities that have been supported by United Response.

For a year that was marked by celebration, it was also one of challenge. We witnessed high inflation and pressure on cost of living, together with the continued impact of underfunding of public services. In spite of the improvement in financial performance

compared to the previous year, we recognised the need for a fundamental transformation in order to improve our long-term financial outlook. The transformation will take the organisation from being a collection of discrete service centres, to a structure that is more coherent and based upon functionally aligned capabilities. That transformation work was initiated at the end of 2023, and will continue throughout the 2024/25 financial year.

As part of the transformation, we combined our North and South divisions into a single operating unit, which led to the departure of Mike Crowhurst, Director of Operations South, in March 2024. The new structure also provides a better focus on people and inclusion, business development and finance, as well as increased emphasis on growth opportunities such as Housing and Education. Throughout this process, we are committed to maintaining the high quality of care services that we provide.

Sadly, we saw the departure of Tim Cooper, who stepped down as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in April 2024, having led United Response through nine difficult years. The Board would like to thank Tim for his outstanding contribution. Our thanks also go to the rest of the executive leadership

team, led by Belinda Phipps (interim CEO), for their commitment and hard work.

There have been Trustee changes as well. Alastair Ballantyne and Bill Hodson have moved on, and the Board would like to thank them for their years of dedicated service. In their place, Nikki Pawsey and Vicky Whelan have joined the Board as Trustees.

In a year of celebration, challenge and change, we look back to reflect on all of our achievements to date, and then look forward to ensure we will adapt to be a resilient organisation that is fit for the future. The environment in which we operate is not going to get any easier, but we are confident that United Response will be a financially sustainable organisation that delivers positive outcomes for the people we support.

Of course, this is only possible thanks to the work of our dedicated staff. I am enormously proud of their efforts to ensure that the people we support have the opportunity to live their lives to the full. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank every member of the United Response team for their continued dedication to our purpose.

Getting to know...

Interim Chief Executive, Belinda Phipps

Poppy, who is supported by United Response, sat down for a chat with our Interim Chief Executive, Belinda Phipps.

I do Drama twice a week at ROC Creative. To start us off, my first question is, what is the best show you've ever seen?

I think the best show I've ever seen is War Horse. I went to see it - not because I wanted to go - but because my youngest daughter really, really likes horses. So as a treat for her birthday I said I'd go. I wasn't looking forward to it, but it was absolutely fabulous. I really enjoyed it and so did she.

What was your journey to this job?

I'm here as the Interim Chief Executive. I've been a Chief Executive for a very long time (32 years!) and I've worked for lots of different sorts of organisations, such as the NHS, the British Medical Association, and organisations similar to this one which support people living with drug addiction. I'm very pleased to come, because United Response does a very, very worthwhile job for people who deserve to be treated equally and given every opportunity in life.

What has impressed you so far at United Response?

I've been really impressed at seeing what people are learning at places like ROC College, ROC Creative and URTEC in York. It's been really lovely to see people learning to do things that they might not have had the chance to do in the past. It's also been very nice to talk to the staff who really care about what they do, want to do a good job and want to give people we support the best opportunities they can.

What are your hopes and goals for United Response?

It's been very hard for the whole sector over the last few years and some organisations have had to spend money they had in reserves in order to keep going. United Response has had to do that too, but you can't go on doing that forever. By the time I have finished here, I hope that United Response will still do brilliant services, without spending its reserves. We need to get to this point without disturbing the services that we give people we support.



technology. We've just introduced a database called Nourish, we're going to introduce a system for rostering in the autumn and we're upgrading our finance system.

Finally, we've introduced a new process so that anyone in the organisation can fill in a form to request an idea for improving things or something new they want to try. These suggestions will also make things better.

What changes are you hoping to make to support people to live good lives in the community, especially people like me who have left education?

I think we need to all think about the places that the people we support live in. Many people like yourself want to think about a future where they could perhaps have their own place with their own front door. We need to be really good at creating places to live where it's easy for people to live in them and for staff to provide support, so you can be as independent as possible.

The other key thing is creating opportunities for people to do what you're doing – learning new skills, being educated and having a chance to volunteer or try out some employment. This all helps people we support feel more confident to be themselves and be more able to live independently. The more that we can help people to live independently, the better it is for you, because it's a nicer way to live, and the better it is for the local authority, because they have can pay less for support hours.

What has been happening so far to achieve this?

The leadership of an organisation is really important, so we've made some changes there. We also noticed that because our services were divided, with one manager looking after the North and one looking after the South, they were becoming quite different when they didn't need to be. To change this, we've brought them together under one manager.

On top of this, we are making improvements so staff can work more efficiently and have more time to support people. One thing we've been looking at here is the

Our year in numbers



2,045

People supported who have a learning disability, are autistic or have complex health needs



78,484

dedicated hours of care our team delivered



69

local authority partners worked with



64,464

visits to our website



111

people provided with education (across academic year 23/24)



2,532

hours of employment support delivered (academic year 23/24)



130

courses and qualifications completed by our students (academic year 23/24)



1,148,395

impressions gained on our social media posts



416

pieces of press and media coverage secured



£569,572

received in donations and grants from supporters, donors, trusts and foundations

Who we are

United Response works in communities across England and Wales to provide care, support, housing, education, and employment services. Founded in 1973 with just one service, we now operate in over 420 locations, supporting people to achieve their goals, have independence and live a happy life.

Our vision is a society where everyone has equal access to the same rights and opportunities.

Our mission is to ensure that individuals with learning disabilities and mental or physical support needs have the opportunity to live their lives to the full.

Our values guide the way we work. We are Creative, Responsive, Strong, Honest and United.

Through our strategy, Shaped By People, our aim is that the people we support can say the following:

- I am connected
- I have relationships
- I have choice
- I have strengths
- I am respected





Our stories

Kelly, Shaun and Dawn: It's the fun that we have.

Last summer, services across Nottingham came together to put on a production called 'This is me', where people we support shared their personal stories on stage. Service Manager Liz and Kelly, Shaun and Dawn, who we support, share their memories of the show.

Liz: What was your role in the show, Shaun?

Shaun: I was the narrator. At first, I was a bit nervous, but as time went on, I became more confident. It brought me out of my shell.

Liz: You told your own story through dance in the show, didn't you Kell? It was so powerful. How did you feel before you did that?

Kelly: A bit nervous. I wanted to make sure we showed the stories in a way that helped people to understand where we've come from and where we are now.

I am connected

"Taking part in the show has helped me. It was a safe space for me."

Liz: I think we definitely achieved that. What was your favourite bit about the production Dawn?

Dawn: It was nice, really nice. I enjoyed it. My most favourite thing was...all of it! And I met new, nice people.

Kelly: Taking part in the show makes you have friends.

Dawn: Kelly is my best friend. I can't wait to go to Butlins with her in September!

Shaun: Taking part in the show has helped me. It was a safe space for me.

Liz: Why did you want to take part?

Kelly: I wanted to take part to tell my story. Everyone's story is different, but when we come together, some of the experiences are similar. The show brought us together.

Liz: So, did you feel like you weren't on your own?

Kelly: Yeah.

Shaun: I wanted to do it to make friends. I was a bit nervous making new friends, but as soon as I dared, it was great.

Liz: For staff, it was about uniting services. A lot of things have come off the back of it. It's amazing. I'm so proud of what we've done. It makes you want to do the next thing, and make it bigger and better. My colleague Cheryl is doing a choir now, we're doing karaoke nights. We've got so much talent that needs to be seen. Do you feel like your life is different because you took part?

Kelly: I think it is, because we've made friends. Not like friends just for a day, like lifetime friends.

Liz: I'm so glad. I've found the actual performance is secondary. It's the stuff that goes on behind the scenes. It's the fun that we have! I can't even explain it. It means so much. We're actually doing our third performance now. I miss it when we're not doing it.

'This is me' was funded by a Small Sparks grant. Thanks to The Clothworkers' Foundation we are able to fund many brilliant community projects like this each year.

I have relationships

Unfortunately, many people with learning disabilities face relationship stigma. People can wrongly assume that they cannot form meaningful relationships, which is completely untrue.

We believe supporting people to form good quality relationships is a fundamental part of good support. This year, we had some happy news from our Salford Services. Derek and Debbie, two people we support, recently got engaged while on holiday in Benidorm.

Derek and Debbie met some years ago through United Response and immediately hit it off. Support Worker Lynda said: "When they're together, Derek's got a big smile on his face."

Derek and Debra's big moment

Shortly after meeting, the couple began dating and spending lots of time together.

"We've been to the Trafford Centre on dates together many times," explained Debbie. Derek first expressed his desire to propose in a review. Lead Senior Support Workers Natalie and Sarah supported Derek to prepare for the big moment. He rehearsed at home, practising what to say and how to get down on one knee. He also chose the ring, ensuring he found one that Debbie would like.

While on holiday in Benidorm the time came to pop the question. Derek decided to propose on the beach.

"He opened the box, and guess what he did!" said Debbie. "He put that ring on my finger! I love it so much."

Ruth, one of the team managers in Salford, said:

"I think there are lots of assumptions made about disabled people. People think 'they're not able to do that' when they actually are. We'll always find a way of making it happen. That's what this work is about. It's about what they want, and making it happen for them".



Kate: My learning journey

Kate shares her experience how support from United Response has helped her make the big choices in her life.

I would definitely say my confidence has grown during my years with United Response. I first got involved with United Response when I joined the media group in York a few years ago. There, I learnt about camera work, directing, and how to use Premier Pro. That's where I became interested in editing videos.

After that, I got a part-time job with United Response. I usually work with the Practice Development Team, editing their learning lunch videos. Some of the videos are really fascinating.

My favourite thing about my job is it allows you to be creative and experiment. During the pandemic, we made a stop frame animation video for the "Stopping Over Medication of People with a Learning Disability, Autism or Both" campaign. This is one of the best projects I've worked on because of how much I learnt.

Alongside my job, I'm currently studying Game Design at University. United Response helped me with writing my personal statement. From there, they've been checking in on me to see how I'm finding University.

United Response are supportive, united and responsive. If there's one thing United Response is very good at, it's identifying what the person wants to do, and how they can do it in the best way possible.



'There's no greater disability in society than the inability to see a person as more'

Nikki and Diane, who are both in their 15th year with United Response, share their experience supporting people with complex needs.

Our service is called Gombards, it's a residential home where we support people with severe and complex needs. We are really proud of what we achieve for the people we support. For example, one lady joined us who had not been supported in the way she needed to be before. Now she's thriving, and we've seen a major change in her life.

One of our proudest achievements of all is United Sparkles, our creative enterprise. We use hand over hand techniques to get the finger prints of people we support. We make the art in our art room. It's their space,

and a place where they can get away from whatever else is going on. After getting their finger prints, we add the art to mugs, bags, baubles and more, and sell it at fairs. United Sparkles is unique. Without their fingerprints, we wouldn't have any designs. It just shows that people with all disabilities are capable of doing anything. That's in the United Sparkles motto, "there's no greater disability in society than the inability to see a person as more".

We also get some good reviews from the parents. Some of them probably never ever thought their sons or daughters could do this. Knowing the parents are getting to see this, wow! That puts a smile on your face. The people we support get lots of benefits from taking part. One of the people we support is blind. We do the glass baubles

I have strengths



with her, because she's got very gentle touch. And she smiles while we're doing it. So we know she's content and happy to be doing it. We'll explain all along what colours we're using and what we're going to do. Her smile says it all.

We also bring people we support along to the fairs. People love to meet the artists, and it's important they are there rather than us selling artwork on their behalf. At Gombards, we've never wanted the people we support to be segregated. People should feel included in everything that we do, and that's what we strive to do at Gombards.

At Gombards, we've never wanted the people we support to be segregated.

Hannah's story: 'The people here believe in you'

Hannah is an autistic writer and campaigner, who contributes to United Response as a Media Contributor and Spokesperson.

I first got diagnosed with autism when I was 17. There was no support and I didn't want other people to struggle like I struggled. So, I started doing peer mentoring with United Response. After that, I got involved with our campaigns. I've loved everything that I've been involved with.

The campaign's team makes a massive effort to make sure disabled people's voices are heard. My proudest moment was submitting a petition to Downing Street last summer, calling for accessible voting. To say that I'd achieved that at 20 is amazing - not many people have done that!

When I first got diagnosed with autism, I was really low. I think finding the right organisations to work with, like United Response, has helped me. I tell anyone that wants to join United Response, to do so. You'll get so many opportunities to do good work. The people want to help and support you, and they believe in you.

I am
respected

I can't thank United
Response enough
for what they've
done for me.

I think my time with United Response is one of the reasons I've got a new job. I can't thank United Response enough for what they've done for me.



Hannah, in white, submitting a petition to Downing Street alongside other members of the My Vote My Voice campaign group. Photo © All-Party Parliamentary Group on Adult Social Care

Looking ahead to 2024/25

Our strategy

United Response launched its strategy 'Shaped By People' (2020 – 2024) during the Covid-19 pandemic. The preceding years were incredibly challenging for the social care sector and for United Response, so towards the end of 2023/24, we looked at a root and branch review of how we operate.

In 2024/25, we will roll out a one-year plan to deliver transformational change for United Response, improving how we work and ensuring financial sustainability. At the end of that plan, United Response will have completed work so we can develop a new and clear strategy, improve our use of technology, and work as a united team that collaborates to deliver better outcomes for the people we support.

Technology and systems

We will finish rolling out our digital care records management system and look at how to use other systems to reduce pressures on busy service managers. We will also look at how we can better use technology to improve collaboration and consistency across our charity.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will recruit an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) specialist to lead this work and roll out our EDI strategy. We will use data better and aim to increase diversity across our workforce, leadership team, and board. We will review our processes to remove any barriers and reduce inequality. We will relaunch our Diversity Forum and the role of Diversity Ambassadors to ensure we are creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for our staff team.



Engagement, Brand and Influencing

We will continue to support the development of the People's Forum so the people we support can input into the governance of United Response and improve how we listen and respond to our beneficiaries. We will collaborate with our sector peers as More Than A Provider to ensure that political parties prioritise social care, and that we see a fair pay agreement for social care workers that recognises the importance of these roles. We will also look at how we can optimise our marketing channels in preparation for work to improve our brand and increase awareness with our core audiences.

Structure, Governance and Management



Financial review

We continue to operate in an increasingly challenging environment. Economic recovery post-pandemic was weaker than expected and household incomes continued to fall. Throughout the period there was extreme economic turmoil as a result of government decisions on fiscal and monetary policy with inflation reaching record numbers impacting on almost every aspect of business and everyday life. The Russian-Ukraine war impacted on the UK economy with increased uncertainty impacting on growth and higher commodity prices.

Despite the turbulent economic context, the need for our services continues to grow and we have seen revenues increase by £5.7m to £106.5m. Negotiated fee uplifts were the main driver for income growth, alongside rising activities in growth areas, particularly Education, Skills and Employment. We returned unsustainable contracts to local

authorities as United Response responded proactively to challenging market conditions. Looking ahead, the Board have agreed plans for 2024/25 including a return to operating surplus and a small overall deficit on reserves to allow investment in a wide-ranging programme of transformation. Investments in better use of digital technology will continue and in parallel the organisation is reshaping management structures and activities to support long-term financial sustainability. After the successful turnaround achieved in the last year United Response is approaching the future with growing confidence despite the many external challenges that remain.

The financial position of the company at the end of the year

The charity recorded a decrease in reserves of £2.7m (2022/23: £8.3m). This net deficit results from planned investments in new digital platforms and particularly

the recognition in full of the provision for the Oracle contract for £1.7m as detailed in note 5. The small operating deficit was driven by a combination of tight market conditions and the continued need to invest in change and development.

Whilst overall this represents a limited further decrease in reserves in the year, the scale of turnaround it demonstrates is testament to the work across the organisation to support a return to financial sustainability.

Total unrestricted operations, through both general and designated funds, but before the effect of gains on investments and sales of fixed assets, recorded a deficit of £2.7m (2022/23: a deficit of £8.8m).

Overall income increased by £5.7m to £106.5m in 2023/24 (2022/23: £100.8m). The principal sources of funding continue to be through contracting with local authorities in England and Wales to

provide statutory services for clients with learning disabilities in a supported living or residential care environment. In 2023/24, contractual income of £104.1m contributed 98%, marginally up year-on-year by £5.3m (2022/23: £98.8m/98%)

Total expenditure was £109.4m (2022/23: £109.0m). The small increase of £318k primarily due to the increase in the national living wage to £10.42 (2022/23: £9.50) plus an in-year pay rise given to all staff of £1.8m. The costs of direct charitable activities totalled £90.7m (2022/23: £91.2m).

Unrestricted freehold property has a net book value of £4m (2022/23: £4.2m) within designated reserves. In the current market, a sale of our freehold properties would likely result in significant premiums over the net book value.

Overall, support costs for charitable activities increased by £2.6m to £16.9m (2022/23:

£14.3m). As lockdowns lifted, travel, training, and recruitment costs increased compared to the previous financial year. In addition, the commencement of projects previously delayed by the pandemic also resulted in increased spending.

Total net assets decreased by £2.7m to £18.0m (2022/23: £20.7m). The net movement in working capital saw an increase in Creditors <1 Year of £1.1m, increase in Debtors of £131k, decreases in Cash at bank of £2.4m and net cash used for Investment activities of £2.1m (2022/23: £9.8m generated)

United Response Services Limited (URS) had gross income of £56.6m (2022/23: £53.7m) and recorded a trading surplus of £1.1m (2022/23: £1.1m), which has been gift-aided to United Response Limited. URS holds contracts with local authorities for welfare services that are subcontracted to United Response, which ensures that the group's taxation position is effectively managed.

Investment Policy and Performance

The Trustees have broad investment powers, set out in the Memorandum and Articles. The Board establishes the charity's investment policy and reviews the target return annually. During the previous financial year, the Trustees agreed to place £2m with

Brewin Dolphin following a competitive tender process. This amount was maintained throughout the 2023/24 year, achieving a net return of 10.3% and ending at a value of £2.2m as of 31st March 2024. Additional surplus funds during the year were invested in short-term cash deposits to maintain liquidity to cover short-term liabilities. Oversight of these long-term investments will continue to be provided by the Finance & Resources Committee.

Changes in Fixed Assets

Changes in the charity's fixed assets are shown in notes 10 and 11 to the accounts.

Reserves

The total funds held by United Response on 31 March 2024 were £18.0m (2022/23: £20.7m), of which £2.2m was held in restricted funds (2022/23: £2.0m). Please refer to the details of restricted funds included in note 17 to the accounts.

The Trustees have designated some reserves for specific purposes; on 31 March 2024, the total designated reserves were £5.9m (2022/23: £6.0m). Due to the nature of the funds, the total of these has not changed significantly over the last two years, see details in note 19 to the accounts.

United Response's free reserves represent unrestricted general funds which have not been designated for a specific purpose and are therefore available for use within the charity's objectives. United Response needs reserves to protect it against risks and to ensure financial sustainability, including an adequate level of working capital to provide a financial buffer, particularly in such times of uncertainty. Reserves also enable us to take advantage of opportunities to develop our activities and to enhance support to people, over and above that which we can provide from income received under contract.

At 31 March 2024, the balance of free reserves was £10m (2022/23: £12.7m) and cash holdings, including investments was £15.5m (2022/23: £15.3m). This exceeded the minimum reserves target of £7.0m set by the Finance and Resources Committee in June 2022. This calculation of free reserves also excludes freehold property that had a net book value in March 2024 of £4.9m (2022/23: 4.8m)

The cost of winding up the organisation in an orderly fashion is estimated at £6.5m. The Trustees consider such an event a remote possibility as the majority of services supplied are of a statutory nature, and staff would be transferred under TUPE regulations to an alternative provider, thus significantly reducing the exposure.

Going concern

United Response considers its position to remain strong to continue its focus on the services it provides. Our good relationships with key funders and a proven ability to retain and secure new services, combined with strong liquidity and sufficient reserves, underline this. United Response's liquidity is evident with unrestricted reserves which stand at £15.9m (2022/23: £18.7m), of which 98% (2022/23: 82%) are held as cash and investments. United Response's free reserves continue to be considered sufficient to provide cover for any short unexpected changes in income and expenditure.

In the face of challenging market conditions, proactive action has been and continues to be taken. Performance to date has been robust in terms of maintaining income generation and also cost control. Contingency measures, detailed monitoring and robust risk management are in place and overseen regularly by the Board.

Alongside an organisation wide focus on financial improvement, our financial plans are actively structured to deliver a return to break even. We are able to do this because of the strength and scale of our reserves and cash balances held after many years of growth and solid financial performance.

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis because there is a reasonable expectation that United Response has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and the Trustees believe that there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the charity's ability to continue.

Governance overview

United Response is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Its Memorandum and Articles of Association govern it. United Response Services Limited is a company limited by shares, with United Response being the only shareholder. The directors of this subsidiary are the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and two Trustees of United Response.

Our Board of Trustees uphold and promotes the principles of the Charity Governance

Code. The Trustees operate by Section 172 (1) of the Companies Act, they act in a way they consider would most likely achieve the organisation's purposes. In making this assessment, the Trustees have considered the following:

- The likely consequences of any decision in the long term
- The interests of the company's employees
- The need to foster the company's relationships with stakeholders, including the people we support, our funders, supporters and key influencers
- The impact of the company's operations on the community and the environment
- The desirability of the company maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct



How we are organised and governed

A Board of Trustees governs United Response. With the powers and obligations of directors under the Companies Acts 2006, the Trustees are responsible for United Response's leadership and strategic direction, stewardship, overall financial and organisational control, monitoring progress and ensuring compliance. The Board is also responsible for protecting the organisation's reputation and values, setting the long-term vision, and holding the Chief Executive and directors' team to account whilst maximising their performance for delivering United Response's policies, strategies and objectives.

The Board of Trustees meet at least four times per year. Five committees feed into the work of the board:

- The Finance and Resources Committee oversees our work's critical financial aspects, which stem from finance, HR, investment and other resource-related strategies.
- The Operations Committee focuses on the quality and safety of services to the people we support.
- The Education, Skills and Employability Committee is responsible for overseeing and scrutinising our education, skills, and employability provision.
- The Audit and Risk Committee oversees

external audits and internal controls across United Response.

- The Nominations Committee acts on behalf of the board to ensure that appropriate governance arrangements are in place, including recruiting new Trustees.

Each committee can appoint co-optees to enhance their work should the Nominations Committee chair and members feel this would add value to the committee's work. During this year, the co-optees were:

Jon Barton

Audit and Risk Committee Co-optee

Steve Coleman

Housing Development Advisor Co-optee

Patricia Dennison

Chair of Safeguarding Forum

Linda Owen

Education Standards Advisor Co-optee

Stephen Maltby

Education Standards Advisor -Co-optee

United Response adheres to principles of good governance, in particular the Charity Governance Code. In line with good practice, we undertake periodic reviews of our governance, both compliance with requirements and adherence to best

practice. This activity is undertaken in part during annual business of the Board and its committees, for example review of committee Terms of Reference and their performance and through more in-depth periodic reviews.

Directors' team

The Chief Executive leads the directors team, reporting to the Chair of the Trustees. Through the Chief Executive, the directors are responsible for the day-to-day management and implementation of the strategy approved by the board, leadership of the organisation and key decisions. They are the most senior paid employees of the organisation. Members of the directors' team attend board and sub-committee meetings to brief the Trustees on organisational matters. During this year the directors were:

Chief Executive

Tim Cooper (resigned March 2024)

Interim Chief Executive

Belinda Phipps (appointed March 2024)

Director of Quality and Practice Development

Sarah Battershall

Director of Communities

Julia Casserly

Director of Operations South

Mike Crowhurst (resigned March 2024)

Director of Housing and Development

Be McCarroll

Director of Finance and Company Secretary

Pete Thomas

Director of People and Inclusion

Jennifer Tremewan (appointed July 2023)

Director of Corporate Services

Mark Ospedale (resigned June 2023)




Remuneration of the directors' team

The Finance and Resources Committee has responsibility for overseeing the pay and reward of the Chief Executive and directors. The committee undertakes benchmarking with multiple sources, using external advice, to ensure that the pay and reward of senior staff are appropriately reviewed against comparable organisations in the charitable sector and are proportionate to the pay and reward of staff overall in the charity. The committee reports its findings to the Board of Trustees.



Our decisions and progress: Shaped by People

Shaped by People has eight strategic intentions over the year we made the following decisions and progress against those aims.

Strategic intention	Decisions
 <p>Offer excellent person-centred support, enabling people we support to live as active members of their local communities</p>	During the year, our services continued to achieve strong endorsement from CQC, with inspection results remaining ahead of industry comparators. We continue to review our service offer and make decisions to exit support contracts where they did not meet the full cost of delivering care, or where other external constraints had a considerable negative impact on our ability to deliver excellent support.
 <p>Promote wellbeing at work and empower colleagues in a more participatory, less hierarchical organisation</p>	We reshaped the Director's Team to enable better decision-making and promote collaborative working. We also decided to reshape our HR function into the People and Inclusion team to enable a greater focus on people experience. We introduced a new role - Reward and Recognition Specialist - under the leadership of the Head of People Experience.
 <p>Operate in a financially sustainable manner making a virtue of our not-for-profit status</p>	After a challenging year in 2022/23, we achieved a £6M turnaround in operating performance in 2023/24. We agreed to plans targeting an overall balance on reserves in 2024/25. Fundraised income of £507k provided opportunities for people that we support.

Strategic intention

Decisions



Speak out with people we support and families, to ensure the voice of disabled people is heard

We continued to roll out United Response's policy and campaigning strategy and sought opportunities for people we support to share their experiences. We ended the year having delivered 64 opportunities for people we support to share their story in the media. We provided 14 opportunities for people we support to meet with MPs and share their views.



Harness the power of digital working to deliver efficiency and more enjoyable ways of working



Our digital programme is one of our most significant financial commitments so we spent time analysing the investment needed to deliver on our promises. We, therefore, decided to halt the rollout of Oracle and replace it with a new plan for our digital systems, designed to reduce costs significantly and limit the change. In 2024, we will:

- Upgrade our current finance system, IRIS.
- Retain iTrent as our HR system and continually upgrade this.
- Continue implementing Sona to manage staff rotas but delay this to enable Nourish to roll out successfully.
- Staff have been excited by the rollout of Nourish as a fully digital care management system enabling us to reduce administrative pressures and improve collaborative working.



Invest in diversification to enable people we support to achieve wider outcomes and to broaden our range of revenue sources



The Board approved a business case to expand our education offer into new areas. We worked with investment partners to secure property that would deliver high-quality homes to the people we support. Adding 45 self-contained units over 4 locations in 2024/25 will allow us to grow our housing and support business. it will increase the range of housing available to the people we support in key strategic locations. in many instances, it provides opportunities for people to move to more independent living and choose housing consistent with the life they wish to live.


Strategic intention		Decisions	
	Develop a recognised brand for our work. Proud of our achievements, confident that we learn from both our successes and our failings	The brand audit completed in 2022/23 highlighted the need to develop and enhance our brand. However, in the current financial climate, we decided to pause further investment until we have a clear strategy and see progress with our financial sustainability.	
		Collaborate with others to deliver our aims	We continued to work with Brandon Trust, Certitude, Choice Support, Dimensions, and MacIntyre as More Than A Provider to influence political parties to prioritise social care. We decided to produce a set of policy recommendations to set out what we wanted to see for the future of social care.





Stakeholders and relationships

The relationships forged and held by United Response are the backbone of the organisation’s history and future and are deep-rooted in all of our work on a regional and national level. Maintaining and fostering each of these relationships is a key priority for the charity, its Directors’ Team, and board. The company’s principal decisions during the financial year carefully consider the importance of these relationships.

Stakeholder	How we engage	Our aims
 People we support	Our support is person-centred. This means that people drive our support and what they want for their life, no matter their support needs. People we support don’t just have a say in how they are supported in their service: they also have a say in how the organisation as a whole supports people. They do this by taking part in our People’s Forum, working as Quality Checkers, and helping us interview and train new staff.	Through our work, we support people to exercise choice and control. We work alongside them so they can achieve the outcomes they want and meaningfully contribute to their communities so they can be active citizens. People we support should be able to say that as a result of access our services: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am connected• I have relationships• I have choice• I have strengths• I am respected
 Communities we work in and potential people we support	We reach the communities we work by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging with local partners including, the NHS, other support providers, local groups	

Stakeholder	How we engage	Our aims
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media and digital marketing• Through our campaigning and media work to improve the social care sector, reduce stigma and challenge negative stereotypes• We share our practice resources with others in the UK• Producing accessible and Easy Read information and guidance	We work in 69 local authority areas providing support for people who have learning disabilities, are autistic or who need mental or physical support needs. We use our knowledge and experience to highlight how the social care sector and wider societal attitudes can be improved so that people can have a better quality of life. We work with our partners and funders so people can gain access to high quality services and support.
 Funders	We reach our funders in a variety of ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We hold long-standing, positive relationships with our funders meaning we work closely together on any relevant issues• We provide opportunities for our funders to visit our services and events• We seek feedback from our funders through surveys and use feedback and insights on our performance to help develop our offer.• We provide reports and updates about the projects our funders support.	United Response gains funding from a variety of sources to deliver our services and activities, including from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local authorities• NHS trusts• Trusts and Foundations• Individual Giving

Stakeholder	How we engage	Our aims
 <p>Our regulators</p>	<p>We ensure that we comply and engage with our regulators by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compiling and submitting timely reports and returns • Self-reporting when necessary • Being prompt with any requests for information • Meeting with our regulators and updating them on our performance 	<p>We maintain strong governance and compliance with our regulators, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CQC • CIW • Ofsted • The Charity Commission • Companies House
 <p>Our staff</p>	<p>We engage, reward and recognise our staff in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing learning and development opportunities • Focusing on improving our culture and equality, diversity and inclusion • Recognising staff through our UR Stars awards scheme • Listening to staff through our staff forum, United Voice, and improving two-way internal communication 	<p>We aim to recruit and retain a skilled workforce who are signed up to our vision, mission and our values.</p>

Risks and how we manage them

Risk management is embedded throughout United Response’s structure and processes. The board of trustees takes a direct overview of risk management and is supported in this by the audit and risk committee. An internal audit function overseen by the Head of Risk and Internal Audit manages our annual assurance plan and reports directly to the audit and risk committee on a quarterly basis. Our suite of risk registers actively connects departmental, project and functional risk management with strategic risks identified in our corporate risk register. A set of contingency financial triggers are set and monitored so that proactive action can be taken.

Throughout 2023-24 United Response has continued to develop the framework in which we manage our risks in order to ensure that key threats and opportunities are identified, monitored and managed in the most effective way. Management of our risks continues to remain a key priority for the charity as we build consideration of risk at all levels both organically and through a structured schedule of risk-focused meetings. Risk remains at the heart of our approach during the growing programme of organisational transformation as we identify

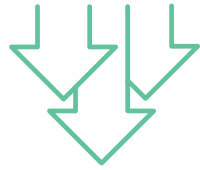
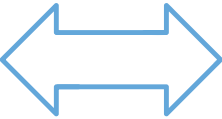
and target ambitious objectives for impact and long-term financial sustainability.

United Response’s corporate risk register

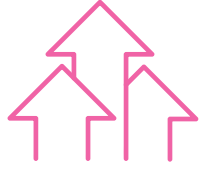
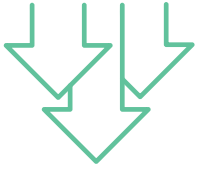
During 2023/24 United Response continued improving our active risk management. The corporate risk register has been consolidated in order to streamline the document and improve focus on key threats faced by the organisation. Within the 17 risks (8 red, 6 amber, 3 green) held on the corporate risk register, focus has been targeted on the ‘Top 5’.



1

Description of risk	Annual trend	How we've mitigated the risk
Financial Sustainability The charity continued to face challenges around financial sustainability. This risk was identified as significant in 2022 and a comprehensive range of mitigation measures were continually applied throughout FY 23/24, ultimately leading to a reduction in our exposure to the risk as United Response's financial position stabilised. Despite this, finance sustainability remained our top risk throughout the year.	 Improving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In year, a heavy focus on financial performance both at central and at service level was applied. • A financial adversity recovery plan, first developed in Winter '22 was adapted and relaunched based on revised budget and forecast • Ongoing negotiations with local authorities for new and renewed contracts. Viability of contracts under constant review • Proactive monitoring of financial performance • Financial training for colleagues is now being rolled out to reduce service level discrepancies and errors • Significant changes were made to United Response's finance team structure
External Environment Like many organisations in our sector, the environment within which United Response operated continued to provide challenges throughout FY 23/24. The nature of current funding streams continued to present volatility given the squeeze on local authority funding and neglect of social care.	 Stable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing development of strategic initiatives with enhanced focus on income stream diversification during the early part of the year • United Response continued to lobby and work with other organisations to influence the external environment in relation to social care • Significant modernisation of our approach to practice was achieved through the launch of the Nourish digital care management system

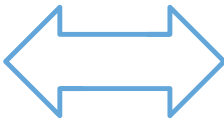
2

Description of risk	Annual trend	How we've mitigated the risk
Disruption & distraction during transformation Towards the end of the financial year, United Response commenced a significant transformation exercise which introduced risks relating to instability, senior staff departures, change resistance and fatigue and the potential for impacts to our operations.	 Worsening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement with organisational leadership to capture feedback on transformation and its impacts • Careful management of organisational messaging. Careful proactive communication of changes and their justification • Regular review and consideration of transformation deliverables and targets • Enhanced focus on cohesive leadership to deliver a strong, clear top-down message • Appointment of interim CEO to oversee transformative period
Staff Retention & Recruitment Staff retention & recruitment remained a challenge throughout FY 23/24, however it was a challenge that gradually reduced as the year progressed as recruitment data and retention figures improved. The risk did however remain high as the ongoing cost of living crisis continued to present challenges related to staff pay as the real living wage continued to grow throughout the year.	 Improving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff rewards (financial & non-financial) reviewed within year. Pay uplifts agreed and effected in 2023 • Introduction of "my first year" onboarding scheme has proven a successful initiative to combat attrition in early stages of employment • Targeted reduction of vacant hours across the charity: Year-on-year vacant hours have reduced by a third across the year ending Jan 2024 • Restructure of Recruitment and Learning & Development teams within year has produced positive outcomes

3

4

5

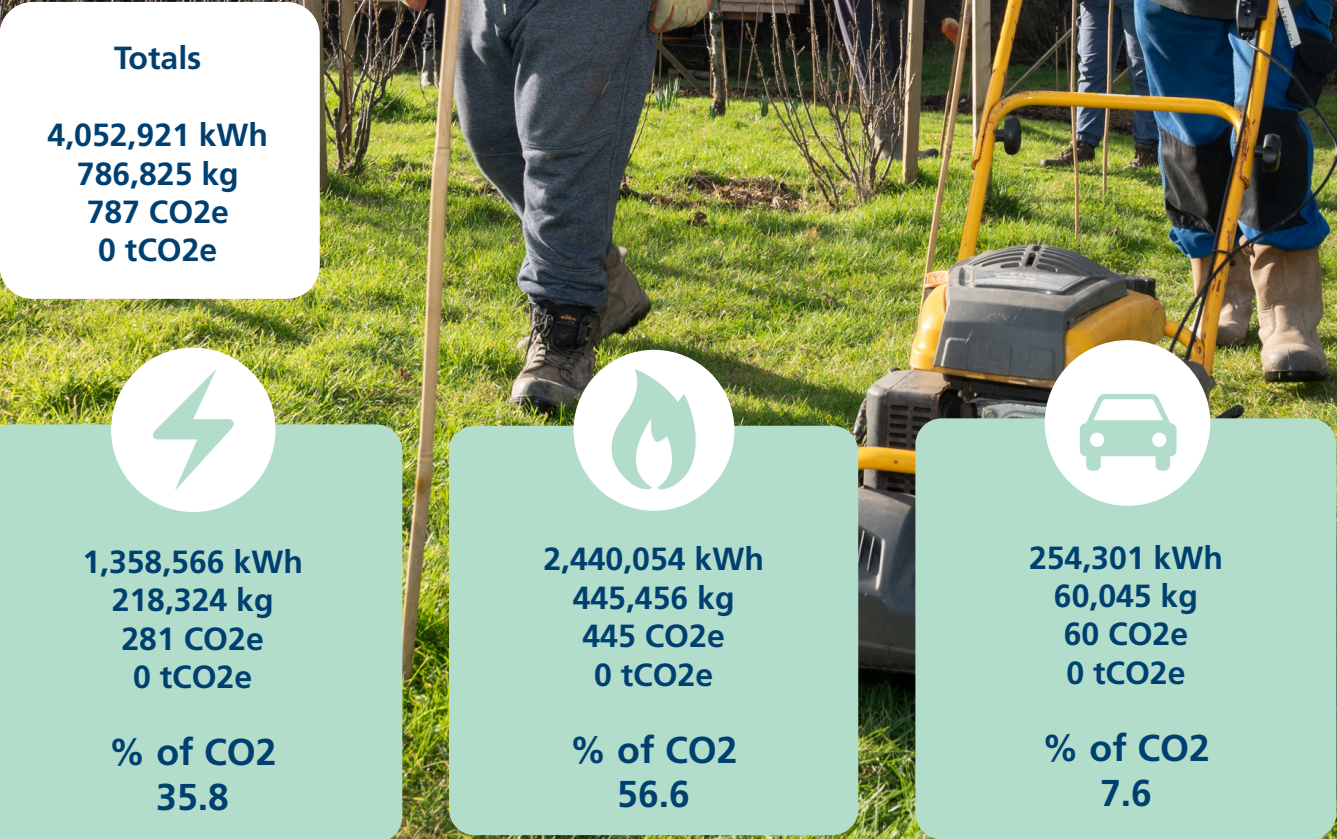
Description of risk	Annual trend	How we've mitigated the risk
<p>Ongoing uncertainty relating to contractual terms</p> <p>United Response relies heavily on collaboration and partnerships with Local Authorities (LA's) to carry out its mission. United Response is exposed to long-term uncertainty regarding the terms being offered within the contracts offered by these LA's. Unfavourable terms may result in adverse conditions, financial challenges and may hinder our ability to provide our services safely and effectively.</p>	<div> Stable</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Careful analysis of benefits and risks associated with all contractsPreparation of proposals around negotiations for alternative, improved termsOngoing relationship management between UR and Local Authorities. We are continuously engaging with LA's to monitor and anticipate changes to terms of existing or upcoming contracts. Where possible, we will use our in-house skills to lobby.CEO & Director-level discussion with alternative providers to understand how third parties have approached similar situationsRegular DT discussion to ensure that this remains at forefront of agenda during leadership conversations

Going into 2024/2025 we aim to continue to improve our risk management approach and to do so with a particular focus on the context of organisational changes, maintaining the quality of our work, robust financial controls and the developing external environment.

Energy and Carbon consumption

Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting (SECR) is the legislative reporting requirement in the Directors' Report. It mandates that all large companies must report on the operational energy consumption and associated emissions. This is the third year of reporting for United Response.

High level breakdown



The main sources of Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions are the consumption of gas and electricity, essential for operational buildings and residences supporting people with disabilities. This combined consumption accounts for 92.4% of United Response's total CO2 emissions, while the remaining 7.6% is emitted through staff transportation and activities associated with supported learning and living facilities. United Response's total CO2 emission breakdown is highlighted in Diagram 1 below:

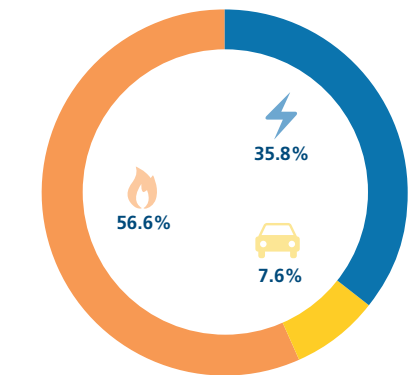


Diagram 1: United Response total CO2 emission breakdown

Diagram 2 illustrates kgCO2e emissions in more detail. The monthly profile exhibits a consistent pattern for electricity usage, while higher consumption is seen for gas during the winter months. It is to be noted that the gas data was estimated since the data

provided from the utility brokers was found to be erroneous.

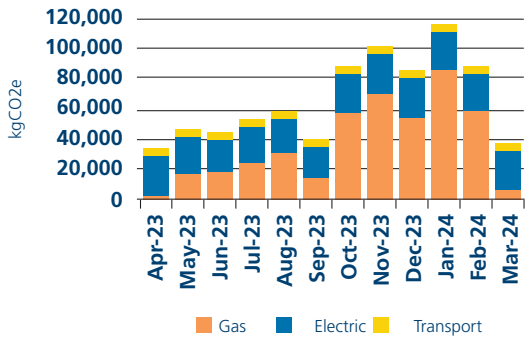


Diagram 2: kg CO2e emissions per month

Diagram 3 compares kWh consumption over the two most recent reporting years. The profile indicates an increased demand for electricity with a slight reduction in energy usage from natural gas and transport in 2024.

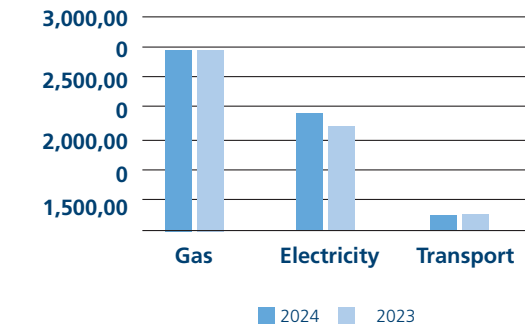


Diagram 3: kg CO2e emissions per month

Intensity Metric

An intensity metric provides United Response with an indicator of carbon performance based on operational figures, specifically the number of staff members. Table 2 illustrates that with 3,450 employees, the average emission is 228 kgCO2e per staff member. In 2024, there was an increase in the organisation's operational intensity by 24 kgCO2e per staff member.

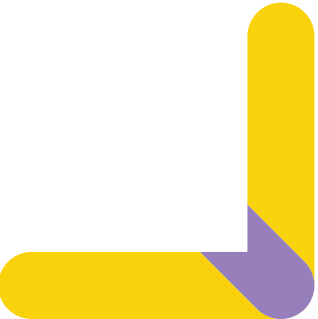
Intensity metric	2024	2023
Number of staff	3,450	3,663
kg CO2e	786,825	747,238
kg CO2e PSM	228	204

Table 2: Intensity metric

United Response's Initiatives

This year we had a number of energy and carbon improvement projects that were completed and some which are still in progress:

- Electric and Hybrid Vehicles**
United Response is progressively integrating electric and hybrid vehicles into its existing fleet. This initiative has been ongoing since the previous SECR period with a current aim of ensuring 25% of new fleet purchased to be hybrid or electric.
- Smart Metering**
The installation of Smart Meters across the company's premises will allow for closer monitoring of peaks and troughs in energy usage, and as such will help us identify areas where energy saving measures can be implanted.
- Condensing portfolio**
The organisation is also considering the closure of several sites, including their head office, in an effort to reduce energy consumption and maintain a more streamlined portfolio.



Methodology

United Response measures Scope 1 and 2 emissions. All energy data was collated by United Response’s energy suppliers, while transport data and staff numbers were gathered internally. Since the provided gas data was found to be faulty, estimates based on heating degree days were used instead. Scope 1 emissions encompass fleet vehicles and gas, while Scope 2 emissions cover electricity. Table 3 shows the figures used to convert energy to CO2.

	Litre	kWh	Co2e
Gas	n/a	1	0.18256
Electricity	n/a	1	0.20707
Petrol	1	9.5	2.1
Diesel	1	10.6	2.5

Table 3: CO2 conversion factors

Quality management and safeguarding

Keeping people safe, well and protected from abuse is at the heart of what we do. To achieve this, we work with our partners, such as local safeguarding boards, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Ofsted. We continued to outperform our peers in the CQC Market Oversight Group with 94% of our services receiving a good or

outstanding rating. 100% of our CIW services are good and our FE College has a good Ofsted rating.

Quality improvement

In 2023/24 our team of auditors and quality checkers, who are people we support, completed 125 audits. They found:

- Our care and support is generally very good.
- The impact of the health coaches has been very positive and has had a direct impact improving the health of the people we support.
- Our quality checker tool is working well
- But they also told us that:
- We need to embed better training around the Mental Capacity Act
- Support plans could share more about the day-to-day lives of people we support

As a result of their findings we have:

- Rolled out a new digital support planning system (Nourish) that captures people’s information and provides the ability for Management and organisational oversight and some aspects of digital reporting. This work is nearly complete with 80% of our services now live and using this system.
- Worked with services and staff teams to ensure that the information on our

- electronic people we support recording system (Nourish) is fit for purpose, person-centred, and person-led.
- Worked with central teams, such as learning and development, to ensure that our staff is knowledgeable, skilled, and competent.
- Reviewed the way in which we conduct audit and quality assurance to embed a more dynamic way of supporting services to improve the way our staff team work with the people we support and, ultimately, the lives of the people we support.

Safeguarding

United Response is committed to embedding a culture of safeguarding and learning across our organisation. We do this by training and supporting our staff to follow our safeguarding and whistleblowing policies and procedures, implementing various control measures and processes such as risk assessment, person-centred planning and positive behaviour support planning. We encourage and welcome the involvement of the families and friends of the people we support. This acts as a safeguarding measure and is essential to their quality of life.

In 2023/24 we examined 412 safeguarding incidents that involve the people we support. Of these:

- We conducted full investigations using a tiered investigation process depending on the seriousness and impact of the safeguarding incident.
- We found 27% were substantiated against United Response, 30% were not substantiated against United Response and 43% had not been closed out by the Local Authority.

To support our ongoing commitment to improving safeguarding, we have:

- introduced a new process to close safeguarding referrals that have remained open despite no further concerns
- agreed a new escalation process to support managers with effective Safeguarding support when they need it.

Our commitments

We fully comply with the obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Our annual transparency statement for the year ended 31 March 2024 is on our [website](#). United Response takes a zero-tolerance approach towards fraud, bribery and corruption. It is committed to complying with all applicable laws and regulations relating to fraud, bribery and corruption wherever it operates.

Our people and culture

This year we continue to put a strong focus on improving our work around equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). We were very proud to have been accredited with the Disability Confident Leader status in December 2023.

With the help of Vercida Consulting we gained feedback from our staff to support the development of an organisational EDI strategy. We launched a staff survey and held series of listening focus groups with staff from across the charity, including a dedicated feedback session with our neurodiverse staff. This enabled us to develop the strategy which our Director of People and Inclusion signed off in February 2024.

Throughout the year we promoted activities in our Diversity Calendar, including but not limited to LGBTQ + Pride month (June), Disability Pride month (July) and Black History Month (October).

Our quarterly diversity forum events continue to have a consistent and good level of attendance. Our staff Diversity Ambassador Lead provided mentoring to staff from Black and minoritised backgrounds who had attended aspiring leaders training.

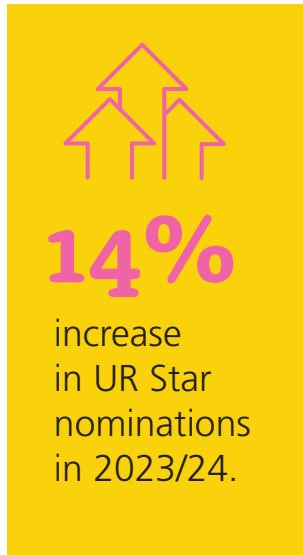
We delivered unconscious bias training to managers so they could recognise the importance of understanding the problem of bias in the workplace, address their own biases and create a more inclusive workplace

How we listened and engaged with our staff

Our staff forum, United Voice, provided us with opportunities to listen to staff and have their views inform the future direction of our charity.

In January 2024 we created a code of conduct for our forum Convenors to establish the expectations and commitment required for the role. We also launched a recruitment campaign to ensure we had more representatives from our support workers cohort, successfully growing representation to 75% for service areas.

We were pleased to increase UR Star nominations by 14% in 2023/24, recognising more staff than ever for their achievements. Our annual celebration days were an opportunity to celebrate our UR Stars, apprentices and colleagues with over 20 years of service. To better support our new starters, we launched My First Year, a programme of check-ins for everyone who has joined us. As a result, we have seen retention



improvements, with staff turnover reducing from 9.58% to 8.91% in the first 12 months.

Gender pay gap

At United Response, women earn £1 for every £1 that men earn when comparing median hourly pay. Their median hourly pay is 0.4% lower than men's. When comparing mean (average) hourly pay, women's mean hourly pay is 2.3% lower than men's. Our full gender pay gap report can be found [here](#).



75%

of service areas
represented in
our staff forum

Fundraising

In 2023/24 we raised £569,571.88 through:

- Securing philanthropic donations from trusts, foundations and corporate partners
- Providing opportunities for people to leave a gift to us in their will
- Supporting people to take part in challenge events and raise money on behalf of United Response
- Promoting appeals and fundraising asks people who have already shown an interest in our work
- Community-based fundraising activity.

A huge thank you to all of our funders, donors and supporters. Through their generosity we are able to achieve our mission of enabling everyone we support to live a good life and contribute to our vision of a society where everyone has equal rights and opportunities.

This year, we welcomed several esteemed foundations to our family of supporters. We are pleased to announce new partnerships with the Peter Harrison Foundation, Motability Foundation, The Bowels Charitable Trust, the Hobson Charity, the Roger De Haan Foundation, the Yellow Wood Foundation, and the Godington Foundation. Additionally, we are grateful for

the continued, long-standing support from the Clothworkers Foundation, the Purey Cust Trust, and the National Heritage Lottery Fund. This list is not exhaustive, and we extend our deepest thanks to all who have contributed to our mission



We were immensely grateful for the opportunity to launch our first BBC Radio 4 charity appeal in support of our hate crime work. We were thrilled to have Leon Harrop, a

BAFTA Breakthrough-winning actor known for his role in Ralph & Katie—the first-ever TV drama featuring two learning-disabled lead actors—present our appeal. Leon, who has Down syndrome, is no stranger to challenging stereotypes. He is deeply passionate about eradicating disability hate crime and shared with listeners his own experiences of facing discrimination, even in the face of his success. The appeal successfully raised £14,066.



£14,066

raised through our BBC Radio 4 charity appeal supporting our hate crime work

This year 17 people took on the challenge of running the iconic London Marathon for United Response, collectively raising £31,890. We are very grateful for their support.

We are deeply grateful to acknowledge that, during this year, we received £105,806 in legacy gifts. These generous contributions reflect the lasting impact of those who chose to remember us in their wills, ensuring that their commitment to our mission endures for years to come. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the individuals and families whose legacy will help shape a brighter future for those we support.

As we move forward with our organisational transformation, we will adapt our fundraising activity to meet the needs of the organisation and the people supported by the charity account for any changes in the external landscape.



£31,890

raised by our 17 London Marathon runners



Ethical fundraising

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards in our fundraising practices, strictly adhering to Charity Commission guidelines. As members of the Fundraising Regulator and the Chartered Institute of Fundraising, we comply with the Code of Fundraising Practice for the UK and diligently protect vulnerable individuals in accordance with the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016.

We are pleased to report that there have been no complaints regarding our fundraising activities over the past year.

Our team is actively developing our fundraising policies to align with our strategic plans. We continually review updates in guidance and legislation, such as the Fundraising Regulator’s Code of Fundraising Practice and GDPR, to ensure that our data is captured and stored securely and efficiently. We prioritise clear and consistent communication with our supporters, though we do not employ direct marketing or external third parties to raise funds. At present, our direct fundraising efforts remain at a low level. All data related to our fundraising activities is meticulously recorded on our CRM system, Donorfy, ensuring accuracy and timeliness.



Reference and administrative details

United Response is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission and a company limited by guarantee.
Company and VAT number 01133776 / GB317764974
Charity number 265249

Registered address and office
7th Floor, Knollys House
17 Addiscombe Road
Croydon

Trustees

During this year the trustees were:

Chair
Malcolm McCaig

Vice-Chair
David Willis (Chair of Finance and Resources Committee)

Honorary Treasurer
Charles Garthwaite

Mark McLaughlin (Chair of Audit & Risk Committee)
Alastair Ballantyne - resigned December 2023
Bill Hodson - resigned March 2024
Satya Samal
Bronagh Scott
Alison Stanley
Deborah Tavana
Guy Van Dichele
Lisa Odendaal
Nicola Pawsey – appointed July 2023
Vicky Whelan – appointed July 2023

Bankers

Lloyds Bank
3rd Floor
25 Gresham Street London EC2V 7HN

Auditors

Crowe U.K. LLP
55 Ludgate Hill
London
EC4M 7JW

About this Report

This report outlines the aims, objectives and performance of United Response for the year 2023 to 2024. Through this report we want to highlight what we do, the outcomes of our work and how we use the money we receive to deliver our charitable objectives. United Response is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. This charitable company is what we mean when we refer to “the charity”.

In this report there is evidence of the charity's activities which are all for the public benefit and are delivered on a not-for-profit basis. The objectives of the charity are to support people with learning disabilities or physical disabilities, autistic people, and those with mental health needs to live the life they choose in their own community. We do this by delivering care and support services encompassing residential care, supported living, housing, employment support, day opportunities, skills and wellbeing activities and further education.

The report is presented by the Board of Trustees of the charity under UK charity law who also act as directors under UK company law. In this report we refer to the members of the Board as “the Trustees”. The report includes the reference and administrative

details on page 49, the Statement of Trustees responsibilities on pages 50-51 and the financial statements on pages 59-88. In preparing the report, we aim to meet our overall obligations under the rules and regulations.

Statement of Trustees responsibility

The Trustees (who are also directors of United Response for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees’ Report, the Strategic Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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



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;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions, disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the provisions of the charity's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as each of the Trustees of the charity, at the date of approval of this report, is aware there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the charity's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report) of which the charity's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the steps that he/she should have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

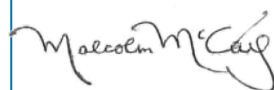
Public Benefit Statement

United Response exists entirely for the public benefit. All our activities are carried out in support of our charitable objectives.

The core of our work is in supporting people with learning disabilities and those with mental health needs, but we also place a significant focus on investing in communities. We provide services primarily under contracts with local authorities, the NHS and personal budgets. It is central to our ethos and charitable status that we promote and campaign for the wider public benefit of our beneficiaries in terms of equality and citizenship. We have taken into account the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

With thanks

The Trustees' would like to express their thanks to everyone who contributes to United Response's work; the people we support and their families, our staff, our commissioners, funders, donors and partners. We are grateful for your tireless dedication and support for our cause. The Trustees' Annual Report and the strategic report contained within was approved by the Trustees of United Response on 16 October 2024 and signed on its behalf by



Malcolm McCaig
Chair

Independent auditors report to the Members of United Response

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of United Response (the "charitable company") and its subsidiaries (the "group") for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Group Statement of Financial Activities, the Group and Company Balance Sheets, the Group 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 group's and the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the group's 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 group 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 trustee’s 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 charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

Other information

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

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material

inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether 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, which includes the directors’ report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors’ report included within the trustees’ report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or 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:

- the parent company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the parent company 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

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement set out on page 50, of the charitable company for the

purposes 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 charitable company'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.

Details of the extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations are set out below.

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

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error, and discussed

these between our audit team members. We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company and group operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011 together with the Charities SORP (FRS 102). We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which might be fundamental to the charitable company's and the group's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. We also considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company and the group for fraud. The laws and regulations

we considered in this context for the UK operations were General Data Protection Regulation, Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulations, employment legislation, taxation legislation and health and safety legislation.

Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be within the timing of recognition of contract income, recording the impact of CQC regulatory reviews and the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management, internal audit and the Audit & Risk Committee about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases, reviewing regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

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.

Vincent Marke
Senior Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of
Crowe U.K. LLP
Statutory Auditor
London

United Response Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 March 2024

(incorporating a consolidated income and expenditure account)

	Notes	General Funds 2024 £'000	Designated Funds 2024 £'000	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £'000	Restricted Funds 2024 £'000	Total Funds 2024 £'000	Total Funds 2023 £'000
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	18	-	18	552	570	505
Charitable activities	4	105,377	-	105,377	-	105,377	99,849
Investments	3	560	-	560	-	560	207
Other activities	3	1	-	1	-	1	235
Total income		105,956	-	105,956	552	106,508	100,796
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	288	-	288	-	288	233
Charitable activities	5	106,916	-	106,916	417	107,333	105,298
Other activities	5	1,743	-	1,743	-	1,743	3,515
Total expenditure		108,947	-	108,947	417	109,364	109,046

United Response Consolidated and Charity Balance Sheets As at 31 March 2024

	Notes	General Funds 2024 £'000	Designated Funds 2024 £'000	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £'000	Restricted Funds 2024 £'000	Total Funds 2024 £'000	Total Funds 2023 £'000
Net deficit on operations		(2,991)	-	(2,991)	135	(2,856)	(8,250)
Net gain/(loss) on investments	19	166	-	166	-	166	(6)
Net (expenditure)/income before transfers between funds		(2,825)	-	(2,825)	135	(2,690)	(8,256)
Transfers between funds	19	19	(19)	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(2,806)	(19)	(2,825)	135	(2,690)	(8,256)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds at 1 April 2023		12,664	6,022	18,686	2,028	20,714	28,970
Total funds at 31 March 2024		9,858	6,003	15,861	2,163	18,024	20,714

All the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above. If income and expenditure from Other Activities are ignored, the net deficit would be £1,115,000 (2022/23 deficit of £4,970,000).

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Fixed Assets					
Intangible assets	10	1	4	1	4
Tangible assets	11	5,422	5,557	5,422	5,557
Investments	12	11,609	8,989	11,609	8,989
Total fixed assets		17,032	14,550	17,032	14,550
Current Assets					
Stocks		40	40	40	40
Debtors	13	11,433	11,302	7,902	7,733
Cash at bank and in hand		3,933	6,293	3,927	6,288
Total current assets		15,406	17,635	11,869	14,061
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	14	(12,299)	(11,058)	(8,764)	(7,486)
Net current assets		3,107	6,577	3,105	6,575
Total assets less current liabilities		20,139	21,127	20,137	21,125
Provisions for liabilities	15	(2,115)	(413)	(2,115)	(413)
TOTAL NET ASSETS	16	18,024	20,714	18,022	20,712
FUNDS OF THE GROUP:					
Restricted Funds					
Restricted funds	17	1,333	1,423	1,333	1,423
Restricted property fund	18	830	605	830	605
Total restricted funds		2,163	2,028	2,163	2,028
Unrestricted Funds					
General Funds	19	9,858	12,664	9,856	12,662
Designated funds	19	6,003	6,022	6,003	6,022
Total unrestricted funds		15,861	18,686	15,859	18,684
TOTAL GROUP FUNDS	16	18,024	20,714	18,022	20,712

The deficit for the financial year, dealt within the financial statements of the parent charity, with company number 1133776, was £2,690,000 (2022/23 deficit of £8,256,000) after gift aid from subsidiaries. These financial statements were approved by the Board and authorised for issue on 16 October 2024.

Malcolm McCaig - Chair
United Response



Joe Anichebe - Treasurer



Consolidated Statement of Cashflows For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash generated / (used) in operating activities	A	(134)	(10,515)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Dividends and interest from investments		560	207
Purchase of Investment Portfolio		(2,036)	(2,000)
(Decrease)/increase in cash held for reinvestment		(418)	11,784
(Decrease)/increase in property, plant and equipment		(332)	(598)
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment		-	374
Net cash generated/(used) in investing activities		(2,226)	9,767
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(2,360)	(748)
Cash & cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		6,293	7,041
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	B	3,933	6,293
A. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flows from operating activities			
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)		(2,690)	(8,256)
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation and amortisation charges		382	355
Returns on investments		(166)	6
Dividends and interest from investments		(560)	(207)
(Gain) / loss on sale of fixed assets		-	(235)

	Notes	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Decrease / (increase) in stocks		-	-
Decrease / (increase) in debtors		(131)	(1,868)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors		1,241	(310)
Increase / (decrease) in provisions		1,790	-
Net cash provided by operating activities		(134)	(10,515)
B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents			
Cash in hand		87	149
Cash at bank		3,846	6,144
Total cash and cash equivalents		3,933	6,293

The notes on pages 64-88 form part of these accounts.

United Response
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended
31 March 2024

Charity Information

United Response is a public benefit entity registered as charity in England and Wales and a company limited by guarantee. It was incorporated on 11 September 1973 (company number: 1133776) and registered as a charity on 2 October 1973 (charity number: 265249). The address of the registered office is 7th Floor - Knollys House, 17 Addiscombe Road, Croydon, London, England, CR0 6SR.

1. Accounting Policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the second edition of the Charities Statement of Recommended

Practice issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and Companies Act

The charity has taken advantage of the exemptions in FRS 102 from the requirements to present a charity only Cash Flow Statement and certain disclosures about the charity's financial

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

b) Group financial statements

These financial statements consolidate the results of the charity and its wholly owned subsidiaries: United Response Services Limited and Robert Owen Communities (dormant) and are referred to as "the Group".

A separate statement of financial activities and income and expenditure account are not presented for the charity itself following the exemptions afforded by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

c) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

We have set out in this report a review of

United Response's financial performance, the reserves position and principal risks and uncertainties.

Based on the assessment of these, United Response considers its position to be strong and continues its focus on the services it provides. Our good relationships with key funders, a proven ability to retain and secure new services, combined with strong liquidity and sufficient unrestricted reserves underline this.

All the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above. If income and expenditure from Other Activities are ignored, the net deficit would be £1,114,000 (2022/23 deficit of £4,970,000).

United Response's liquidity is evident in review of the consolidated reserves which stand at £15.9m (2022/23 - £18.7m) and £10.0m as free reserves (2022/23 - £12.7m), of which almost all is held as cash and short-term fixed deposits.

The current economic climate has been challenging due to a soar in the cost of living, the disruption of global supply chains and a recruitment crisis. We have maintained some remedial actions, using

reserves and proceeds of sold properties from services we handed back where local authority fees did not meet the total cost of delivering good quality care and support. United Response's free reserves continue to be considered sufficient to provide cover for any short term unexpected changes in income and expenditure.

d) Critical accounting judgements and key sources of uncertainty

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying value of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an on-going basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects the current and future periods.

1. Accounting policies continued

In the view of the trustees, other than those matters disclosed above, there are no assumptions concerning the future or estimation uncertainty affecting assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date likely to result in a material adjustment to their carrying amounts in the next financial year.

e) Income

Any funds received are accounted for as income when United Response can meet the following recognition criteria: it has entitlement, there is probability (more likely than not) that it will be received, and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Sources of funds include Charitable contractual income, Grants, Legacies, Gifts in kind/Donation and investment income. Any funds received in advance are deferred until the contracted service has been provided at which point United Response is entitled to record it.

Where there are terms or conditions attached to incoming funds, particularly grants, then these terms or conditions must be met before the income is recognised. Where terms or conditions have not been met or uncertainty exists as to whether they can be met then the relevant income is

not recognised in the year but deferred and shown on the balance sheet as deferred income.

Grants are recognised on the performance model, when the charity has complied with any conditions attaching to the grant and the grant will be received. See Note 4 for revenues recorded related to additional Government grants and funding for the pandemic.

f) Expenditure

Costs of raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income. Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the provision of support to people with learning disabilities or mental health needs and include both the direct and support costs relating to these activities. Governance costs are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to one of the charity's activities they have been allocated on the basis of estimated time spent.

g) Operating leases

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the period.

h) Pension schemes

United Response operates a non-contributory stakeholder pension scheme for eligible staff members. Current employer's contributions amount to 3% of pensionable earnings. The charity also contributes to the NHS pension scheme, the West Yorkshire Pension Fund and the Nottinghamshire County Council Pension Fund in respect of staff members who have transferred from other employers. These are defined benefit schemes which we account for as defined contribution schemes as it is difficult to identify the charity's share of the underlying assets and liabilities; we hold £100,000 in reserve relating to these schemes should we be required to supplement our contributions.

i) Intangible fixed assets

Computer software costs have been capitalised within intangible assets as they can be identified with a specific project anticipated to produce future benefits. Once brought into use, they are amortised on the straight line basis over four years.

j) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £2,000 are capitalised and shown at cost. Depreciation has been charged to write off

all fixed assets, except for freehold land, over their estimated useful lives, at the following rates:-

- Freehold buildings and improvements 2% to 25% on cost.
- Leasehold buildings over period of lease.
- Furniture and equipment 25% on cost.
- Motor vehicles 25% on cost.

k) Financial instruments

United Response has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Financial assets held at amortised cost comprise cash at bank and in hand, together with trade and other debtors.

Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise overdrafts and trade and other creditors.

Investments, including bonds held as part of an investment portfolio, are held at fair value at the balance sheet date, with gains and losses being recognised within income and expenditure.

1. Accounting policies continued

These are detailed in note 12 to these accounts. Investments in subsidiary undertakings are held at cost less impairment.

l) Investments

All investments held are included in the balance sheet at market value.

m) Stock

All stock is held at the lower of cost and net realisable value.
Since 2016, stock holdings included farm stock from the Robert Own Communities (ROC) acquisition and small supplies for the Café.

As a result of the pandemic, stock now includes holdings of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in a privately managed distribution warehouse. Once PPE is distributed to the services, it is recorded as an expense.

n) Provisions

United Response has commitments to make good dilapidations and carry out repairs

under various property leases. A provision is made for all leased properties that may be subject to a potential dilapidation charge and is based on the experience of recent actual costs incurred when vacating premises.

o) Funds

Income received subject to specific conditions imposed by the donor is included in restricted funds. Revenue expenditure is allocated against these funds as incurred. Restricted funds which have financed fixed assets are reduced by amounts equivalent to any depreciation charge over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned. The analysis of restricted funds is shown in note 17 to the accounts.

p) Cash at bank and in hand

Liquid resources are defined as cash at bank and in hand immediately available to meet working capital needs. Other cash not required for working capital requirements are classified as investments.

2. Analysis of Donations and Legacies

	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Donations from trusts		
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	-	-
National Lottery	-	50
Wolfson Foundation	-	43
Clothworkers' Foundation	-	35
Waterloo Foundation	-	15
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	16	15
National Heritage	27	-
Mobility Grant	200	-
Peter Harrison	20	-
Other	69	28
Total donations from trusts	332	186
Legacies		
- Mrs J Moore	-	41
- Other	-	1
Total donations from legacies	-	42
Total other voluntary income	238	277
Total donations and legacies	570	505

3. Investment income is made up as follows:

	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Bank interest	560	207
Total investment income	560	207
Other income is made up as follows:	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Gain on sales of fixed assets	1	235
Other income	1	235

4. Analysis of Income from Charitable Activities

	Contractual Income £'000	Grants £'000	Trading Income £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Learning disability residential services	11,635	22	-	11,657	12,471
Learning disability supported living	81,461	98	-	81,559	76,719
Other learning disability services	7,030	862	-	7,892	6,080
Mental health services	1,569	-	-	1,569	1,425
Employment Opportunities - PWS*	2,275	2	273	2,550	2,236
Government funding - Covid 19 & WRR	-	6	-	6	497
Capital Grants	144	-	-	144	421
Total income from charitable activities	104,114	990	273	105,377	99,849

*PWS - people we support

Contractual income is made up as follows:

	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Income from statutory authorities	97,528	93,851
Income from people we support and other sources	6,586	4,920
Total contractual income	104,114	98,771

Grant income is made up as follows:

	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Government funding - Covid 19 & WRRF	6	497
NHS England property grants	108	421
Skills for care	12	-
Grants to support employment (various)	3	-
St Raphael	861	-
Total grant income	990	918

5. Analysis of Total Expenditure	Direct costs £'000	Support costs £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Raising funds	272	16	288	233
Charitable activities				
Learning disability residential services	10,619	1,931	12,550	13,050
Learning disability supported living services	70,418	13,177	83,595	83,177
Other learning disability services	5,579	1,043	6,622	5,327
Mental health services	1,165	407	1,572	1,290
Employment Opportunities - People We Support	2,037	365	2,402	2,029
Governance costs	592	-	592	425
Total	90,410	16,923	107,333	105,298

Governance costs have been allocated to activities on the basis of estimated time spent.

Other	-	1,743	1,743	3,515
Total expenditure	90,682	18,682	109,364	109,046

Other costs of £1,743k (2022/23 - £3,515k) relates to the contracted costs of the proposed Oracle Enterprise system and Nourish IT Systems.

6. Analysis of Support Costs	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Regional support and training	6,765	5,807
Service development and quality	1,297	1,114
Communication and policy	517	512
Financial, HR and legal	5,428	3,817
Information Technology	1,991	1,882
General management	925	1,186
Total support costs	16,923	14,318

Support costs have been allocated to activities on the basis of estimated time spent.

7. Net Surplus on Operations for the Year	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
This is stated after charging:		
Depreciation and amortisation	470	355
Auditors' remuneration including VAT	40	50
Other fees paid to Auditors including VAT	13	13
Amounts paid under operating leases		
- Land and buildings	946	1,053
- Motor vehicles	300	256

8. Trustee benefits and expenses

A total of £2,401 was paid to 5 trustees during the year (2022/23 - £1,969). The expenses reimbursed to trustees cover travel and subsistence costs only. None of the Trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits.

Indemnity insurance is provided for the trustees as part of the overall management liability policy, the total premium paid during the year amounted to £18,956 (2022/23 - £18,956).

Staff Costs

9. Total staff costs for the year were as follows:

	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Wages and salaries	74,808	71,952
Social security costs	6,433	6,365
Pension contribution costs	1,548	1,631
Cost of withdrawal from the Pensions Trust Growth Fund	-	-
Total	82,789	79,948

Wages and salaries include £524,000 (2022/23 - £331,000) of redundancy and termination payments which were paid out in accordance with our redundancy policy and legal requirements.

Average number employed

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Direct charitable activities	3,134	3,134
Support and governance	308	309
Generating voluntary income	4	-
Total	3,446	3,443

Number of employees whose remuneration (including taxable benefits) exceeded £60,000 during the year

	2024 Number	2023 Number
£60,000 - £70,000	14	11
£70,001 - £80,000	12	8
£80,001 - £90,000	2	-
£90,001 - £100,000	1	1
£100,001 - £110,000	3	4
£110,001 - £120,000	1	-
£120,001 - £130,000	1	-
£130,001 - £140,000	-	-
£140,001 - £150,000	1	1
£150,001 - £160,000	-	1
Total	35	26

Total pension contributions outstanding at the year end were £266,000 (2022/23 - £267,000).

The Executive Team consists of the Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of People & Inclusion, Director of Communities, Director of Quality and Practice Development, Director of Housing & Development, Director of Education, Skills, Employment and Enterprises, Director of Business Development and the Director of Communications and Marketing. This represents a temporarily expanded team with several interim positions collectively driving our transformation programme.

Executive Team Remuneration

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Total pay and benefits of the Senior Executive Team	1,034	1,005

10. Intangible Fixed Assets

	Total £'000
Cost	
1 April 2023	419
Additions	-
Disposals	-
31 March 2024	419
Amortisation	
1 April 2023	415
Charge for the year	3
Disposals	-
31 March 2024	418
Net Book Values (Group & Charity)	
31 March 2024	1
31 March 2023	4

Intangible assets relate to capitalisation of computer software costs.

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Freehold property £'000	Leasehold property £'000	Furniture & equip. £'000	Motor vehicles £'000	Total £'000
Cost					
1 April 2023	6,306	1,372	2,242	60	9,980
Additions	244		88		332
Disposals		(35)	(111)		(146)
31 March 2024	6,550	1,337	2,219	60	10,166
Depreciation					
1 April 2023	1,498	1,036	1,837	52	4,423
Charge for the year	203	108	152	4	467
Disposals		(35)	(111)		(146)
31 March 2024	1,701	1,109	1,878	56	4,744
Net Book Value (Group)					
2024	4,849	228	341	4	5,422
2023	4,808	336	405	8	5,557
Net Book Value (Charity)					
2024	4,849	228	341	4	5,422
2023	4,808	336	405	8	5,557

Freehold property includes three properties with a net book value of £831,000 (2022/23 - £605,000 - two properties) which are subject to the restrictions set out in note 18.

12. Fixed Asset Investments

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Market value at beginning of year	8,989	18,779
Purchases at cost	2,036	2,000
Disposals at book value	-	-
(Decrease) / increase in market value	166	(6)
Increase / (decrease) in cash held for reinvestment	418	(11,784)
Market value at end of year	11,609	8,989

The value of the investment was made up as follows:-

	Historical Cost		Market Value	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
UK Fixed Deposits	6,995	6,995	8,795	6,995
UK Bonds	133	111	141	111
Overseas Bonds	235	159	234	159
UK Equities	392	386	402	382
Overseas Equities	922	872	1,041	858
Global Investments Funds	73	129	94	133
Absolute Return Funds	20	70	20	71
Cash	61	78	61	78
Property	62	59	64	58
Other	142	150	757	144
Total investments	9,035	9,009	11,609	8,989

13. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Trade debtors	8,263	8,063	4,251	2,903
Amounts owed by group & associated undertaking	-	-	1,518	2,070
Prepayments	124	670	124	670
Accrued income	1,740	2,016	703	1,537
Other debtors	1,306	553	1,306	553
Total	11,433	11,302	7,902	7,733

Trade debtors are stated net of a general doubtful debt provision based on the age of debts of £219,000 (2022/23 - £417,000). Accrued income is an estimate of income earned but not yet invoiced.

14. Creditors - Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	Group		Charity	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Trade creditors	637	1,488	637	1,488
Accruals	4,701	3,063	4,693	3,041
Deferred income	1,043	1,133	635	694
Taxation and social security	3,697	3,351	798	460
Other creditors	2,221	2,023	2,001	1,803
Total	12,299	11,058	8,764	7,486

15. Provision for Liabilities and Charges

	Oracle Provision 2024 £'000	Dilapidation Provision 2024 £'000	Total Provision 2024 £'000	Total Provision 2023 £'000
Opening balance	-	413	413	413
Utilised in year	-	(88)	(88)	-
Released unused during the year	-	-	-	-
Additional amount provided	1,730	60	1,790	-
Closing balance	1,730	385	2,115	413

The provision for dilapidations provides for the cost of repairs arising as a result of obligations under property leases.

During the year, the Charity identified that a contract for the upgrade of the in-house accounting software system, became onerous due to a significant issue in regards its suitability.

The provision for this onerous contract has been calculated as follows:

Description of the Contract: Oracle Cloud Service Agreement

Reason for Provision: Cancellation of implementation of Oracle Service Agreement.

Total Provision: £1.7m (discounted at 6% NPV)

Calculation Basis: The provision represents the unavoidable costs of the remaining service contract

Expected Settlement Date: The provision is currently in negotiation, and could become payable in full subject to agreement.

16. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	General Funds £'000	Designated Funds £'000	Total unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2024 Total Funds £'000
Intangible fixed assets	-	1	1	-	1
Tangible fixed assets	-	4,592	4,592	830	5,422
Investments	11,609	-	11,609	-	11,609
Current assets	12,663	1,410	14,073	1,333	15,406
Current liabilities	(12,299)	-	(12,299)	-	(12,299)
Provisions for liabilities & charges	(2,115)	-	(2,115)	-	(2,115)
Total net assets 31 March 2024	9,858	6,003	15,861	2,163	18,024

2023 Comparative Disclosures

	General Funds £'000	Designated Funds £'000	Total unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2023 Total Funds £'000
Intangible fixed assets	-	4	4	-	4
Tangible fixed assets	-	4,611	4,611	946	5,557
Investments	8,989	-	8,989	-	8,989
Current assets	15,146	1,407	16,553	1,082	17,635
Current liabilities	(11,058)	-	(11,058)	-	(11,058)
Provisions for liabilities & charges	(413)	-	(413)	-	(413)
Total net assets 31 March 2023	12,664	6,022	18,686	2,028	20,714

17. Restricted Funds

	Balance 31 March 2023 £'000	Transfers during the year £'000	Generated during the year £'000	Utilised during the year £'000	Balance 31 March 2024 £'000
Time For You	15	-	-	-	15
Accessible Voting	21	-	1	-	22
North Division	298	40	6	(40)	304
South Division	420	-	101	(2)	519
Devon ESE (formerly ROC)	276	(40)	7	(31)	212
Other restricted funds	52	-	35	(10)	77
Subtotal	1,082	-	150	(83)	1,149
Represented by tangible fixed assets:					
North Division	10	(8)	-	-	2
South Division	147	8	152	(125)	182
Devon ESE (formerly ROC)	184	-	-	(184)	-
Other restricted funds	-	-	-	-	-
Total excluding restricted property	1,423	-	302	(392)	1,333
Restricted property fund (see note 18)	605	-	250	(25)	830
Total	2,028	-	552	(417)	2,163

The purposes of the principal funds shown above are as follows:

Time for You - this is a grant from Ipswich Borough Council in relation to the Suffolk Short Break Demonstrator Project, involving the provision of respite to family carers of people with learning disabilities. The grant was originally awarded to Ipswich Council for Voluntary Service, but was transferred to United Response during 2012.

Accessible Voting - this is a grant from the UK Democracy Fund a Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust initiative. This is a grant to develop a campaign to get people with a learning disability and autistic people registered to vote and casting their vote in the next general election.

North Division - the largest element of the income and expenditure relates to York Training and Community Services. The offering consists of a Café, Health & Wellbeing Outreach, The Base for independent living workshops, the Autism Hub, supported employment coaching and the media centre. Grants have also been provided by Trafford MBC, Knowsley MBC and Wigan MBC to enable us to develop employment and social opportunities for people with autism. As well as Liverpool to tackle bullying.

South Division - the largest element of the income and expenditure relates to the Donation Station, our charity shop, which raises money for The Community Network, and teaches employment skills to the people we support.

Devon ESE - in 2016 United Response merged with Robert Owen Communities and this fund represents the balance of restricted funds acquired at that time and the net movement in restricted revenue funds since. ROC College is a specialist college that provides education for young people between the ages of 16 and 25 within Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. We also offer other supported employment opportunities and services such as Boscawen Farm where People we Support and Students can learn transferable skills.

Funds represented by tangible fixed assets - these funds relate mainly to improvements to properties, including houses owned by United Response in West Sussex and Devon and leased in Suffolk, Essex and Kent.

2023 Comparative Disclosures

	Balance 31 March 2023 £'000	Transfers during the year £'000	Generated during the year £'000	Utilised during the year £'000	Balance 31 March 2024 £'000
Time For You	15	-	-	-	15
Accessible Voting	6	-	15	-	21
North Division	124	158	25	(9)	298
South Division	241	84	106	(11)	420
South West Division	42	(42)	-	-	-
North West Division	134	(134)	-	-	-
Devon ESE (formerly ROC)	228	7	51	(10)	276
Other restricted funds	123	(73)	2	-	52
Subtotal	913	-	199	(30)	1,082
Represented by tangible fixed assets:					
North Division	2	8	-	-	10
South Division	142	5	-	-	147
South West Division	1	(1)	-	-	-
North West Division	8	(8)	-	-	-
Devon ESE (formerly ROC)	188	(4)	-	-	184
Total excluding restricted property	1,254	-	199	(30)	1,423
Restricted property fund (see note 18)	188	-	421	(4)	605
Total	1,442	-	620	(34)	2,028

18. Restricted Property Fund

The original restricted property fund of £182,000 (2022/23 - £184,000) represents the value of a freehold property provided by the South East Kent District Health Authority to house a service in Folkestone. The property, which was acquired at no cost to United Response, is registered in the name of the charity and has been included in fixed assets at the cost of acquisition and refurbishment borne by the Health Authority, less depreciation. In the event of the service terminating, United Response has undertaken to transfer the property back to the Health Authority for £nil consideration.

Last year restricted property funding was received from NHS England for the purchase of a property in Aylesbury with a Net Book Value of £399,000 (2022/23 - £413,000). The property, which was acquired at no cost to United Response, is registered in the name of the charity and has been included in fixed assets at the cost of acquisition and refurbishment borne by NHS England, less depreciation. In the event of the service terminating, United Response has undertaken to repay a 100% portion of the market value of the property back to NHS England less disposal costs.

In the current year a restricted property funding was received from the Trustess of Ipswich St Raphaels Club at a value of £250,000. The property, which was acquired at no cost to United Response, is registered in the name of the charity and has been included in fixed assets at the cost of acquisition of £250,000. The Ipswich St Raphaels Club is restricted in nature, any change of use, or disposal, can only be actioned on the consent of the Charity Commissioners.

19. Unrestricted Funds

	Balance 31 March 2023 £'000	Transfers during the year £'000	Generated during the year £'000	Utilised during the year £'000	Net Gain (Loss) year £'000	Balance 31 March 2024 £'000
Property fund	1,061	-	-	-	-	1,061
Pension fund	100	-	-	-	-	100
Maintenance fund	250	-	-	-	-	250
Tangible fixed assets	4,611	(19)	-	-	-	4,592
Total designated funds	6,022	(19)	-	-	-	6,003
Unrestricted general funds	12,664	19	105,956	(108,947)	166	9,858
Total unrestricted funds	18,686	-	105,956	(108,947)	166	15,861

Funds have been designated for the following purposes:-

Property fund - to help fund the purchase of properties to support the development of the charity's activities. These funds are likely to be utilised over the next five years.

Pension fund - to cover the potential liability associated with membership of one multi-employer defined benefit local government pension schemes. It cannot be estimated when this will be utilised.

Maintenance fund - to provide funding for major repairs of properties which the charity has responsibility for. These funds are used, reviewed and maintained ongoing.

Tangible fixed assets - relates to the portion of reserves invested in unrestricted tangible fixed assets to be used by United Response in its operations. This decreased during the year by £148,000 due to a transfer from unrestricted general funds.

2023 Comparative Disclosures

	Balance 31 March 2023 £'000	Transfers during the year £'000	Generated during the year £'000	Utilised during the year £'000	Balance 31 March 2024 £'000
Property fund	1,061	-	-	-	1,061
Pension fund	100	-	-	-	100
Maintenance fund	250	-	-	-	250
Intangible Fixed Assets	8	(8)	-	-	-
Tangible fixed assets	5,109	(498)	-	-	4,611
Total designated funds	6,528	(506)	-	-	6,022
Unrestricted general funds	21,000	506	100,176	(109,018)	12,664
Total unrestricted funds	27,528	-	100,176	(109,018)	18,686

20. Capital commitments

There were no capital commitments in the year 2024 (2023 - nil).

21. Operating Lease commitments

	Land and buildings		Vehicles	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Total of future minimum lease payments under non cancellable				
within one year	333	653	124	125
within two to five years	97	452	192	153
after five years	-	118	-	-
Total	430	1,223	316	278

22. Subsidiary Undertakings

All subsidiaries have their registered address as the same as United Response: 7th Floor Knolly's House, 17 Addiscombe Rd, Croydon, CR0 6SR.

In January 2019, United Response Services Limited (URS) was formed as a wholly owned subsidiary of United Response. URS is registered as company number 11788717 and £100 share capital was invested by United Response. On 1st April 2019, the entity commenced trading. United Response Services Limited carries out trading activities with local authorities on behalf of United Response Limited.

In 2016 the charity acquired Robert Owen Communities (ROC), a UK charitable company with registered charity number 517845 and company number 02038915. ROC has been dormant since 2019.

The tables overleaf show the impact of the subsidiaries on the results of the Group.

Financial activities of Subsidiaries in 2024

	2024 URS £'000
Sales revenue	56,563
Other income	-
Total turnover	56,563
Salaries and wages	-
Other costs	55,432
Total operating costs	55,432
Trading profit	1,131
Gift aid due to parent	(1,131)
Retained profit	-
Retained loss brought forward	-
Retained profit carried forward	-
Gross Assets	4,966
Gross Liabilities	(4,966)
Total Net Assets	-

2023 Comparative Disclosures

Financial activities of subsidiaries in 2023	2024 URS £'000
Sales revenue	53,560
Other income	172
Total turnover	53,732
Salaries and wages	-
Other costs	52,665
Total operating costs	52,665
Trading profit	1,067
Gift aid due to parent	(1,067)
Retained profit	-
Retained loss brought forward	-
Retained profit carried forward	-
Gross Assets	5,554
Gross Liabilities	(5,554)
Total Net Assets	-

23. People We Support bank accounts

The charity administers holding bank accounts on behalf of residents for the receipt and payment of the residents' personal allowances. These bank accounts have not been reflected on these financial statements as an asset or liability. The value held at 31 March 2024 was £565,449 (2022/23 - £557,000). The bank accounts are held separately from those of the charity.

24. Transactions with Related Parties

There have been no related party transactions in the year to 31 March 2024 that require disclosure other than transactions with the subsidiary companies, URS and UR's trustees. Transactions with URS are set out below and those with the trustees are disclosed under note 8

In 2023/24, the charity charged URS £55,432,000 (2022/23 - £52,658,000) in respect of the delivery of operational services.

In 2023/24, URS paid the charity £52,126,000 (2022/23 - £52,153,000) of monies collected on invoices settled.

In 2023/24, under a deed of covenant, URS will make a gift aid payment to the charity of £1,131,227 (2022/23 - £1,067,000). Payment will be made to the parent charity during the 9 months following the relevant reporting date.

As at 31/03/2024, URS owed the charity £1,521,000 (2022/23 - £2,072,000).

**25. Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

(incorporating a consolidated income and
expenditure account)

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £'000	Restricted Funds 2023 £'000	Total Funds 2023 £'000
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	306	199	505
Charitable activities	99,428	421	99,849
Investments	207	-	207
Other activities	235	-	235
Total income	100,176	620	100,796
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	233	-	233
Charitable activities	105,264	34	105,298
Other activities	3,515	-	3,515
Total expenditure	109,012	34	109,046
Net deficit on operations	(8,836)	586	(8,250)
Net gain/(loss) on investments	(6)	-	(6)
Net (expenditure)/income before transfers	(8,842)	586	(8,256)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	(8,842)	586	(8,256)
Reconciliation of funds:			
Total funds at 1 April 2022	27,528	1,442	28,970
Total funds at 31 March 2023	18,686	2,028	20,714



Get in touch

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