

Making life better by design

Annual Report
2023/24



Design
Council



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About the Design Council

The Design Council is the UK's national strategic advisor on design, championing design and its ability to make life better for all. It is an independent and not for profit organisation incorporated by Royal Charter.

The Design Council uniquely works across all design sectors and delivers programmes with business, government, public bodies and the third sector. The work encompasses thought leadership, tools and resources, showcasing excellence and research to evidence the value of design and influence policy. Our Design for Planet mission was introduced in 2021 to galvanise and support the 1.97 million people who work in the UK's design economy to help achieve net zero and beyond.





Foreword

Recognition is growing that design is a key skill for driving the green transition. The understanding that designing responsibly is essential for our planet's future is taking root. Our Design for Planet mission is part of a movement which is gaining momentum, but there is still much work to do.

Our work this past year has provided the catalyst for change. Our research on the **Green Design Skills Gap** evidences the urgent need for capacity building and knowledge development at every level within the design community. Addressing the skills gap is essential to ensure designers are equipped to turn the tide and pivot us towards a better future.

The third **Design for Planet Festival** at the University of East Anglia brought together 2,500 online attendees from 93 countries and featured over 60 world-leading thinkers from business and design. The theme of collaboration underscored the strength of unity and need for cross discipline working in tackling the climate challenge.

Being selected by the World Design Organization to host the 34th **World Design Congress** in London in 2025 provides us with an unparalleled opportunity to shine a light on Design for Planet and position the UK at the forefront of global discussion. The unanimous cheers heard in Tokyo as London was announced as the next host city, reflect the international respect and high expectation that we must now deliver on. It is an opportunity to showcase UK leadership in design and sustainability on a global stage.

Seeing Kate Raworth's powerful words "If you're not designing for planet, what planet are you on", projected on iconic architecture across the capital during London Design Festival, served as a war cry and a bold reminder to the design community of the role they play.

As we move into our 80th year, we aim to build on these successes and publishing our 5-year strategy provides the roadmap for continuing our mission and our vision for a regenerative world for all.

Minnie Moll
Chief Executive

William Eccleshare
Chair of the Board of Trustees



Charitable Objects



The Design Council is a charity incorporated by Royal Charter.

We are guided by four key objectives.

The advancement of British industry and public services by the improvement of design in their processes, products and services

The protection, enhancement, improvement and revitalisation of the natural and built environment (including architecture)

The advancement of the education of the public in subjects relating to sustainable development and sustainable living

To promote the study of and research into the value of design and to actively disseminate the results to the public at large

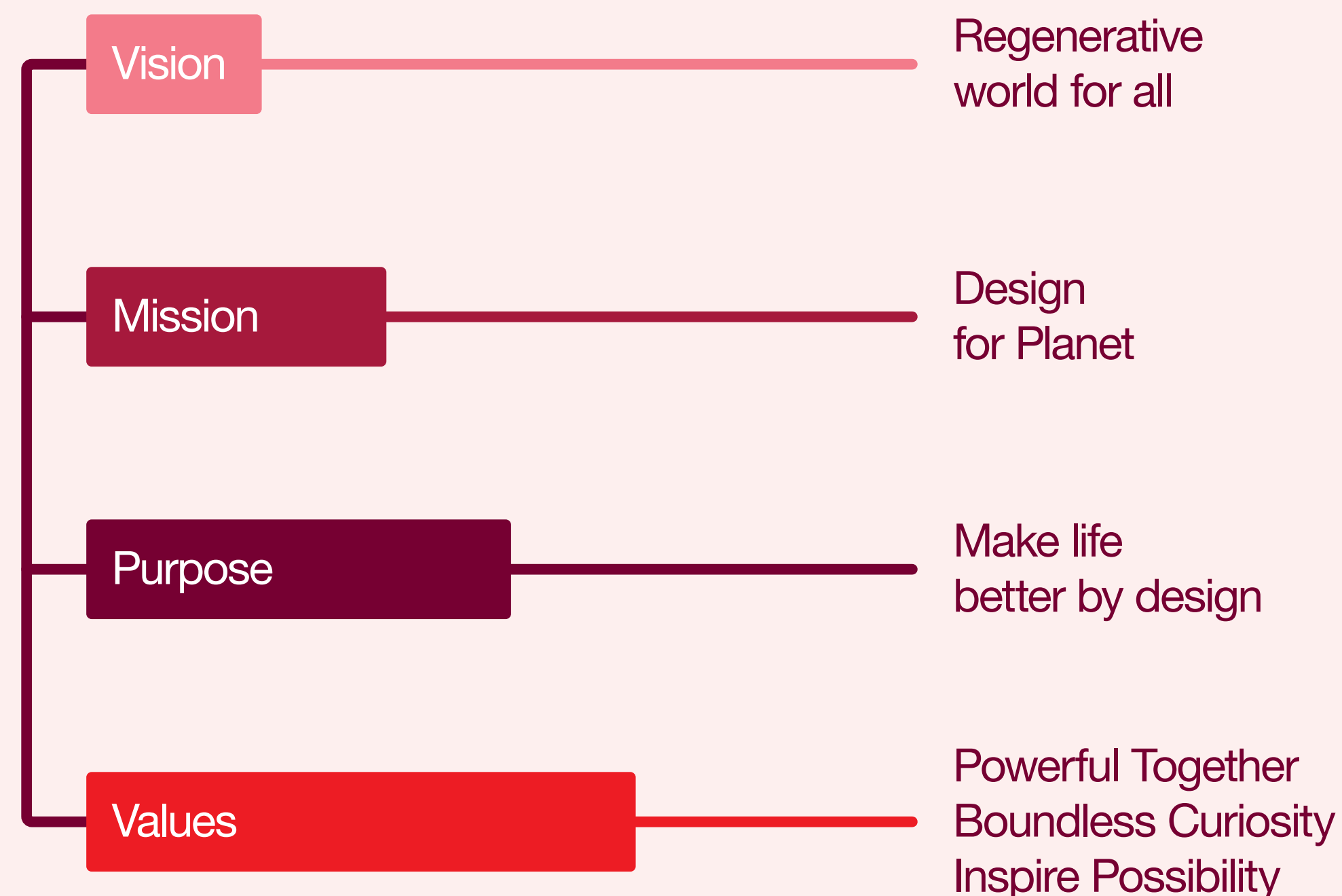
Our vision and mission

We are hopeful that, as part of a global design community, we can truly drive the change we want to see in the world.

Design had a role in getting us to the point when we are taking more from the planet than it has to give, and now design must play a critical and potentially transformative role in the creation of a positive future.

We have published our 5-year strategy as our roadmap for accelerating a societal transition from a consumer economy to a regenerative society.

Design for Planet is not just our mission, it's a call to action, a practice, a movement and a definition of good design.



An aerial photograph of a dense, lush green forest. A light-colored, winding road or path cuts through the trees, forming a large, irregular loop in the center of the image. The trees are a vibrant green, and the overall scene is captured from a high angle, looking down on the landscape.

“Design skills are not only the golden thread through our world-leading creative industries, but will be critical to the green transition.”

Lord Jo Johnson

80% of environmental
impact is determined
at the **design stage.**



66%

of designers have designed for
environmental impact in the last
12 months.

71%

of designers believe demand for
this kind of design will increase in
the next 3 years.

46%

of designers feel proficient or
expert in Design for Planet skills.

Green Design Skills Gap report 2024



At the Design Council we commission pioneering evidence-based research, develop ground-breaking programmes and deliver influencing and policy work to demonstrate the power of design.

We bring together non-designers and designers from grassroots to government and share with them our design expertise to transform the way they work.

What we do



Fundraising statement

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. Although we do not undertake fundraising from the general public, the legislation defines fundraising as “soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes”. In relation to the above we confirm that all solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators, professional fund-raisers, or third parties.

The day-to-day management of all income generation is delegated to the key management personnel as described within the Structure, Governance and Management section, who are accountable to the Trustees.

We have received no complaints in relation to solicitations. Our terms of employment require staff to behave reasonably at all times; as we do not approach individuals for funds we do not consider it necessary to design specific procedures to monitor such activities.



Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that in exercising their powers and duties they have had due regard to the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit. The Design Council exists for the benefit of people and our purpose is to make life better by design. The Trustees have referred to the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity’s aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

Grant making

The Design Council makes grants to certain beneficiaries under our programmes. Grants made in the year are set out in note 4 to the financial statements. All grants paid during the year related to the Guy’s and St Thomas’ Trust Charity – Employee Health Innovation Fund.

Design for Planet messaging was projected across London Bridge, St Paul's and the Tate Modern during London Design Festival.

Our impact and achievements



In numbers

91

Workshops

240

Experts
recruited

18

Government
ambassadors
engaged

41

91

Curated
events

60

Speakers at
Design for Planet
Festival 2023

10

Awards judged

4

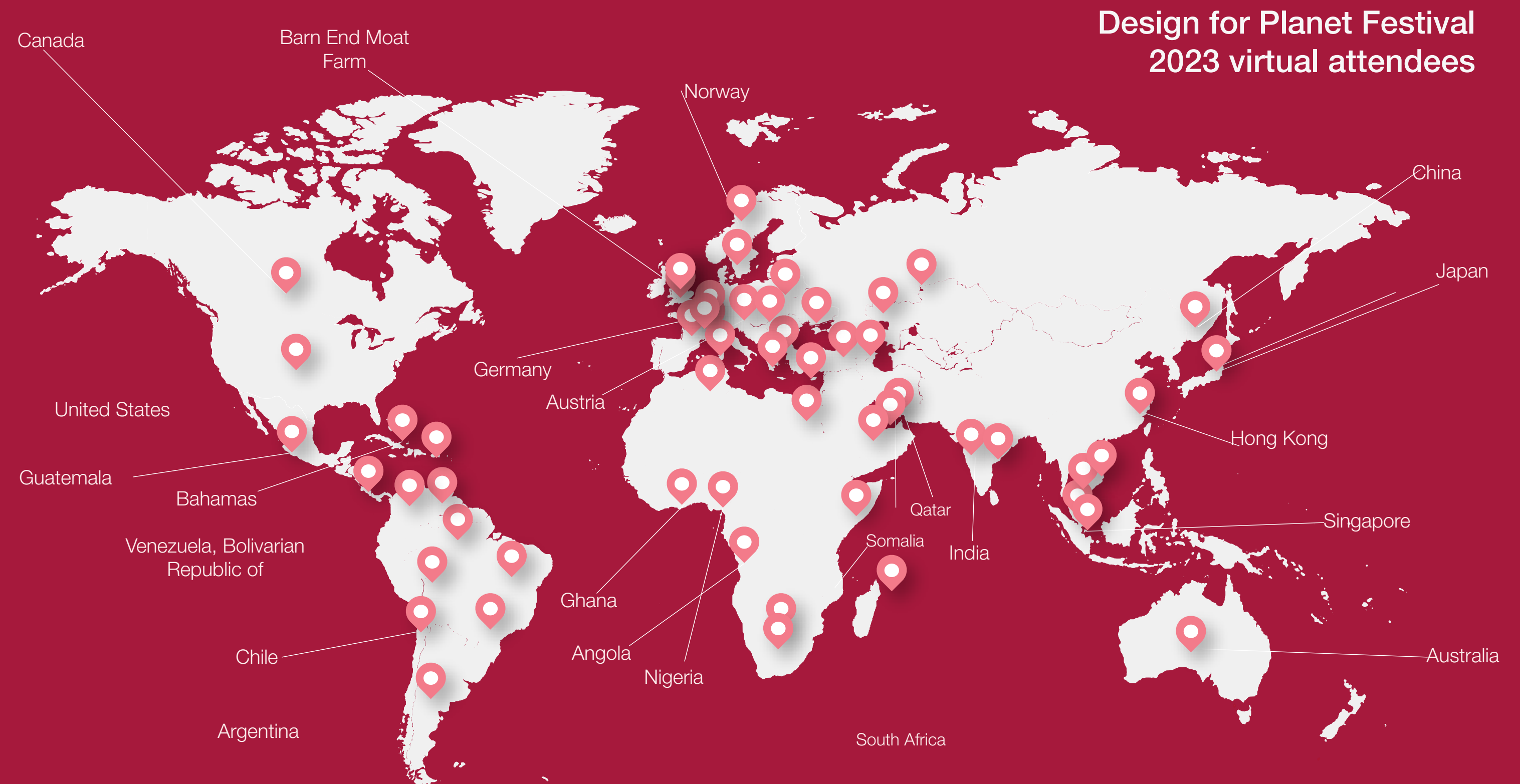
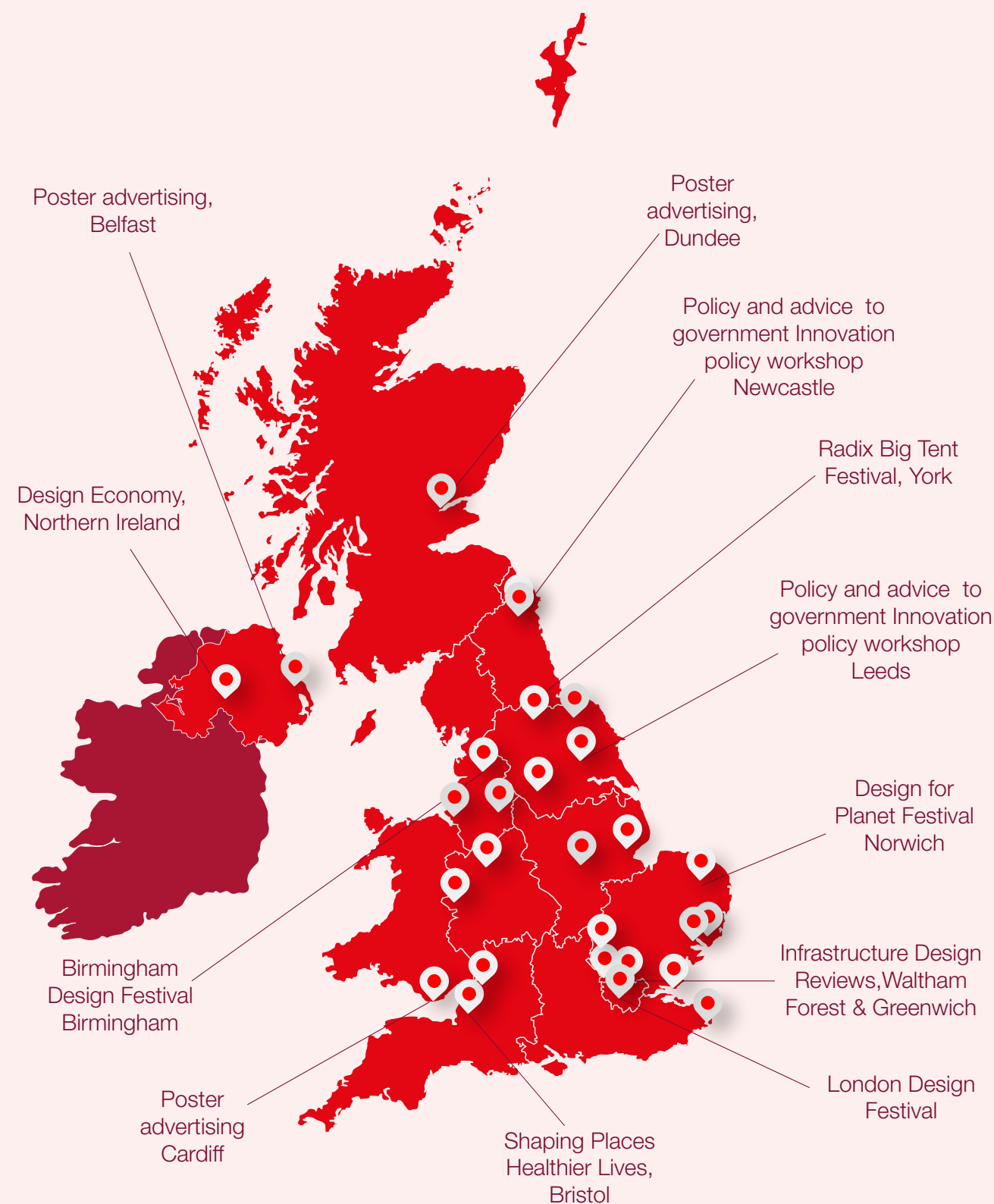
Design Academy
cohorts

Speaker
platforms

Taking our mission around the world

We have worked hard to engage stakeholders and audiences from across the four nations of the UK through events, design festivals, round tables, steering groups and our UK-wide Experts Network.

We have extended our global reach through a combination of Design for Planet Festival online attendees (from 93 countries worldwide) and speaking at international events.



Raising awareness of design

Achieving our charitable object of educating and promoting the value of design.

274

Press mentions

338,458

Website visitors

155,978

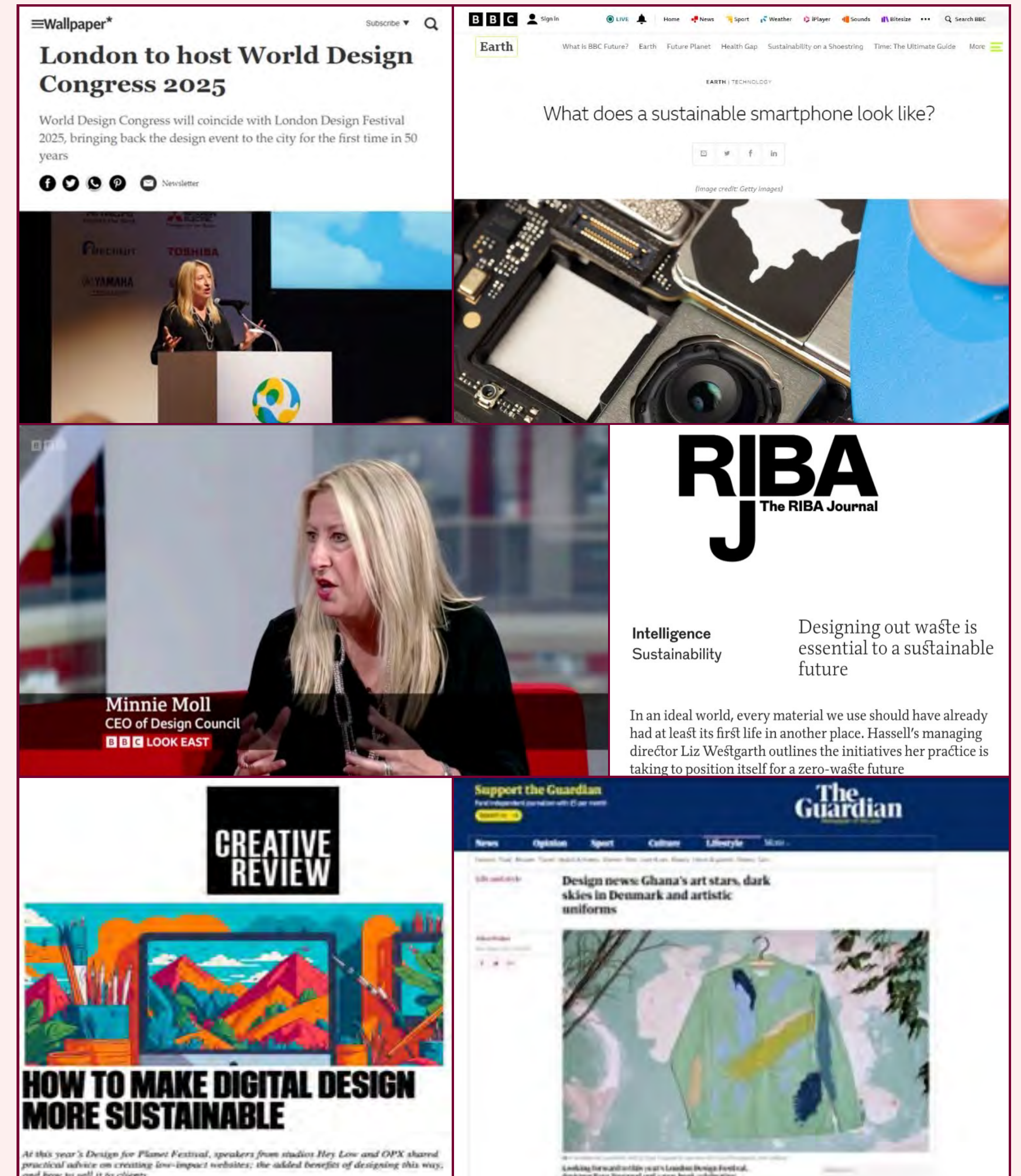
Video views

38,245

Blog reads

361,033

Social media followers



Making the case for design to government

As the UK's National Strategic Advisor on design, the Design Council acts as the Voice of Design to government.

18

Ambassadors engaged

200+

Participants engaged

8

roundtables hosted

16

9

calls for evidence and consultations responded to

4

Workshops run across 3 English regions

political leaders engaged across Westminster and combined authorities

Making the case to government

At the start of the year, we brought together political leaders including Mayor Tracey Brabin, Minister James Murray, Baroness Judith Blake in two leaders' roundtables in Westminster and Leeds. The roundtables explored design's role in UK industrial strategy, proposing ways the current and future government could harness the power of the nations' design clusters for sustainable growth. The importance of design for successful innovation was highlighted.

Building on the policy roundtables, we ran two half-day green innovation workshops bringing together six teams of design and innovation leaders from Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, Hull, York and Sheffield. The workshops were hosted in partnership with Leeds Beckett and Northumbria University design schools. Chi Onwurah MP,

now Chair of House of Commons Innovation select committee, spoke at the second event, articulating the importance of design for inclusive and responsible innovation.

By using creative prototyping activities, the teams developed tangible ways innovation investors like UKRI and Mayoral Combined Authorities could harness design to create better green innovation outcomes for local places. The workshops created new connections across design clusters and ideas that will inform future innovation funding and institutional investment

From design policy to policy design. In September 2023, the UK Civil Service's Policy Design Community launched the Public Design Review. The Review brought together the

stewards of public design with the stewards of public value to make a landmark case for design in government.

Building on the Design Council's 2021 survey evidence and track record, we led the review workstream on design outside of central government, bringing together 30 public design leaders from local authorities, the NHS, and police to develop recommendations for increasing the use and value of design in the public sector. We also contributed case studies, ROI modelling, and Chief Design Officer Cat Drew gave a thought leadership interview to the Review.



Creative Industries

In 2023, then Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt announced the Creative Industries as one of five key growth sectors. As a result, our engagement with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) was supercharged, including through contributing to a high-level Treasury Connect Creative Industries event co-hosted by five Cabinet Ministers.

Our CEO Minnie Moll is a member of the government's Creative Industries Council (CIC), contributing to the Creative Industries Sector Vision, helping to secure a chapter on climate action as well as highlighting the urgent action needed on Design and Technology (D&T) GCSE uptake. Our Design Economy research and Design for Planet Festival were both shared as examples of sector best-practice in the Sector Vision.

Following the Sector Vision's launch, Minne was asked to co-chair the Climate Charter working group. Working with Alison Tickell (Julie's Bicycle) and the Creative Industries Council team, the working group created the Creative Climate Charter, reporting back to the Secretary of State and securing support from all CIC members within six months. We believe this is the world's first such Charter.

With D&T education highlighted as a priority for action, we also worked with the Creative Industries Council to host a high-level roundtable at PriestmanGoode to explore the challenges, impact and solutions. With Department for Education, DCMS and CIC representatives present, the roundtable has helped move D&T on to the government's priority agenda.

With a forthcoming election on the horizon, we worked to build understanding and support for design with opposition parties. We produced a booklet on 'Design for a Better Britain' and prepared a full programme of events and meetings for Conservative and Labour party conferences, to communicate design as a core green skill to both parties.

The Labour party asked us to lead contributions to a Labour-organised design roundtable and we were invited to Labour's business day in January and creative industries summit in March, helping to inform the party's Plan for the Creative Industries.



Design for the circular economy

One of our key policy priorities in 2023/24 was getting design embedded within circular economy and waste policy.

Over the year, we've built a stronger relationship with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), contributing to their thinking on Extended Producer Responsibility as a policy tool to incentivise circular design decisions. Their 'Waste prevention programme for England, 'Maximising Resources, Minimising Waste' (2023), now sets a key role for product design to 'design out' waste from our economy.

During Design For Planet festival our CEO, Minnie Moll, signed the Restart Project's Right to Repair declaration. And Defra and Department for Energy

Security and Net Zero officials joined our workshops in circular design policy.

Over winter we worked with the Restart Project, Peers for the Planet and Green Alliance to bring forward an amendment to the Digital Markets Consumer and Competition Bill aiming to strengthen Right to Repair legislation in the UK. Baroness Hayman proposed the amendment, and we supported her to build a strong cross-party coalition behind the amendment with design for repairability being strongly advocated for in the House of Lords.

While the amendment fell at the final hurdle of report stage, the cross-party consensus gained provides a strong foundation for future advocacy with Labour's manifesto advocating for the circular economy for the first time.





*“Globally and nationally we
need to do more to protect
both consumers and natural
resources by extending
product lifecycles.”*

Baroness Hayman

Green Design Skills Gap Report

The Design Economy is the Design Council's flagship publication, sharing key data and insights into the state of design and its value to the UK economy. This year, working closely with PDR, a world leading design consultancy and applied research facility the focus of the research was: running a national survey of designers to generate an understanding of the state of green design skills across the UK, developing case studies with 19 UK businesses to demonstrate the social and environmental value of design and leading a series of workshops with designers across various design sectors to understand how they are currently measuring their impact. This resulted in us publishing a report on the Green Design Skills Gap.

In March 2024, we published a report on the Green Design Skills Gap that reveals that while 66% of designers have worked on environmental projects in the last 12 months, and 71% of them think the demand for environmental design is going to grow, only 43% think they have the capability to do so. Skills and knowledge are critical enablers of change, yet only 50% of the UK's designers believe their education has equipped them to design for planet. In short, there is a pressing green design skills gap.



71%

of designers say they think demand will grow,

but only

43%

feel they have the capability to meet this.

We announced these findings at the London Design Biennale Summit where it was mentioned in Culture Secretary Lord Parkinson's address.

Inspiring and educating

Life in Design films

The number of students studying Design and Technology (D&T) at GCSE has fallen by 68% over the last decade.

With the future of our design pipeline at risk we created a series of interviews with prominent designers across different disciplines to inform and inspire the next generation to consider a career in design.

They tell unique personal stories that highlight the different pathways into design whether that's through education, mentorships or on the job learning and paint a picture of what their day to day looks like.

52,000
video
views

The series will continue in 2024/25 and be shared with education partners to reach young audiences and parents.



Margaret Calvert

graphic designer famous for her work in designing the British road sign system.



Foday Dumbuya

fashion designer and founder and Creative Director of LABRUM London.

Xavier De Kestelier

architect Head of Design and Head of Innovation at Hassell studio.

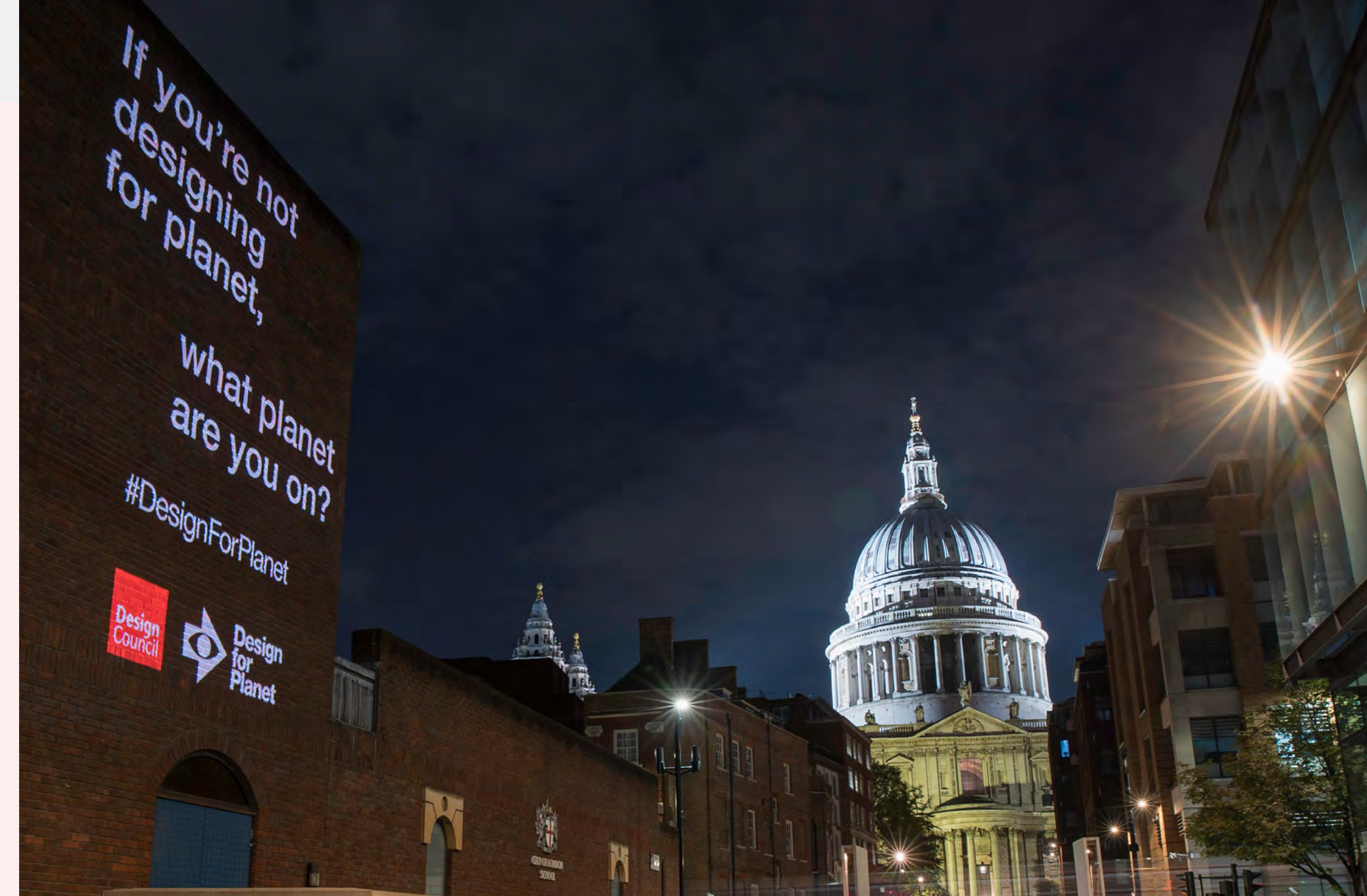
Design made it possible campaign

To increase the public's awareness of the value of design, we ran a series of activities across London, Birmingham, York, Dundee, Cardiff and Belfast. The campaign included posters, projections and ambient graffiti that linked through to a webpage that highlighted key design value statistics and case studies. We also held panel discussions at design and business events including:

Clerkenwell Design Week
Diversity in Design

Birmingham Design Festival
Designing Career Pathways

York Radix Big Tent
Future of Cities and Designing with AI



250

outdoor posters

200

panel attendees

6

regional activations

47,679

digital impressions



Design for Planet Festival 2023

For the third year of our annual Design for Planet Festival we went to the University of East Anglia in Norwich to explore the theme of Collaboration. The aim was to unite and inspire the design and business community in upskilling in green design skills and sparking collaboration and action.

Keynote speakers included Visa's Head of Design Strategy Cedrine Streit, Bas van Abel from the repairable mobile phone company Fairphone and Professor Dori Tunstall.

Panel discussions explored climate justice through housing, designing our way out of the energy crisis, how to design a beautiful, green website and how to be consciously creative. In-person roundtables produced recommendations on repair and ecolabelling.

Secretary for Science, Innovation and Technology and MP for Norwich North and Chloe Smith mentioned the Festival and encouraged attendees to use the online resources during the UKRI Connect event.

Attending businesses included:

- IKEA
- Amazon
- V&A
- Burberry
- Arup
- Microsoft
- Tesco
- Vodafone



95%

increased Design for Planet knowledge

2,500

online viewers

93

countries

67

NPS

78%

inspired to act

Celebrating 20 years of the Double Diamond



Many designers first come into contact with the Design Council's work when they study the Double Diamond. A universally accepted tool, the Double Diamond is a visual representation of the design and innovation process describing the steps taken in any project, irrespective of methods and tools used.

In 2023, to mark 20 years since its conception, we held an event at IDEO London to hear from some of the designers who worked on creating the

Double Diamond. We also registered the tool under the Creative Commons license to allow an easy way for designers to use and adapt it in any way they need.

The international response to the moment included a Double Diamond birthday cake baked in Sydney Australia and a Double Diamond board game made by students at Carnegie Mellon University in the USA.

“It's not an instruction manual on how to design, it's an invitation to get involved

Tim Brown, Co-Chair of IDEO”



50,600
digital reach

80
in-person attendees

1,700
online event registrations

Design Code Pathfinder Programme

We worked with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Office for Place to support 25 local authorities and neighbourhood planning groups in producing their design code as part of the Design Code Pathfinder Programme Phase 2. The programme looked to upskill local authorities and capture learnings on the design coding process.

The Design Codes are a valuable new tool intended to raise the quality of our built environment. They are a means of

setting out the needs and aspirations of communities and stakeholders in an area to create better places for the people who live and work there.

The Design Council oversaw the evaluation of the programme and offered design advice by drawing on their extensive network of design experts. Drawing on the learnings from the programme, we developed a selection of mixed-media learning materials to help coding teams understand the steps and process of developing a design code. These

materials have been produced by, and feature, a wide range of experts in the field including local authorities and neighbourhood planning groups who participated in the programme.

“ I have a much greater appreciation of the council officers, contractors and LDA design after being part of the [community engagement] process. ”

Teignbridge local resident



33

Design support sessions

6

Focus groups and feedback sessions

11

Learning products produced

Shaping Places for Healthier Lives

Designing systemically is central to designing for planet. It is therefore vital that we do what we can to build systemic design literacy, giving people the resources that they need to think and act in this way.

We have been doing just this through the **Shaping Places for Healthier Lives** programme, which supported five councils to improve their local health systems by taking a systems approach. The Design Council's role was to provide design tools and methods to help local council teams successfully adopt systemic ways of thinking and working. Initially, we focused on building the teams' confidence to talk about themselves as systems changers. Once this foundation was set, we provided coaching, created webinar

series' and held reflection spaces to further enhance the teams' systemic design capabilities. As well as the council team members being able to utilise these resources on future projects, several of the resources have also been shared more widely with other councils and community organisations, increasing the reach of the Design Council's impact.

Council team members have praised the Design Council, crediting the 'invaluable' resources and the 'insightful', 'helpful', 'timely' and 'creative' support.

83%

of programme participants **strongly agree** that Design Council support has helped them improve their understanding of systems change.

“[The Design Council] has expanded our thinking and encouraged us to embrace a broader way of working.”

Council team member



User Focused Products

150+ tailored coaching sessions for 48 SMEs

Net Zero Living is Innovate UK's £60 million, three-year programme to help places and businesses across the UK accelerate the transition to net zero. The User Focused Products programme is a critical part within it that helps businesses understand and respond to the needs, opportunities and barriers that hinder the large-scale deployment of net zero solutions in the market.

We are supporting 48 start-ups across the domains of heat, energy, mobility and make & use. Helping

them use design practices to conduct user research into their early-stage products and services. Our Design Experts are coaching them to repeat, refine and importantly pivot, if need be, from existing concepts and projections for how the product or service might be commercialised.

Throughout the project we generated insights that capture the role of design in accessing and enlarging the net zero market. We also created moments and opportunities for the supply side (businesses) to connect

with demand side (local authorities). These projects aim to address local net-zero challenges, underlining the impact in driving tangible progress towards accelerating the transition to net zero across the UK.



Employee Health Innovation Fund

+300 employees from 7 employers engaged

The EHIF programme aimed to help employers discover new ways of supporting the health and wellbeing of their staff. Supported by Impact on Urban Health we delivered this pioneering programme beginning with the understanding that improving access to meaningful, inclusive and healthy working environments is an effective way of reducing the risks of long-term health conditions (LTHCs).

Funded by Impact on Urban Health's multiple long term health conditions (MLTC) programme, it supported 7 employers based in Lambeth and Southwark to trial a range of interventions.

The programme found the following reasons to take a design-led approach:

1. To identify the root cause of the problem to solve
2. To turn ideas into action (based on research and data)
3. To improve the ambition and impact of an intervention
4. To build buy-in and trust with the people an intervention is serving
5. To enable the necessary collaborations to tackle systemic problems.



100%
saw improved
working processes
that support health
and wellbeing in the
organisation

85%
saw
improvements
to the
workplace

Building & Architecture Academy with National Rail

+100 Network Rail colleagues joined

We developed the Buildings & Architecture Academy (B&AA), a design thinking programme for Network Rail. Its primary aim is to introduce, develop, and integrate human-centred design methodologies

within Network Rail to enable more considered ways of working and help realise value across the organisation. The B&AA prides itself on its diverse participant makeup. So far, four cohorts of up to 20 participants have

completed the programme. Attendees include colleagues from different teams within Network Rail, ensuring a rich mix of expertise and a valuable exchange of viewpoints and perspectives.



Programme monitoring and evaluation found that course participants found the following components insightful:

- Recognising the significance of brief interrogation and post-occupation evaluation.
- Learning about sustainable design principles and appreciating considerations concerning asset lifecycles.

- Embracing human-centred design approaches to realise value for customers and colleagues.
- Applying the Double Diamond methodology for project scoping, planning, and evaluation.
- Identifying the needs of users and stakeholders rather than wants.

Attendees have already begun using design skills in their unique roles such as setting up Sustainability Design

Design Reviews

The UK government committed to tripling renewables by 2030 at the COP28 Summit in 2023 (Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency pledge). This requires an acceleration in pace and deployment of renewable energy infrastructure that is well designed.

The Design Council pioneered the use of Design Review. It is now an established methodology for assessing and improving the quality of the built environment for public good. Design Review can also be used to aid the development of large-scale infrastructure that can provide holistic benefit to people and place.

Anglian Water

We have provided a series of Design Reviews for the development of two water reservoirs in Fens and South Lincolnshire. These will be the first reservoirs planned and constructed in the UK for over 40 years and will help to mitigate the potential water shortages the UK, in particular in the south-west of England, will face in the coming decades. We

are providing Design Review support to Anglian Water to ensure that the reservoirs provide multiple function, enhance the beauty of the surrounding landscape and provide high quality amenity space that can bolster tourism to local areas.



FROND, winner of the Design for Planet Prize at the New Designers for their seaweed-based product design.



World Design Congress

Creating a catalytic moment for design

We submitted a bid and were selected to host the World Design Congress in London in September 2025. The World Design Organization's biannual event is a prestigious gathering of their global members and the design, business and education community to discuss design's role in the biggest challenges of the time. Our bid included the proposal for the theme to be Design for Planet and create a catalytic moment in galvanising action.

Our CEO Minnie Moll announced London as the next host city at the Tokyo 2023 event to the WDO members to a warm reception.

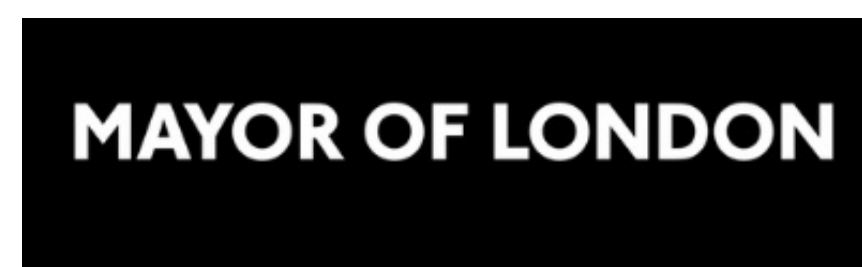
The World Design Congress was last held in the UK in 1969 when it came to the Southbank Centre for 1,000 delegates from 63 countries and H.R.H. Princess Margaret as the guest of honour. The Design Council held an exhibition at its Design Centre in Haymarket titled "Design '69" to showcase best design examples from 22 countries.



“For too long creativity has been the missing ingredient in the urgent conversations about the future of our planet. Having the World Design Congress in London in 2025 will be the excuse for brilliant designers from across the globe to come together and inspire the different revolutions we desperately need, to make the world a better place for everyone.”

Thomas Heatherwick Designer, founder of Heatherwick Studio

We convened a group of leading design, government and education partners to support the bid for the World Design Congress.



Powerful together

Building a sustainable, resilient and adaptable organisation, fit for the future.

As we celebrate our 80th year in 2024, ensuring the Design Council remains both organisationally resilient and adaptable to change as well as financially sustainable is a key priority.

Therefore, we are investing in the following core pillars which underpin our strategy:

- Implementing one single operating system to manage resourcing, project budgets, procurement and finance
- Improvements to our CRM system to better manage our revenue pipeline and marketing activities
- New external service partners for IT and finance to optimise internal costs
- Learning & Development to support our people in their career aspirations and progression

- New engagement tools to enable more frequent and meaningful dialogue with colleagues

Through working together and living our values, we are building an organisation that can continue to thrive into the future.



Financial review

2023-2024

Review of the period

The results for the Design Council for the year ended 31 March 2024 are set out in the financial statements from page 56 onwards.

In our 13th year as an independent charity the financial results show a deficit of £0.31m compared to a planned surplus of £0.11m.

Total income for the year amounted to £3.64m (£4.27m in 2022/23) including a grant of £2.0m from AHRC (£2m in 2022/23). The remaining income of £1.64m (£2.27m in 2022/23) was raised from a variety of sources.

Total costs for the year were £3.95m (£4.15m in 2022/23).

Cash and short-term deposit balances has remained at £1.3m as at 31 March 2024 (£1.3m as at 31 March 2023).

Reserves Policy

Total funds held by the Design Council at the end of the year were £0.64m (£0.95m in 2022/23). Of this, £0.19m were restricted funds (£0.5m in 2022/23) a breakdown of which is shown in Note 12 of the accounts.

The Trustees have reviewed the level of reserves required to sustain on-going operations. Accordingly, the Design Council has adopted a reserves policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets (the “free reserves”) should be between three and six months of overheads.

At 31 March 2024 free reserves were £0.35m (£0.34m in 2022/23) against a target level of £0.350m to £0.7m. Given the current external context, the Trustees are comfortable that the free reserves at 31 March 2024 are within the policy reserves range.

Free Reserves

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Total Unrestricted Funds	456	496
Less Tangible Fixed Assets	(104)	(153)
Free Reserves	352	343

Going concern

The Trustees have reviewed the financial position of Design Council and its subsidiary, its forecast cash flows, liquidity position and potential funding commitments for the foreseeable future. The Design Council operates as an independent charity but it has a reliance on government funding via AHRC to carry out its current activities, and there is a level of uncertainty regarding the charity's ability to grow and diversify its income streams. Consequently, the Trustees have used prudent assumptions in assessing the likely size and scale of income opportunities and will only commit funds to charitable activities when they

are certain that obligations can be met. The Trustees believe that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. As a result, they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the Annual Report and Accounts.

Subsidiary undertaking and related parties

The Charity wholly owns a subsidiary Design Council Enterprises Limited, a company registered in England. The subsidiary is used for fund-raising activities that are non-primary purposes trading. The subsidiary is currently dormant.

As such, the results of Design Council Enterprises Limited have not been presented separately and consolidated accounts have not been prepared.

Plans for the future

During 2024/25, Design Council continues to focus on delivering on our Design for Planet mission, which has been extended from a 3 year to 5 year strategy reflecting the scale and importance of our work.

This year we have 4 business goals:

- 1. Skills & Policy** – develop a Green Design Skills Framework to underpin our skills programme and supportive policy activity, and engage or educate 5,000 UK designers to Design for Planet.
- 2. Refining & Strengthening Our Role** – refine our strategic advisory role with key partners and within government, and leverage platforms and channels to maximise our reach.
- 3. Being a Trusted Partner** – convert 2-3 significant Design for Planet projects that demonstrate impact of DfP whilst also delivering revenue.
- 4. Fit for the Future** – ensure we remain a thriving organisation that is resilient and adaptable to change and financially and operationally sustainable.

Whilst we have seen progress in terms of demand for Design for Planet-orientated client projects as well as new opportunities to raise our profile such as hosting the World Design Congress in London in 2025, there are still a number of challenges that the organisation is facing such as:

- The level and security of grant funding from Government for our National Strategic Advisor role.
- Organisational changes including embedding of new systems, inflationary pressures and staff turnover.
- Finding a fit for purpose London office location within budgetary constraints.

Nonetheless, we remain confident and excited by our Design for Planet mission, and starting to plan in earnest for the World Design Congress in September 2025 which represents a huge opportunity to demonstrate the value of design as well as the unique role Design Council plays.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The Design Council is a charity incorporated by Royal Charter that works for public benefit. The Royal Charter was originally granted on 9 May 1976 and amended on 1 April 2011 to reflect The Design Council's change in status from being a public body to being a charity and the transfer in of certain activities and assets of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE).

Last year, the Design Council joined the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) family as part of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) receiving an annual grant to further the role of design within the UK. To further our strategic alignment and collaboration, an observer from AHRC is invited to attend Design Council Board meetings.

The Design Council registered as a charity on 13 October 1976 and the registered charity number is 272099. Our registered address is:

Design Council
c/o Sayer Vincent
Invicta House
110 Golden Lane
London EC1Y 0TG
United Kingdom

Structure of the organisation and decision making

The Board of Trustees is responsible under the Design Council’s Royal Charter for:

- Setting the vision, mission and values.
- Developing strategy to achieve the Charity’s Objects, and monitoring performance.
- Ensuring that the charity seeks the views of current and future beneficiaries and that these are considered in developing strategy and delivering services.
- Ensuring that the charity complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Safeguarding the assets of the charity to ensure these assets and resources are used only in furtherance of the charitable objects.
- Ensuring that the charity’s governance is of the highest possible standard.

The Board of Trustees takes into consideration the Charity Commission’s requirements including guidance on public benefit and Trustees must at all times act in the best interests of the charity and must avoid any conflict between their personal or outside interests and those of the charity. The responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and its committees are set out in terms of reference.

The Board of Trustees formally met seven times during the year and additionally for other briefings and strategy discussions.

During the year the Board reviewed the structure, terms of reference and membership of its sub committees, resulting in the following two sub committees.

The Chair of each sub-committee reports back to the Board of Trustees after it meets.

Finance, Audit and General Purposes

Committee: meets four times a year or more frequently as needed (six times in 2023/24) to support the Board of Trustees in ensuring effective:

- Financial stewardship, audit and risk management.
- Management of physical resources (including technology and property).
- Ensuring that the charity is complying with all aspects of the law and relevant regulations.

People Committee: this is a new committee formed during the year that aims to meet quarterly

to support the Board of Trustees in ensuring the charity is complying with all the relevant regulations and best practice by reviewing and making recommendations on the items below. It met twice during the year.

- People-related strategies, risks and opportunities
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
- Governance and recruitment, and development of the Board.

The Board of Trustees delegates day to day responsibility for managing the charity to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is accountable to the Board of Trustees for achieving the mission and goals, for ensuring the organisation is well run and meets its charitable objects and for ensuring that the Design Council remains relevant, contemporary and sustainable in the future. The Chief Executive reports to the Chair of the Board of Trustees and leads an Executive Team.

During 2022/23, we were delighted to introduce our current Chair, William Eccleshare and six new Trustees to the Board. During 2023/24 one Trustee resigned and one retired after completing their final term.

The Design Council had 37 colleagues employed at the end of the year.

Additionally, we draw on the expertise of our 200+ Design Council Experts: design pioneers who work with us to advocate for design, share knowledge about best practice and help us deliver advice and programmes. We selected a new cohort of Experts during the year to better represent the communities that we serve, to represent a full spectrum of design disciplines, regional and demographic diversity, and skills that will help accelerate our Design for Planet mission.

During the year the Board continued to implement the recommendations from the governance review undertaken in 2022/23.

Recruitment, induction and training of Trustees

New Trustees are recruited through an open process and are appointed by the Board of Trustees. Trustees may serve up to two consecutive three-year terms, although in exceptional circumstances a third term may be approved, up to a maximum of nine years.

On appointment, new Trustees are provided with an induction pack and have meetings with

key management personnel to brief them on the activities of the Design Council and their responsibilities as a Trustee. Periodically, a survey is used to identify skills gaps and development priorities. Briefings and training are provided for Trustees as necessary.

Pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel is reviewed and approved annually by the People Committee. Remuneration is benchmarked periodically against pay for similar roles in the sector.

Trustees are not remunerated for their role as Trustees, other than reimbursement of reasonable expenses which are described in the Note 5.

A small number of Trustees may also deliver design advice services in their capacity as the Design Council experts. Any remuneration for these services is at the same rate as paid to other built environment practitioners for equivalent services.

Risk management

We believe that sound risk management is integral to both good management and good governance practice. Risk management forms an integral part of the charity’s decision-making and is incorporated within strategic and operational planning.

A risk register covering key strategic risks is maintained and updated quarterly by the Finance, Audit and General Purposes Committee and the Board and more frequently where risks are known to be volatile. Risk registers are maintained for individual core programmes and new activities and

projects are reviewed to ensure they are in line with the charity’s objectives and mission. Any risks or opportunities arising will be identified, analysed and reported at an appropriate level.

The Board will commission expert advisers to provide independent assessments and assurance on a case by case to address specific business needs.

The Board considers that the key risks facing the Design Council are as set out below:

Risk/challenge area	We will mitigate this by:
Financial	• Diversify our sources of income by exploring the potential of philanthropic fundraising. • Make the case for increasing the level of Government grant for our National Strategic Advisor role. • Grow our fee base especially by partnering with AHRC/UKRI on key projects • Control costs to achieve a financial surplus • Regular and timely financial reporting and forecasting, including quarterly business reviews and clear ownership of budgets
Operational	• Continue to work on improving employee value proposition and experience to reduce turnover and associated operational disruption • Embed new ERP system and implement common project management life cycle approach and tool • Focus on building operational excellence
Reputational	• Successfully demonstrate the impact of our work, especially the Design for Planet strategy • Deliver successful and impactful Design for Planet festival, as well as secure key sponsors for World Design Congress in 2025 • Increase our voice and reach by promoting the outcomes of our research and skills programmes • Ensuring we embed and live our values and code of behaviours • Making use of external reputational advisory firm when required
Legal/commercial	• Appointed new legal advisors to support across commercial/contract and employment law • Rolling out of new standard framework agreements. • Use of standard project management tool to manage contracting and document management. • Training for new starters on GDPR requirements.

Reference and administrative details

Board of Trustees

More information on each of our Trustees can be found [here](#). Trustees who served during 2023/24 and meeting attendance is listed below.

The Board of Trustees is overseen by the Chair, William Eccleshare, who joined in July 2022. Anne Boddington is the Deputy Chair. We thank Kieron Boyle and Pooran Desai who left the Board during the year for their support.



**William
Eccleshare
(Chair)**



**Anne
Boddington
(Deputy
Chair)**



**Beatrice
Fraenkel**



**Biljana
Savic**



**Chris
Naylor**



**Jonquil
Hackenberg**



**Keith
Morgan
CBE**



**Kieron
Boyle**



**Paul
Monaghan**



**Pooran
Desai
OBE**



**Tendai
Chetse**

					Attendance record		
Trustee	Date appointed	Role and Committees	Notes		Board	Finance, Audit and General Purposes Committee	Stewardship Committee/ People Committee
1	William Eccleshare (Chair)	29.07.22	Chair, Board of Trustees Finance, Audit and General Purposes Committee People Committee	First term until 29.07.25	7/7	5/6	2/2
2	Anne Boddington (Deputy Chair)	10.09.15	Deputy Chair, Board of Trustees People Committee	Reappointed for a further term to 31.12.24	7/7		2/2
3	Beatrice Fraenkel	13.12.18	People Committee	Reappointed for a second term to 13.12.24	4/7		0/2
4	Biljana Savic	26.05.22		First term until 26.05.25	5/7		
5	Chris Naylor	26.05.22	Finance, Audit and General Purposes Committee	First term until 26.05.25	5/7	3/6	
6	Jonquil Hackenberg	26.05.22	People Committee	First term until 26.05.25	6/7		2/2
7	Keith Morgan CBE	04.10.18	Chair of Finance, Audit and General Purposes Committee	Reappointed for a third term 04.10.25	5/7	6/6	
8	Kieron Boyle	10.09.15		Retired on 10.09.23.	1/2		
9	Paul Monaghan	17.03.22		Initial term until 17.03.25	5/7		
10	Pooran Desai OBE	26.05.22		Resigned on 06.01.24	5/5	3/3	
11	Tendai Chetse	26.05.22	Chair of People Committee	Initial term until 26.05.25	3/7		2/2

Key management personnel

Aside from the Trustees the key management personnel are:

- Minnie Moll**
Chief Executive
(joined 1 March 2021)
- John Middleton**
Chief Operating Officer
(joined 1 December 2019)
- Cat Drew**
Chief Design Officer
(joined 1 July 2019)
- Edward Hobson,**
Director of Place
(joined 1 November 2021)
- Robert Holmes,**
Director of Finance and Operations
(joined 23 November 2023)
- Sarah Booth,**
Director of Impact
(joined 1 November 2023)

Administrative details

- Registered name and address**
Design Council
c/o Sayer Vincent
Invicta House
110 Golden Lane
London EC1Y 0TG
United Kingdom
- Charity Commission number**
272099
- Bankers**
Lloyds Bank
Villiers House
48-49 The Strand
London WC2N 5LL
- Advisory and legal**
TLT LLP
20 Gresham Street
London EC2V 7JE
- Auditors**
Sayer Vincent
110 Golden Lane
London EC1Y 0TL
- Worknest**
7th Floor The Beacon
176 St. Vincent
Street Glasgow,
Scotland G2 5SG

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of the Design Council for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company 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 and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to

presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

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

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2024 was 9 (2023: 11). The Trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Approved and authorised by the Trustees on 02/12/2024 and signed on their behalf on 02/12/2024

William Eccleshare
Chair of the Design Council
Board of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of the Design Council

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Design Council (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, 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 FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

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

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other Information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

- The information given in the trustees’ annual report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements;
- Sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit

Responsibilities of trustees

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

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless

the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with regulations made under section 154 of that Act.

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

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

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and

remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.

- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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

Use of our report

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

02/12/2024

Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

110 Golden Lane,
London, EC1Y 0TG

Sayer Vincent LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted £000	Restricted £000	2024 Total £000	Unrestricted £000	Restricted £000	2023 Total £000
Income from							
Charitable activities	2	1,037	2,599	3,636	1,393	2,880	4,273
Total income		1,037	2,599	3,636	1,393	2,880	4,273
Expenditure on							
Charitable activities	3 & 6	1,056	2,890	3,946	1,459	2,694	4,153
Total expenditure		1,056	2,890	3,946	1,459	2,694	4,153
Net income / (expenditure) for the year		(19)	(291)	(310)	(66)	186	120
Transfer between funds		(21)	21	-	26	(26)	-
Net movement in funds		(40)	(270)	(310)	(40)	160	120
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward		496	458	955	536	298	834
Total funds carried forward	12	456	188	645	496	458	954

- Notes**
- a. All operations of the Design Council are ongoing.
 - b. There are no recognised gains and losses in the year other than those shown above.
 - c. The notes, numbered 1-15, form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £000	2023 £000
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	8	104	153
Total fixed assets		104	153
Current assets			
Debtors	9	195	480
Cash at bank and in hand		1,322	1,299
Total current assets		1,517	1,779
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	975	979
Net current assets		541	800
Net assets		645	954
Funds	12		
Restricted funds		189	458
Unrestricted funds		456	496
Total funds		645	954

The notes at pages 60 to 75 form part of these accounts.

Approved and authorised by the Trustees on 02/12/2024 and signed on their behalf on 02/12/2024.

William Eccleshare
Chair of the Design Council Board of Trustees

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £000	2024 £000	2023 £000	2023 £000
Cash flows from operating activities:					
Net cash used in operating activities	a		22		382
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		-		(146)	
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities			-		(146)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			22		236
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward			1,299		1,063
Cash and cash equivalents carried forward			1,322		1,299

Note to the statement of cash flows:

a: Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	310	(120)
Interest received	-	-
Depreciation charges	50	47
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed asset	-	13
Decrease in debtors	286	156
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(3)	46
Net cash used in operating activities	22	382

Notes to the Design Council Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows.

a. Basis of preparation

The financial statements 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 Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK

and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charity will continue in operational existence for twelve months from the date of approval of the Financial Statements.

The Trustees have applied the going concern basis to the financial statements. As outlined in the trustee’s report the charity has been managing all its financial risks. The Trustees

are confident in the charities ability to manage these risks and do not consider that these represent any material uncertainty around the charities ability to continue as a going concern.

In preparing financial statements it is necessary to make certain judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

The accounting policies below include estimates relating to provisions and the recoverability of debtors and stage of completion of contract delivery for programme fees.

b. Income recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

In particular:

Grants are accounted for once a formal offer of funding is received, subject to satisfying any performance-related conditions. In the event that a grant is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period;

Programme fees and licence fee income are accounted for on an accruals basis. As services are delivered in accordance with any milestones set out in these contracts income is recognised. Any part of the service not delivered at the balance sheet date is deferred;

Gifts in kind are assets donated to the charity for its own use or for distribution to beneficiaries. They are included at valuation and recognised as income only when they are used or distributed.

c. Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis, and allocated to the appropriate heading in the Financial Statements. Charitable activities' expenditures enable the Design Council.

The Design Council to meet its charitable aims and objectives, consistent with good governance. In note 4 costs are attributable to the categories of charitable expenditure on an actual basis with the exception of support costs which are allocated as a proportion of total directly attributable costs.

In note 3 costs are attributable to the categories of charitable expenditure on an actual basis with the exception of support costs which are allocated as a proportion of total directly attributable costs.

Support costs in note 6 costs are attributed to the categories detailed on an actual basis. The basis of apportionment to charitable expenditure is as a proportion of total directly attributable costs.

Grants are paid to approved beneficiaries. Grant expenditure is recognised in the period in which eligible activity creates an entitlement in line with the terms and conditions of the grant. Accrued grants are charged to the

SOFA and included as part of the accruals within the balance sheet.

The Design Council reclaims from HMRC VAT incurred in goods and services in line with the standard method of partial exemption. Irrecoverable VAT is treated as a central cost and allocated with other support costs to the relevant activities on the SOFA.

d. Liquid resources

The Design Council’s liquid resources are a combination of cash, and short term deposits.

e. Funds accounting

Funds held by the Design Council are either:

Restricted Funds: These are the grant funds received from government, charities, and other public bodies where the use of the funds is restricted to a specific purpose.

Unrestricted Funds: These are funds which have been received from all other programmes.

f. Fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible Fixed Assets costing less than £1k are not capitalised and are written off in the year of purchase. Assets are capitalised at cost and are kept under review for any impairment.

All fixed assets are written off on a straight-line basis over the assets’ expected useful lives as follows:

Leasehold improvements
10 years, or over the period of the lease

Furniture and fittings
5 years

Computer equipment
2 – 5 years

g. Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme on behalf of its employees. The amount charged to the SOFA in respect of pension costs and other post-retirement benefits is the contributions payable in the period. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

h. Leases

All leases are accounted for as operating leases and rentals are charged to the income and expenditure account on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease

i. Provisions

Provisions are made when the Design Council has a legal or constructive financial obligation, that can be reliably estimated and for which there is an expectation that payment will be made. The obligation is recognised as a liability once the obligation has crystallised.

j. Holiday leave benefits

A liability is recognised to the extent of any unused holiday pay entitlement, which has accrued at the balance sheet date and carried forward to future periods. This is measured at the undiscounted salary cost of the future holiday entitlement and so accrued at the balance sheet date.

k. Design Council Enterprises Limited

The charity owns the whole of the share capital of Design Council Enterprises Limited. Its trading subsidiary was dormant during the year and therefore consolidated accounts are not prepared.

2. Income from charitable activities

Income from charitable activities 2023-24	Unrestricted £000	Restricted £000	2024 Total £000
Grants from AHRC	-	2,000	2,000
Other grants from government and public bodies	(73)	599	526
Programme fees	1,110	-	1,110
Total income from charitable activities	1,037	2,599	3,636

Income from charitable activities 2022-23	Unrestricted £000	Restricted £000	2023 Total £000
Grants from BEIS	-	2,000	2,000
Other grants from government and public bodies	47	880	927
Programme fees	1,346	-	1,346
Total income from charitable activities	1,393	2,880	4,273

3. Expenditure

Expenditure 2023-24 Charitable activities	Grants payable £000	Staff costs £000	Other direct costs £000	Total direct costs £000	Support costs £000	2024 Total £000
					(note 6)	
Championing	-	425	395	820	362	1,181
Social Innovation	(128)	289	396	558	247	804
Place/Infrastructure	-	801	476	1,277	683	1,960
Total 2024	(128)	1,515	1,267	2,654	1,291	3,946

Notes: Grants payable

The cost of grants payable in 2023/24 was a credit balance due to an over-accrual in 2022/23 of expected grants to be paid out in 2023/24. A total of £299K of grants were paid out during 2023/24 plus a year-end accrual of £7K, which was less than the £434K accrued the previous year and subsequently reversed in 2023/24. Hence the net total was a £128K credit.

4. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:	2024 £000	2023 £000
Salaries and wages	1,859	1,861
Social security costs	215	211
Pension contributions	119	135
Staff benefits	5	6
Redundancy costs	62	38
Total payroll staff costs	2,260	2,251
Total temporary and contract staff costs	-	-
Total staff costs	2,260	2,251

Redundancy payments are £62k (2022/23: £38k). These payments are based on continuous length of service and include accruals. Amounts paid excluded pension contributions or benefits in kind.

The number of employees, whose emoluments were over £60k (including salary and taxable benefit in kind costs) falls within the ranges shown below.

Band	2024	2023
£60,000 - £69,999	-	1
£70,000 - £79,999	1	1
£80,000 - £89,999	1	2
£90,000 - £99,999	-	-
£100,000 - £109,999	1	-
£130,000 - £139,999	-	1
£140,000 - £149,999	1	-

Redundancy payments are £62k (2022/23: £38k). These payments are based on continuous length of service and include accruals. Amounts paid excluded pension contributions or benefits in kind.

The number of employees, whose emoluments were over £60k (including salary and taxable benefit in kind costs) falls within the ranges shown below.

	2024	2023
Permanent (payroll)	36	39
Other staff (other)	1	-
Total	37	39

5. Net income/(expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:

	Note	2024 £000	2023 £000
Depreciation		50	47
Trustees' reimbursed expenses		-	-
Staff reimbursed expenses		0	8
Auditors' remuneration:			
Audit		15	16
Other services		2	2
Operating lease rentals:			
Plant and machinery		-	-
Land and buildings		-	164

6. Support Costs

Support costs 2023/24

Support costs are allocated to charitable activities as follows:

	Notes	2024 Staff Costs £000	2024 Other costs £000	2024 Total £000
Executive		194	-	194
Office		72	125	197
Governance costs	a	60	-	60
Human resources		51	44	95
IT		88	218	306
Finance	b	241	175	389
Depreciation		-	50	50
Total support costs		678	613	1,291

Notes:

- a. Governance costs relate to the Design Council’s cost of secretariat. This includes the administration of Trustee meetings.
- b. The Design Council only recovers a proportion of the VAT incurred on purchases under the “partial exemption methodology”. The irrecoverable element of the incurred VAT is taken centrally and charged to finance £112k (2022/2023: £135k).

Support costs 2022/23

	Notes	2023 Staff Costs £000	2023 Other costs £000	2023 Total £000
Executive		159	25	184
Office		63	179	242
Governance costs	a	66	-	66
Human resources		49	84	133
IT		67	246	313
Finance	b	259	145	404
Depreciation		-	47	47
Total support costs		663	726	1,389

Notes:

- a. Governance costs relate to the Design Council’s cost of secretariat. This includes the administration of Trustee meetings.
- b. The Design Council only recovers a proportion of the VAT incurred on purchases under the “partial exemption methodology”. The irrecoverable element of the incurred VAT is taken centrally and charged to finance £135k (2021/2022: £106k).

7. Taxation

The Design Council is a charity within the meaning Para 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010. Accordingly the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains within categories covered by Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes. No tax charge arose in the period.

8. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold Improvements £000	Furniture and fittings £000	Computer equipment £000	Total £000
Cost				
At the start of the year	0	7	202	209
Additions in year	-	-	-	-
Disposals in year	-	-	-	-
At the end of the year	-	7	202	209
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	-	(6)	(50)	(56)
Charge for the year	-	(1)	(49)	(50)
Disposals in year	-	-	-	-
At the end of the year	-	(7)	99	(105)
Net book value				
At the end of the year	-	-	103	104
At the start of the year	-	1	152	153

9. Debtors

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Trade debtors	158	255
Other debtors	-	3
Prepayments and accrued income	37	222
Total	195	480

10. Creditors: amounts due within one year

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Trade creditors	144	155
Tax and social security	60	53
VAT payable	70	31
Other creditors	47	30
Grant accruals	66	434
Other accruals	74	74
Deferred income	515	202
Total	975	979

Included within other creditors is £45K related to costs of restructuring agreed and announced before year-end but that were paid to impacted employees in April 2024

11. Analysis of group net assets between funds

Analysis of group net assets between funds 2023/24

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	2024 Total funds £000
Tangible fixed assets	104	-	104
Net assets	353	189	541
Net assets at the end of the year	456	189	645

Analysis of group net assets between funds 2022/23

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	2023 Total funds £000
Tangible fixed assets	153	-	153
Net assets	343	458	801
Net assets at the end of the year	496	458	954

12. Movements in funds during 2023/24

	2023 At the start of the year £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfer to Unrestricted £000	2024 At the end of the year £000
Restricted funds:					
AHRC Grant	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	-
Public Sector Workshops	37	-	(37)	-	-
Designing London’s Recovery	34	-	(34)	-	-
GST Employee Health	170	104	(295)	21	-
National Lottery Design Differently	118	70	(188)	-	-
DLUHC (existing programmes)	88	219	(307)	-	-
DLUHC (new programmes)	-	41	(8)	-	33
Public Design Reviews	-	25	(10)	-	16
AHRC & CD scoping project	-	140	-	-	140
Other funds	11	-	(11)	-	-
Total restricted funds	458	2,599	(2,890)	21	189
Total unrestricted funds	496	1,037	(1,056)	(21)	456
Total funds	955	3,636	(3,946)	-	645

13. Contingent liabilities

There are no contingent liabilities to declare.

14. Related parties transactions

The Design Council trustees are drawn from among its key stakeholders, and staff may at times have links to stakeholder organisations. Therefore it is in the nature of the Design Council’s business to have transactions which are classified as related. All transactions entered into are as

part of the ordinary course of business and on an arm’s length basis, consistent with the Design Council’s policy on potential conflicts of interest. During the year, the Design Council entered into the following transactions with related parties as follows:

Name	Position at Design Council	Note	Related Party	Income £	Expense £
Anne Boddington	Deputy Chair & Trustee	a	Anne Boddington	-	151
William Eccleshare	Chair & Trustee	b	William Eccleshare	-	207
Kieron Boyle	Trustee (resigned Sept 2023)	b	Guys & St Thomas’ Foundation (Chief Executive)	104,412	

Notes:

- a. Expenses paid to Anne Boddington incurred in her role as Trustee
- b. Expenses paid to William Eccleshare incurred in his role as Trustee
- c. This income is related to design support services delivered by the Design Council to Guy’s & St Thomas’ Charity for the Employee Health Fund project on an arms’ length basis. Kieron Boyle resigned as Chief Exec in May 2023 and as a Design Council trustee in Sept 2023



Design Council

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November 2024

2023 -2024