

# EQUINOX CARE

England & Wales · Charity number 296694

## Details

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**Other names** EQUINOX

**Status** Registered

**Legal form** Charitable company

**Company number** [02114430](#)

**Registered** 1987-05-21

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

## Contact

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London  
N1 1TY

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

## Activities

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**Objects:** 3. OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY 3.1 THE OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY (THE ?OBJECTS?) ARE FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT:- 3.1.1 TO ASSIST, RELIEVE AND REHABILITATE ANY PERSON WHO IS IN NEED BECAUSE OF ALCOHOL PROBLEMS, OTHER SUBSTANCE MISUSE PROBLEMS, MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUES, AGE, LEARNING DIFFICULTIES, AN INVOLVEMENT IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM OR A LACK OF APPROPRIATE HOUSING AND TO ASSIST AND RELIEVE SUCH PERSONS, FAMILY, DEPENDENTS AND OTHER CARERS WHO ARE IN NEED AS A RESULT OF THAT PERSON'S PROBLEMS; AND 3.1.2 TO FURTHER SUCH OTHER EXCLUSIVELY CHARITABLE PURPOSES ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF ENGLAND AND WALES AS THE TRUSTEES IN THEIR ABSOLUTE DISCRETION FROM TIME TO TIME MAY DETERMINE.

**Activities:** Equinox works to help and support individuals with drink and/or substance misuse issues, mental health issues and those caught in the Criminal Justice system. We provide housing and/or support or counselling.

## Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Accommodation/housing
- **Who:** People With Disabilities, Other Defined Groups

## Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NOT DEFINED. IN PRACTICE GREATER LONDON
- Brighton And Hove
- Throughout London

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£7,180,000	£7,100,000	£-4,303,000	113
2024-03-31	£7,780,000	£7,680,000	£-4,455,000	107
2023-03-31	£6,446,000	£6,440,000	£-4,164,000	128
2022-03-31	£7,455,000	£8,107,000	£-3,408,000	187
2021-03-31	£8,271,000	£8,128,000	£-3,306,000	112

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
CATHY KANE		2024-11-28
Claire Barton		2022-02-04
Dylan Kerr		2020-02-26
Frida Norman		2025-12-17
Joseph Frederick Charles Wakeford		2026-03-11
Kobi Boakye		2024-11-28
Rebecca Escott-New		2025-12-17
Stuart Jenkin		2018-11-01

**EQUINOX CARE**

England & Wales - Charity number 296694

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# Accounts

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Social  
Interest  
Group

**Equinox**

EQUINOX CARE

# Annual Report

Trustees' Report & Consolidated  
Financial Statements

**Year ended 31 March 2025**

Charity no. 296694  
Company no. 02114430

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## Reference and Administrative details of the Charity, its Trustees and advisors

Equinox Care was established in 1986, incorporated as Drink Crisis Centre on the 23rd of March 1987, and changed its name to Equinox Care on the 13th of April 1999. Equinox Care joined Social Interest Group as a wholly owned subsidiary on the 1st October 2014. It now trades as SIG Equinox.

The directors of the Charity are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law and, throughout this document, are collectively referred to as Trustees.

### **Chair**

Karl Marlowe

### **Other Trustees**

Dylan Kerr

Stuart Jenkin

Jeff Loo (left 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025)

Claire Barton

Cathy Kane (appointed 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024)

Kobi Boakye (appointed 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024)

### **Company Secretary**

Michael Rutherford (left 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025)

Ian Hanham (appointed 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025)

### **Senior Leadership Team**

#### **Group Chief Executive**

Gill Arukpe (left 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025)

Cathy Kane (Interim appointed 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025)

#### **Director of Finance & Resources**

Michael Rutherford (left 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025)

Ian Hanham (Interim appointed 29<sup>th</sup> July 2025)

#### **Director of People & Culture**

Maria Speight

#### **Director of Services & Support**

Angela Henry

Paul Addicott

#### **Director of Development, Marketing & Communications**

Greg Tythe

#### **Director of External Affairs & Impact**

Adam Moll

#### **Director of Housing & Maintenance**

Matthew Costin

#### **Director of Compliance, Risk & Internal Audit**

Jenny Ralls

### **Registered Office**

1 Waterloo Gardens  
Milner Square  
London  
N1 1TY

### **Auditors**

Buzzacott Audit LLP  
130 Wood St  
London  
EC2V 6DL

### **Bankers**

Lloyds Bank plc  
25 Gresham Street  
London  
EC2V 7HN

### **Solicitors**

Russell Cooke LLP  
2 Putney Hill  
London  
SW15 6AB

### **DWF LLP**

1 Scott Place  
2 Hardman Street  
Manchester  
M3 3AA

Company registration number 02114430

Charity registration number 296694

[www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk](http://www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk)

[enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk)

The reference and administration information set out on the previous page form part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

## **Objectives and Activities**

### **Purposes and Aims**

The objects of SIG Equinox, as set out in the Articles of Association, are for the public benefit:

- To assist, relieve and rehabilitate any person who is in need because of alcohol problems, other substance use problems, mental and physical health issues, age, learning difficulties, involvement in the criminal justice system or a lack of appropriate housing, and to assist and relieve such persons' family, dependents and other carers who are in need as a result of that person's problems; and
- To further such other exclusively charitable purposes according to the law of England and Wales as the Trustees, in their absolute discretion from time to time, determine.

The Trustees review the Charity's aims, objectives, and activities annually. This report looks at what the Charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The Trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the Charity has brought to the people it is set up to help. The review also helps the Trustees ensure the Charity's aims, objectives, and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

The Trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and planning its future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities contribute to the aims and objectives.

### **Activities**

SIG Equinox provides personalised residential and community-based health and social care services for people furthest away from living independent lives. Residents and participants often have behaviours that can be challenging: forensic mental health problems and mental health disorders, general mental health, histories in the criminal justice system, being excluded previously from education and employment, substance and alcohol use and periods of homelessness.

SIG Equinox staff are all trained to work in a trauma-informed way. We embrace enabling environments to keep residents and participants at the centre of what we do and how we work. Our residential services are also delivered using a psychologically informed framework. This helps ensure the people using our services achieve stability, rehabilitation, resettlement, and long-term recovery.

Aspinden Care Home, based in London, accepts referrals from across England and provides a residential service for treatment-resistant adults using alcohol. The service supports adults who often cannot access other care homes due to their alcohol use and associated behaviours, and uses the Blue Light system and harm minimisation model to ensure the safety of the residents and staff.

SIG Equinox currently operates across London and Brighton and is ambitious to grow.

## **Chief Executive's Statement**

As we conclude the financial year, I feel immense pride and gratitude reflecting on SIG Equinox's journey. This year is particularly special for us, marking a significant leadership transition. In March 2025, we bid farewell to Gill Arukpe MBE, visionary founder of Social Interest Group (SIG), of which SIG Equinox is a subsidiary. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Gill on behalf of the staff, trustees, and the individuals whose lives SIG has positively impacted. Her legacy will continue to inspire us into the future. We wish her every success in this new chapter of her journey.

I am honoured to step into the role of Interim CEO as we embark on the first year of our ambitious five-year strategy. The UK social care, criminal justice, and voluntary sectors face chronic underfunding, inflationary pressures, workforce shortages, and increasingly complex needs. With new government legislation poised to reshape how our services are commissioned, monitored, delivered and accessed, we expect further instability. Yet, despite these pressures, SIG Equinox remains a beacon of innovation, compassion, and resilience.

Across the year, SIG Equinox proudly supported 354 individuals. Our residential services achieved a 70% success rate in securing positive move-on outcomes to independent or step-down accommodation. We take pride in the fact that 95% of individuals accessing our services remained out of hospital throughout their time with us, and a remarkable 95% did so without any recalls or new convictions.

These impressive figures testify to our trauma-informed, person-centred approach and our staff's passion, persistence, and endeavours to drive our mission. We empower individuals to reshape their identities, reclaim stability, and rebuild their lives with dignity and purpose. We are proud to say we are effectively keeping people out of prison, out of hospital, and off the streets. We have strengthened our evaluation frameworks and continue to invest in our people. Ensuring our employees feel valued, safe, heard, and supported is central to our continued success as we move forward with renewed purpose and ambition.

Our new five-year strategy marks a pivotal moment for SIG Equinox, building on our impacts while setting a bold course for the years ahead. Our focus remains on delivering high-quality, inclusive services that effectively respond to the needs of the people and communities we serve, amidst a changing world. We know that the challenges facing our sector will not ease, but we firmly believe that meaningful change is not only possible but achievable. We witness this every day through the resilience of those we support, the dedication of our staff, and the strength of our partnerships. Together, we will continue to advocate for a more compassionate, equitable system that empowers people to thrive and achieve positive life outcomes.

On behalf of all at SIG Equinox, I would like to thank everyone who has been part of our journey. Whether you are a colleague, partner, funder, or someone who has accessed our services, your belief fuels our mission and everything we do. I am honoured to lead SIG Equinox into this next chapter, and I am genuinely excited about what we can achieve together.



**Cathy Kane, Interim Group Chief Executive**

9<sup>th</sup> October 2025

# A Year in Numbers



**70%**  
Positive move-on across all services.

**3%**  
Hospital returns.

**0%**  
Prison returns.

“Advice, information, and guidance received from staff empowered me in doing things for myself and not having to wait on staff to do them for me, promoting my independence.”

“I was very respected and treated well like I was at home, given advice that I never got from anywhere else. Even when I didn't follow the right advice, even when I was arrested, they never gave up on me.”

“New Hope is the best hostel I have ever lived. I have learned how to cook, manage my money, manage my medication, as well as my anger. I have reflected on the past incidents. My approach in similar situations is now different.”

## Testimonials

“Just knowing someone was downstairs, able to come down for a chat if I was lonely.”

“I have to thank the service and staff who have been very kind and helpful to the residents. I am very happy after receiving support, which led me to develop many skills and I am now living independently.”

## **Strategic Report**

In the face of a worsening cost-of-living crisis this year, SIG Equinox’s impactful services supported 354 people experiencing isolation and difficult choices over their basic needs. Before coming to us, many faced challenging circumstances and may not have received the empathy or trauma-informed care they deserve. SIG Equinox is committed to the vision of integrated community services. Our extensive experience enabled us to meet the growing demand for psychologically informed, person-centred care that empowers individuals to thrive.

### **Expanding Compassion: A New Era of Floating Support**

This year marks an exciting chapter as we begin plans to replicate SIG Penrose’s successful floating support model, which we aim to launch in Brighton and Hove in 2025. SIG Penrose Community Care and Support (PCCS) is an intensive floating support service specialising in supporting individuals facing a wide range of complex challenges. PCCS has established a reputation for delivering exceptional care that genuinely transforms lives. Recently, they received a 5-star ‘Excellent’ rating - the highest achievable - after a rigorous inspection by Lambeth Council’s Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution, which evaluates the quality of adult social care providers.

### **Breaking Barriers in Women’s Complex Trauma**

Our SIG-Equinox Brighton Women’s Service (BWS) earned a high commendation at this year’s Charity Awards, affirming its vital role in Brighton and Hove. As the only organisation in the community providing residential support for women experiencing homelessness with high, multiple, and complex needs, BWS has transformed from a standard women’s hostel into an innovative, psychologically and person-centred sanctuary. By moving beyond conventional support frameworks, BWS tailors its non-clinical therapeutic interventions to meet individual needs, empowering residents to shape their own paths. Farah Nazeer, CEO of Women’s Aid and a judge for the Charity Awards, remarked, “The agility and adaptability of BWS is really impressive and could set an important precedent for other services. The vast majority of refuges and safe spaces will not work with people with this level of trauma because there’s just not that expertise. It’s very difficult work, very intense, and few people are willing to do it, so it is actually quite innovative and radical.”

### **NHS Invests in SIG Equinox Mental Health Resource Centre**

West London NHS Trust and the London Borough of Ealing allocated three years of funding to SIG Equinox Solace Mental Health Drop-In Centre to ensure Ealing residents receive essential mental health support as part of Ealing’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Since 1992, Solace has established itself as a critical resource for adults with mental health needs. As a unique out-of-hours mental health resource in Ealing, Solace is indispensable in the community. The Centre is equipped to support up to 105 community members at any time, addressing long-term mental health conditions such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anxiety, depression, and dual diagnosis. The results speak for themselves; service participants have had no unplanned hospital readmissions over the past three years.

## **Fundraising**

### **Beyond Coins: Make Change Count Campaign**

According to Shelter's recent Homelessness in England 2024 report, there are 3,580 individuals experiencing homelessness in Brighton & Hove, which translates to 1 in 77 people in the local population. With rising costs, evictions, and shrinking housing options, we must confront the reality that these numbers will likely increase. Every year, SIG Equinox takes a strong stand by participating in the Make Change Count initiative, a proactive local scheme that provides a meaningful alternative to street giving. This initiative directly supports Equinox Brighton Women's Service and seven other local charities dedicated to preventing and alleviating homelessness. This year, we raised an impressive £15,332.

### **Thank You**

This report and all the work SIG Equinox completed over the last year would not have been possible without the considerable and ongoing contributions of all our multiple partners, allies, supporters, commissioners and funders. This new and vital funding has enabled us to extend our activities, launch new projects and pieces of work, and make a difference in the lives of the people we support across our services.

## **Transformation Journeys**

### **Lucy's Story**

Lucy came to SIG Equinox Brighton Women's Service three years ago after experiencing severe domestic violence, homelessness, and active substance use, which led to her children being removed from her care. We focused on building a trusting relationship with her and created a tailored support plan using multi-agency services. As she gained emotional and physical stability, she committed to battling her substance use, which allowed her to reconnect with her children and positively impact her mental health. Lucy wanted to learn to read so she could share that experience with her youngest son. We referred her to Step Change, where she successfully improved her literacy skills, strengthening her bond with her children. With stabilised finances, we could assist her with housing transition services. This year, her dedication earned her a SIG Recognition Award in the Inspirational People Category. As Lucy prepares to move into her own home, we are confident in her ability to thrive and immensely proud of her accomplishments.

### **David's Story**

David moved from Oxfordshire to the SIG Equinox Aspinden Care Home in December 2023. Before arriving at Aspinden, David consumed two bottles of Jack Daniel's and smoked 60 cigarettes a day. He struggled to connect with others, overwhelmed by a lack of motivation, low self-esteem, and fear about the future. His relationships with family were strained. After a short time with us, David embraced an Alcohol Agreement and safely reduced his intake to a stable amount of four cans of beer per day. His transformation has been remarkable—he shifted from thinking, "I thought I was gone; they told me I am dying," to actively engaging in activities at the care home. David now enjoys vibrant conversations with staff and supports other residents, inspiring them with his newfound positivity. He has learned to set healthy boundaries, say "no," and recognise his self-worth. He explores music that resonates with him, achieves his goals, and envisions a brighter future—reconnecting with family, attending gigs of favourite bands, and discussing his recovery journey. David takes pride in his accomplishments at Aspinden, and the entire team shares in his pride, witnessing his daily growth and positive engagement. He now attends all his in-house and external appointments and has expanded his palate beyond sausage rolls!

## **Financial Review**

SIG Equinox made a surplus of £194k (2023/24 - £100k surplus) at the operating profit level. This results in an unrestricted fund balance in deficit of £2,151k at 31st March 2025 (2023/24 - £2,171k- deficit). In addition, it had a restricted fund balance of £1k (2023/24 - £1k) after receipts of £2k (2023/24 - £5k) and expenditure of £2k (2023/24 - £5k).

The pensions reserve at the end of the year was £2,153k and relates to the past service deficit liability related to the defined benefit Social Housing Pension Scheme. The triennial valuations have resulted in member organisations being charged a levy to bring the scheme back into surplus. These triennial valuation deficit contributions are reflected in the operating costs and provisions of SIG Equinox. The charity closed its participation in this pension scheme but remains liable for an element of the deficit.

Given the broader economic environment, ongoing changes, and increased competition within the sector, the trustees consider the results disappointing but understandable. Therefore, it is essential that, moving forward, our focus remains on developing new services, new funding models, and effective and financially efficient service delivery models while addressing the issues causing the deficit.

The principle funding sources remain Local Authority block contracts, largely for our resettlement projects, alongside funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS Trusts towards our work with people recovering or living with mental ill health or personality disorders, and our work with preventing homelessness and people experiencing homelessness. The trustees appreciate the funding from its funders, including those statutory commissioners, for the work streams they support and the vital non-statutory funding received from individuals, trusts and foundations.

## **Principal risks and uncertainties**

SIG Equinox has a risk management strategy that the trustees oversee. The risk register is reviewed monthly by the Executive Management Team, in consultation with all managers, and subsequently by the trustees at each quarterly Board meeting. The principal risks are that a resident or participant commits a serious act and that there is class A and B drug usage on our premises. This is not surprising, given the activities undertaken by SIG Equinox. To mitigate these risks, we have robust risk management policies, a pandemic strategy and contingency plans, well-trained staff, incident and near miss reporting and learning, a safeguarding officer, a clinical lead and people safe systems, testing procedures and good relationships with experts by experience and co-production with our residents and participants, responsible officers, and the police. In addition, SIG Equinox is experiencing significant difficulties in procuring properties either for rent or outright purchase, given that we cannot expand at the rate of demand or that we may lose contracts.

**Equinox Care  
Trustee report  
For the year ended 31 March 2025**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Financial Sustainability</b>	The organisation faces financial risks due to funding volatility and rising operational costs.	Dynamic monthly budgeting, engagement with funders, and strategic partnerships to ensure financial resilience.
<b>Operational Delivery and Service Continuity</b>	Risks include workforce challenges, policies and procedures requiring full review, and system inefficiencies that may affect service quality and resourcing.	Improved recruitment, policy updates, and investment in systems and leadership development.
<b>Reputational Risk</b>	Potential reputational damage from lack of updated regulatory scrutiny, incidents, or public perception.	Quality assurance, incident protocols, and proactive stakeholder communication.
<b>Harm to Individuals</b>	Risk of harm to participants, staff or the public due to the nature of services provided.	Safety protocols, training, and monitoring systems to manage and reduce risks.
<b>Regulatory and Legislative Compliance</b>	Risks of non-compliance with evolving legal and regulatory requirements.	Policy reviews, training, and legal oversight to ensure compliance.
<b>Governance and Strategic Oversight</b>	Risks related to leadership transitions and board capacity.	Succession planning, recruitment, and enhanced governance reporting.
<b>Technology and Data Integrity</b>	Risks from cybersecurity threats, fragmented systems, and data quality issues.	Security testing, a new IT strategy, and data governance improvements.

Another significant risk is the pension deficit contributions to TPT to fund the scheme's pension liability shortfall. The risk is regularly reviewed to ensure any contributions are affordable and do not place a significant financial burden on the charity.

### **Reserves policy and going concern**

Reserves are needed to innovate solutions for our stakeholders (residents, participants and commissioners) and bridge the funding gaps between spending on services and recovering these from subsidiaries by providing working capital. In addition, reserves are required to facilitate investment in fixed assets in the form of properties for leasing to subsidiaries for the provision of their services. The trustees evaluated the commitment to future expenditure against likely future income streams and believe a regular review of reserve levels is appropriate. SIG Equinox aims to make a small surplus for retention and reinvestment purposes, increasing free reserves. During the year, the trustees agreed to reduce the target for SIG Equinox to £305k. The actual free reserves, excluding the past service pension liability, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, are £2,151k in deficit (23/24 - £2,171k deficit). The trustees will continue to review the reserves policy and position.

Actions to strengthen the financial position in the future include diversification of funding, including the growth of the business development team to secure additional funds through fundraising and securing and opening several new projects, as well as the closure of projects that were not financially viable. In addition, there are concerted management efforts to increase occupancy, reduce void rates and minimise the use of expensive agency staff.

**Equinox Care**  
**Trustee report**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

After making enquiries, the board of trustees has a reasonable expectation that SIG Equinox has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements. SIG Equinox is considered to have a viable business plan and adequate support from the group to remain solvent for the foreseeable future. Consequently, the board of trustees believes that SIG Equinox is well-placed to manage its business risks successfully. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis when preparing SIG Equinox's financial statements. The pension deficit is large, but there is a robust repayment plan to reduce this over time. There are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cause significant doubt about the ability of SIG Equinox to continue as a going concern, which has been identified by key management personnel after considering the relevant facts and circumstances.

## **Plans for the Future**

SIG Equinox remains committed to delivering safe, effective services that foster inclusive, empowered communities. As we look to the future, we will continue to invest in our people, systems, and partnerships to ensure our services remain responsive, resilient, and reflective of the people we support.

**Investing in People:** We will enhance staff development through targeted training, wellbeing initiatives, and retention strategies that build a skilled and supportive workforce. Embedding our Audit Framework and cultivating a positive safety culture will reinforce operational integrity and promote a shared commitment to safety across all services.

**Expanding Inclusion and Engagement:** Our focus will be on broadening our volunteering offer, growing our inclusivity programme, and advancing our technological capabilities to improve service accessibility and responsiveness. These initiatives will deepen community engagement and ensure our services meet the diverse needs of those we support.

**Elevating Housing Standards:** Through the delivery of the SIG Housing Trust strategy, we will uphold and develop the *SIG Home & Support Standards*, ensuring access to stable, high-quality housing options that promote independence and wellbeing.

**Secure Financial Sustainability:** Financial resilience remains a core priority. We will focus on contract retention and strategic growth, diversify income through fundraising, donations, and commercial activity, and minimise void loss. Streamlining group procurement will further enhance value for money and operational efficiency.

Together, these strategic actions will strengthen our foundation and position SIG Equinox to lead with integrity, inclusion, and impact in the years ahead.

## **Structure, governance and management**

SIG Equinox is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital (Number 02114430) incorporated on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1987 and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission (Number 296694) on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1987.

SIG Equinox's governing instruments are its Articles of Association dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1987, as amended on 1st November 2018. With effect from 1st October 2014, Social Interest Group is the sole member of SIG Equinox, and as of 1st November 2018, the non-executive trustees of Social Interest Group were appointed as the trustees of SIG Equinox.

All the trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 6 to the accounts.

## **Appointment of trustees**

The trustees are listed on page 3. They hold office for an initial period of three years, with the possibility of a second term of three years plus; in exceptional circumstances, where the trustee has specific skills, the board can extend this. The board consists of no fewer than three and no more than nine persons appointed by the members and the executive trustees. No person under the age of 18 may be appointed as a trustee.

Trustees are recruited by the Nominations Committee using specialist recruitment agents and by advertisement. A rigorous interview process takes place, which includes residents and participants. Candidates attend board meetings and visit projects before being confirmed for a post by the Chair.

## **Trustee induction and training**

New trustees must familiarise themselves with the content of the Articles of Association, their legal obligations under charity and company law, the organisational structure and its recent financial performance. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events that will facilitate the undertaking of their role. All trustees have participated in safeguarding training.

## **Related parties and relationships with other organisations**

SIG Equinox is a member of Social Interest Group, of which it is a subsidiary. It provides all support functions, senior management and strategic guidance. All Social Interest Group companies support The charity's charitable objectives: Penrose Options, SIG Housing Trust, Safe Ground and Pathways to Independence.

## **Remuneration policy for key management personnel**

Social Interest Group non-executive trustees set the Group Chief Executive's remuneration. They and all other staff are remunerated in accordance with a job evaluation process and market rates, which external consultants review.

## **Policy for the employment of disabled persons**

In April 2019, we became a Disability Confident Employer.

The charity's policy is not to discriminate against persons covered by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 because of their disability, whether in applying for employment or in the delivery of services.

The key areas of our policy cover recruitment and employment (disabled applicants not being considered any less favourably on the grounds of their disability), service delivery (disabled applicants, residents and participants not being treated less favourably on account of their disability) and information (ensuring information is accessible to all).

## **Employee information**

The charity takes its investment in its staff's professional development seriously and aims to provide different learning opportunities. The charity aims to see staff develop and share learning so that value can be added and staff contribute to our growth and success. We introduced a new core training programme based around the Care Certificate, which comprises face-to-face and e-learning to ensure all modules are covered.

The trustees would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication during the year in a highly challenging climate. We confirm that the charity pays at least the London Living Wage to our employees working in London.

### **Statement of Responsibilities of the trustees**

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK GAAP).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the Group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the 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 which are reasonable and prudent
- State whether the applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on an ongoing 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 the charity's financial position with reasonable accuracy at all times and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the charity's and the Group's assets and taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar 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 maintaining the integrity of the corporate and financial information on the 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 charity's assets in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at year-end was five (2020: five).

The non-executive trustees are members of the charity; the executive trustee is not a member and has no beneficial interest in it.

The trustees' annual report, which includes the strategic report, has been approved by the board of trustees on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and signed on their behalf.



**Dr Karl Marlowe**

**Chair**

# Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

## Independent auditor's report

### Opinion

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

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its 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 charitable company 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 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 other information comprises the information included in the annual report, including the trustees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

# Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report including the strategic report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

## Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 15, the trustees (who are also the directors 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.

# Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

## 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.

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 is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the group and the parent charity and determined that the most significant frameworks which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, data protection legislation, the Care Standard Act and safeguarding regulation.
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of representatives of management and the review of minutes of Trustee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of where management considers there was susceptibility to fraud and knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:
- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- Tested the authorisation of expenditure; and

# Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Review of the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Agreeing financial statements disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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

## Use of our report

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

*Buzzacott Audit LLP*

Hugh Swainson (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of Buzzacott Audit LLP, Statutory Auditor  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL

15 October 2025

**Equinox Care**  
**Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**Statement of Financial Activities**

	Note	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	2025 Total Funds £'000	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	2024 Total Funds £'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Charitable Activities	3	7,175	2	-	7,177	7,691	5	-	7,696
Donations and legacies	2	3	-	-	3	1	-	-	1
Investment income		-	-	-	-	-	-	83	83
<b>Total income</b>		<u>7,178</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,180</u>	<u>7,692</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>7,780</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>									
Charitable activities	4	(6,971)	(2)	(127)	(7,100)	(7,675)	(5)	-	(7,680)
Total expenditure		<u>(6,971)</u>	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(127)</u>	<u>(7,100)</u>	<u>(7,675)</u>	<u>(5)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(7,680)</u>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	5	207	-	(127)	80	17	-	83	100
Transfers between funds		(187)		187	-				
<b>Other recognised gains and losses</b>									
Actuarial losses on defined benefit pension schemes		-		72	72	-	-	(391)	(391)
Net movement in funds		20	-	132	152	17	-	(308)	(291)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>									
Total funds brought forward		(2,171)	1	(2,285)	(4,455)	(2,188)	1	(1,977)	(4,164)
Total funds carried forward	17a	<u>(2,151)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(2,153)</u>	<u>(4,303)</u>	<u>(2,171)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(2,285)</u>	<u>(4,455)</u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17a to the financial statements.

Equinox Care  
Balance Sheet  
As at 31 March 2025

Balance Sheet

	Note	£'000	2025 £'000	£'000	2024 £'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	10		31		75
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	11	1,228		923	
Cash at bank and in hand		278		569	
		<u>1,506</u>		<u>1,492</u>	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(2,337)</u>		<u>(2,387)</u>	
<b>Net current liabilities</b>			<u>(831)</u>		<u>(895)</u>
<b>Total Assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>(800)</u>		<u>(820)</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after one year</b>	13		<u>(1,350)</u>		<u>(1,350)</u>
<b>Net liabilities excluding pension scheme provision</b>			<u>(2,150)</u>		<u>(2,170)</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme provision	15		<u>(2,153)</u>		<u>(2,285)</u>
<b>NET LIABILITIES</b>			<u><u>(4,303)</u></u>		<u><u>(4,455)</u></u>
<b>FUNDS</b>					
Restricted funds			1		1
Unrestricted funds					
General funds		(2,151)		(2,171)	
Pension reserve		<u>(2,153)</u>		<u>(2,285)</u>	
Total Unrestricted funds			<u>(4,304)</u>		<u>(4,456)</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	17a		<u><u>(4,303)</u></u>		<u><u>(4,455)</u></u>

Approved by the trustees on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and signed on their behalf by



Karl Marlowe  
Chair

Equinox: A company limited by guarantee, Company Registration Number 02114430 (England and Wales)

**Equinox Care**  
**Cash Flow Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**Cash Flow Statement**

	Note	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
Net gain / (loss) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		152	(291)
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		21	-
Depreciation charges		24	30
Movement in long-term pension deficit liability		(132)	308
(Increase) in debtors		(305)	(5)
(Decrease) in creditors		(50)	(175)
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>		<b>(290)</b>	<b>(133)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets		-	-
Purchase of fixed assets		(1)	(25)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		<b>(1)</b>	<b>(25)</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>	18	<b>(291)</b>	<b>(158)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		569	727
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>		<b>278</b>	<b>569</b>

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

### **1 Accounting Policies**

#### **a) Statutory information**

SIG Equinox is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England & Wales. The registered office is 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London, N1 1TY.

#### **b) Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

#### **c) Public benefit entity**

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

#### **d) Going concern**

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

The financial statements are drawn up on a going concern basis despite having net liabilities, including the pension reserve in deficit. The deficit of the pension scheme, however, does not result in an immediate cash flow impact on the charity. This deficit will be cleared by an agreed payment plan for pension contributions. For this reason, the trustees are satisfied this does not affect the going concern status of the charity.

Social Interest Group will not recall the inter-company balances within the next 12 months, unless the Trustees deem that SIG Equinox can afford to repay the balances. In addition, the trustees of both Social Interest Group and SIG Penrose have expressed their intention to continue to provide support to SIG Equinox Care, including providing working capital, for the foreseeable future.

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

#### **e) Income**

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

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

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**f) Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund. Unrestricted funds are donations and other income received or generated for the charitable purposes.

**g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**h) Central support costs**

Central support costs are incurred by the parent company, Social Interest Group, and are for senior management, finance, human resources, payroll, workforce development, housing income management, quality & performance and information & communication technology. These departments are vital to the smooth running of Equinox's charitable activities.

**i) Leases**

Operating lease charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**j) Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use. Major components are treated as a separate asset where they have significantly different patterns of consumption of economic benefits and are depreciated separately over its useful life.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Fixtures, fittings and office equipment      Straight line over the term of the lease
- Leasehold improvements                              25% straight line

**k) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Judgement is made around the recoverability of debt and a provision is made based on the age and type of debt. Former resident arrears are provided for in full, whilst current resident arrears are provided for based on age and circumstances.

**l) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of residents and participants.

**m) Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at their settlement amount. Dilapidation provisions are held in the balance sheet at the year end, based on the estimates of cost of returning the property to the landlord at the end of the lease.

**n) Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**o) Pensions**

SIG Equinox makes contributions into a defined benefit pension scheme, which is now closed to new SIG Equinox entrants, and a number of defined contribution schemes. For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 30 September 2023. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and are used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

**p) Interest receivable**

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

**2 Donations**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000</b>
Donation and gifts	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>

Equinox is not involved in active fund raising, but do accept donations via Enthuse. No complaints have been received regarding fundraising activities.

**3 Charitable activities – supporting vulnerable people**

SIG Equinox's activities are to relieve people in need, including but not limited to those with mental health illness, those currently suffering from substance misuse or other addictive behaviour patterns, ex-offenders, the homeless, poor people, aged, disabled (whether physically or mentally) or chronically sick. This is achieved by providing support in the form of housing, or accommodation, or services including but not limited to medical, social, welfare, rehabilitative, resettlement, care services, education, training, employment, mentoring and other similar services. SIG Equinox's income is predominantly contractual income from local authorities and NHS Trusts, and rental income and service charges from residents.

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

4a **Analysis of expenditure (current year)**

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2025 Total £'000	2024 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	3,933	-	828	4,761	4,944
Recruitment & training	-	-	140	140	117
Subsistence & travel	5	-	5	10	10
Premises Costs	809	-	24	833	1,182
Office running costs	142	-	33	175	183
Insurance	-	-	55	55	55
Information technology	-	-	106	106	133
Legal & Professional	-	-	46	46	50
Depreciation	24	-	8	32	43
Audit fees	-	14	-	14	18
Other Costs	923	-	5	928	945
<b>Total expenditure 2025</b>	<b>5,836</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>7,100</b>	
Total expenditure 2024	6,116	193	1,371		7,680

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

4b **Analysis of expenditure (previous year)**

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2024 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	4,061	-	883	4,944
Recruitment & training	-	-	117	117
Subsistence & travel	5	-	5	10
Premises Costs	1,150	-	32	1,182
Office running costs	107	-	76	183
Insurance	-	-	55	55
Information technology	-	-	133	133
Legal & Professional	-	-	50	50
Depreciation	30	-	13	43
Audit fees	-	18	-	18
Other Costs	763	175	7	945
Total expenditure 2024	<u>6,116</u>	<u>193</u>	<u>1,371</u>	<u>7,680</u>

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**5 Net income / (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging :

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Depreciation	24	30
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	809	1,086
Auditor's remuneration (including VAT):		
Audit	<u>14</u>	<u>18</u>

**6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel**

Staff costs were as follows

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Salaries and wages	3,537	3,183
Social security costs	318	292
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	87	80
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	13	13
Agency costs	806	1,376
	<u>4,761</u>	<u>4,944</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2024: Nil).

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £Nil (2024: £Nil). These were borne by the parent entity Social Interest Group.

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2024: £Nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £Nil).

**7 Staff numbers**

	2025	2024
Operational	113	107
	<u>113</u>	<u>107</u>

**Related party transactions**

**8** SIG Equinox was charged £1,193,797 for central office functions provided by the parent charity Social Interest Group (2024: £1,370,875).

SIG Equinox owed £2,215,016 to SIG at the year-end (2024: owed £2,404,574).

SIG Equinox was owed £282,335 by Penrose Options (wholly owned subsidiary of SIG) at the year-end (2024: owed £6,872).

SIG Equinox was owed £1,803 by Pathways to Independence (wholly owned subsidiary of SIG) at the year-end (2024: £nil).

SIG Equinox owed £nil to SIG Housing Trust (wholly owned subsidiary of SIG) at the year-end (2024: owed £55,699).

**Taxation**

**9** SIG Equinox is a registered charity and is exempt from Corporation Tax on its charitable income as it is spent on charitable purposes.

The Charity is part of Social Interest Group VAT registration. However, as virtually 100% of its income is exempt, the VAT on purchases is irrecoverable and therefore included in expenditure.

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**10 Tangible fixed assets**

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £'000	Leasehold Improvements £'000	Total £'000
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>			
At the start of the year	119	123	242
Additions in year	1	-	1
Disposals in year	(33)	(45)	(78)
At the end of the year	<u>87</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>165</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At the start of the year	114	53	167
Charge for the year	3	21	24
Released on disposal	(33)	(24)	(57)
At the end of the year	<u>84</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>134</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At the end of the year	<u>3</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>31</u>
At the start of the year	<u>5</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>75</u>

**11 Debtors**

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Trade debtors	684	697
Amounts due from Group undertakings	284	-
Other debtors	123	86
Prepayments	92	92
Accrued Income	45	48
	<u>1,228</u>	<u>923</u>

**12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Trade creditors	263	209
Taxation and social security	84	58
Pension contributions	45	49
Other creditors	719	675
Deferred Income	49	21
Amounts due to Group undertakings	865	1,117
Accruals	312	258
	<u>2,337</u>	<u>2,387</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year**

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Amounts due to Group undertakings	<u>1,350</u>	<u>1,350</u>

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**15 Pension Schemes**

**The Pensions Trust - Social Housing Pension Scheme (“Scheme”)**

SIG Equinox participates in the Scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 500 non-associated employers. The Scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK.

For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2018. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and is used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

The Scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension scheme in the UK.

The last triennial valuation of the Scheme overall for funding purposes was carried out as at 30 September 2023. This valuation revealed a deficit of £1,560m. A Recovery Plan has been put in place with the aim of removing this deficit by 31 March 2028. The Scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore, the charity is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the Scheme. Following consultation between the Pension Trustees and Employers, a new recovery plan to recover the overall scheme deficit has been agreed. This is based on a full share of liabilities approach. This is effective from 1 April 2022.

*The defined benefit scheme is now closed to new members and so under the projected unit method the current service cost would be expected to increase over time as members of the scheme approach retirement.*

SIG Equinox were notified in 2021 by the Trustee of the Scheme that it has performed a review of the changes made to the Scheme's benefits over the years and the result is that there is uncertainty surrounding some of these changes. The Trustee is seeking clarification from the Court on these items, and this process is ongoing with the Court's determination expected no earlier than Summer 2025. It is estimated that this could potentially increase the value of the full Scheme liabilities by £155m. We note that this estimate has been calculated as at 30 September 2022 on the Scheme's Technical Provisions basis. Until the Court direction is received, it is unknown whether the full (or any) increase in liabilities will apply and therefore, in line with the prior year, no adjustment has been made in these financial statements in respect of this.

**Number of active members in the scheme**

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Active	1	1
Deferred	83	87
Pensioners	<u>51</u>	<u>48</u>

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**Financial assumptions**

	<b>2025</b>	2024
	<b>% pa</b>	% pa
Rate of discount	<b>6.12</b>	5.20
Price inflation (RPI)	<b>3.10</b>	3.15
Price inflation (CPI)	<b>2.79</b>	2.78
Earnings increases	<b>3.79</b>	3.78
Allowance for commutation of pension for cash at retirement	<b><u>75%</u></b>	<u>75%</u>

The discount rate has been increased by 0.3% from the base assumption used by the actuary in deriving the overall deficit position. This is due to the fact the discount rate does not reflect returns that can be achieved in other long term products that can be purchased by SIG Equinox.

**Other material assumptions**

Life expectancies in retirement:	<b>years</b>	years
Male currently aged 65	<b>20.5</b>	20.5
Female currently aged 65	<b>23.0</b>	23.0
Male currently aged 45	<b>21.7</b>	21.8
Female currently aged 45	<b><u>24.5</u></b>	<u>24.4</u>

**Equinox Care**  
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**15 Pension Schemes (continued)**

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Fair value of plan assets	6,455	6,984
Present value of defined benefit obligation	<u>(8,608)</u>	<u>(9,269)</u>
Net defined liability to be recognised	<u>(2,153)</u>	<u>(2,285)</u>

**Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the fair value of plan assets**

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Opening fair value of employer assets	6,984	7,391
Interest income	357	358
Experience on plan assets	(648)	(645)
Contributions by the employer	188	188
Withdrawals by Employees	-	-
Benefits paid and expenses	<u>(426)</u>	<u>(308)</u>
	<u>6,455</u>	<u>6,984</u>

**Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of defined benefit obligation**

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Opening defined benefit obligation	9,269	9,368
Expenses	13	13
Interest cost	471	450
Actuarial losses / (gains)	(719)	(254)
Benefits paid and expenses	<u>(426)</u>	<u>(308)</u>
Closing defined benefit obligation	<u>8,608</u>	<u>9,269</u>

Actual return on plan assets

<u>(648)</u>	<u>(645)</u>
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**Net actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension scheme**

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Actuarial gain on plan obligations	719	254
Actuarial gain / (loss) on plan assets	<u>(648)</u>	<u>(645)</u>
Defined benefit costs recognised in the SOFA	<u>71</u>	<u>(391)</u>

**16a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)**

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	31	-	-	31
Net current assets/(liabilities)	(832)	-	1	(831)
Non-current liabilities	(1,350)	-	-	(1,350)
Defined benefit pension provision	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,153)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,153)</u>
	<u>(2,151)</u>	<u>(2,153)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(4,303)</u>

**Equinox Care**  
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**16b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)**

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	75	-	-	75
Net current assets/(liabilities)	(896)	-	1	(895)
Non-current liabilities	(1,350)	-	-	(1,350)
Defined benefit pension provision	-	(2,285)	-	(2,285)
	<u>(2,171)</u>	<u>(2,285)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(4,455)</u>

**17a Movements in funds (current year)**

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

	At 1 April 2024 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2025 £'000
<b>Restricted Funds:</b>					
Skills for Care	1	-	-	-	1
CO-OP	-	2	(2)	-	-
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>(2)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>General funds</b>	(2,171)	7,178	(6,984)	(174)	(2,151)
<b>Pension reserve</b>	(2,285)	-	(42)	174	(2,153)
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<u>(4,455)</u>	<u>7,180</u>	<u>(7,028)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(4,303)</u>

**17b Movements in funds (prior year)**

	At 1 April 2023 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2024 £'000
<b>Restricted Funds:</b>					
Fulfilling Lives	1	-	-	-	1
Skills for Care	-	5	(5)	-	-
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>(5)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>General funds</b>	(2,188)	7,692	(7,675)	-	(2,171)
<b>Pension reserve</b>	(1,977)	83	(391)	-	(2,285)
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<u>(4,164)</u>	<u>7,780</u>	<u>(8,071)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(4,455)</u>

**Transfers**

During the year, Equinox makes contributions towards the pension deficit of the pension scheme. These are recognised in the year as they are incurred, and are transferred in the year to show the effect on the overall liability.

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
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**17b Movements in funds (prior year) (continued)**

**Purposes of restricted funds**

- Fulfilling Lives. The SIG Equinox Brighton team is part of a nationwide Big Lottery initiative designed to affect positive change on several levels in the area of multiple and complex needs.
- Skills for Care. This is a programme of work related to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment.
- CO-OP. This grant was used to purchase silent disco equipment for Solace project.

**18 Analysis of changes in net debt**

	At 1 April 2024 £'000	Cash flows £'000	At 31 March 2025 £'000
Cash at bank and in hand	569	(291)	278
Intercompany loans falling due after more than one year	<u>(1,350)</u>	-	<u>(1,350)</u>
Total	<u><u>(781)</u></u>	<u><u>(291)</u></u>	<u><u>(1,072)</u></u>

**19 Operating lease commitments**

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases on buildings are as follows for each of the following periods

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Less than one year	631	579
One to five years	-	-
	<u><u>631</u></u>	<u><u>579</u></u>

**20 Guarantees and ultimate parent undertaking**

Equinox Care, trading as SIG Equinox, is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. Social Interest Group became the sole member of Equinox Care on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014. Each member has guaranteed to pay £1 in the event that Equinox Care was wound up. Social Interest Group is the ultimate parent undertaking. Its charity registered number is 158402. Its company registered number is 9122052. Its registered office is: 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London N1 1TY.

**Social Interest Group:**

1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square,  
London, N1 1TY

**Telephone:**

020 3668 9270

**Email:**

enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk

Social Interest Group (SIG) is a leading UK charity providing bespoke person-centred health and social care services through SIG Penrose, SIG Equinox, SIG Pathways to Independence, SIG Safe Ground, SIG Housing Trust and SIG Milner Gibson. Our mission is to empower independence through trauma-informed solutions and dynamic partnerships that keep people out of prison, out of hospital, and off the streets.

**Charity no. 296694 | Company no. 02114430**

@socialinterestgroup

[www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk](http://www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk)



Penrose

Equinox

Pathways to  
Independence

SIG Housing Trust

Safe Ground

Milner  
Gibson

**EQUINOX CARE**

England & Wales - Charity number 296694

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# Accounts

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# Equinox Care

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024



**Equinox**

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**Equinox Care  
Trustee report  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2024.

**Reference and Administrative details of the Charity, its Trustees and advisors**

Equinox Care was established in 1986, incorporated as Drink Crisis Centre on the 23rd of March 1987, opened its first service in 1990 and changed its name to Equinox Care on the 13th of April 1999. Equinox Care joined Social Interest Group as a wholly owned subsidiary on the 1st October 2014. It now trades as SIG Equinox.

**Directors and Charity Trustees**

The directors of the Charity are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law and, throughout this document, are collectively referred to as Trustees. The current Trustees and those that served during the year:

**Chairman**

Karl Marlowe

**Other Trustees**

Dylan Kerr

Stuart Jenkin

Jeff Loo

Claire Barton

**Company Secretary**

Michael Rutherford

**Senior Leadership Team**

**Group Chief Executive**

Gill Arukpe

**Director of Finance & Resources**

Michael Rutherford

**Director of People & Culture**

Maria Speight

**Director of Services & Support**

Angela Henry

Paul Addicott (appointed 15<sup>th</sup> Jul 2024)

**Director of Development, Marketing & Communications**

Greg Tythe

**Director of External Affairs & Impact**

Adam Moll (Appointed 1<sup>st</sup> Apr 2023)

**Director of Housing & Maintenance**

Matthew Costin

**Director of Compliance, Risk & Internal Audit**

Jenny Ralls

**Registered Office**

1 Waterloo Gardens  
Milner Square  
London  
N1 1TY

**Auditors**

Buzzacott LLP  
130 Wood St  
London  
EC2V 6DL

**Bankers**

Lloyds Bank plc  
25 Gresham Street  
London  
EC2V 7HN

**Solicitors**

Russell Cook LLP  
2 Putney Hill  
London  
SW15 6AB

**DWF LLP**

1 Scott Place  
2 Hardman Street  
Manchester  
M3 3AA

Company registration number 02114430

Charity registration number 296694

[www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk](http://www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk)

[enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk)

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For the year ended 31 March 2024**

The reference and administration information set out on the previous page form part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

## **Objectives**

### **Purposes and Aims**

The objects of SIG Equinox, as set out in the Articles of Association, are for the public benefit:

- To assist, relieve and rehabilitate any person who is in need because of alcohol problems, other substance use problems, mental and physical health issues, age, learning difficulties, involvement in the criminal justice system or a lack of appropriate housing, and to assist and relieve such persons' family, dependents and other carers who are in need as a result of that person's problems; and
- To further such other exclusively charitable purposes according to the law of England and Wales as the Trustees, in their absolute discretion from time to time, determine.

The Trustees review the Charity's aims, objectives, and activities annually. This report looks at what the Charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The Trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the Charity has brought to the people it is set up to help. The review also helps the Trustees ensure the Charity's aims, objectives, and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

The Trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and planning its future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities contribute to the aims and objectives.

### **Activities**

SIG Equinox provides personalised residential and community-based health and social care services for people furthest away from living independent lives. Residents and participants often have behaviours that can be challenging: forensic mental illness and mental health disorders, general mental health illness, long history of being in the criminal justice system, being excluded previously from education and employment, substance and alcohol use and lengthy periods of homelessness.

SIG Equinox staff are all trained to work in a trauma-informed way. We embrace enabling environments to keep residents and participants at the centre of what we do and how we work. Our residential services are also delivered using a psychologically informed framework. This helps ensure the people using our services achieve stability, rehabilitation, resettlement, and long-term recovery.

SIG Equinox's flagship service, Aspinden Care Home, based in London, accepts referrals from across England and provides the only residential service for treatment-resistant adults using alcohol. The service supports adults who often cannot access other care homes due to their alcohol use and associated behaviours and uses the Blue Light system and harm minimisation model to ensure the safety of the residents and staff. The heart and soul of SIG Equinox are providing hope without exclusion to all who come to them, and SIG Equinox is keen to develop this service in different parts of the country where there is a significant need. SIG Equinox currently operates across London and Brighton and is ambitious to grow.

## **Chief Executive's Statement**

This year, we have made remarkable progress and achieved meaningful milestones, including supporting 437 people across SIG Equinox services, a 51% increase from last year. We improved staff retention by increasing training, development, and staff pay and reduced our vacancy rate. We should take pride in and celebrate this significant achievement.

We remain dedicated to finding practical service solutions to support the demands of people in need and for commissioners responsible for strategically meeting those needs. We aim to do this from across a range of health and social care areas caused by the inequity of access for the poorest in our society to a good home, employment and health and social care. Many of the people we support feel trapped in the criminal justice system, homelessness cycle and within the mental health pathways.

In a world where socio-economic issues are increasingly entwined, our rich and diverse experience across multiple sectors and policy areas places us in a strong position to innovate and develop new models to support those facing multiple disadvantages.

The advent of a new government with fresh ideas and a fresh approach brings cause for optimism. We know that many immediate challenges they must resolve, from overcrowded prisons to underfunded social care, directly impact the people we support and our frontline staff teams trying to make a difference. Reforms will take time, and we are acutely aware of the financial restrictions the new administration must operate within. However, we are confident that we can and will be part of the solutions to make our public services more impactful, efficient, and equitable.

We at SIG Equinox take great pride in offering opportunities for residents and participants in our peer work programs, staff recruitment, service reviews, focus innovation meetings, audits, and employment. This approach has resulted in impactful outcomes and improved our services and learning. Our dedicated efforts in establishing a genuine approach to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) have been a great source of inspiration. We recently were shortlisted for a Charity Times award for our EDI work. We wholeheartedly embrace and celebrate every voice in our communities and are resolute in dedicating substantial resources to our EDI programs to move beyond tokenism.

Our ambition of resident and participant inclusivity in all we do aims to bring about systems change and acknowledge the invaluable wisdom and experience of those most affected by systems and services. By sharing lived experiences and well-informed perspectives on critical issues, their voices ensure our efforts are meaningful in confronting injustices head-on with external decision-makers. Our influential Theory of Change centred on Identity, Community, and Relationships, has profoundly impacted our support for residents and participants.

Our phenomenal staff are our greatest strength, displaying untold resilience, innovation and passion to support positive change in the most challenging circumstances. We are investing in the training and support required to keep our services safe and keep our staff feeling valued and fulfilled in their roles. Our culture, the 'How' we work together, is critical to achieving this. We have introduced changes to our incidents and investigations processes to nurture a trauma-informed culture that prioritises learning over blame and understands that there will be challenging situations in the sectors we work in. Adverse outcomes cannot always be avoided.

Aspinden Care Home remains a unique service. One which we are incredibly proud to provide. The service is dedicated to care and supporting people who are resistant to changing their alcohol use. When they arrive as new residents, they often feel forgotten and have no choice in life - living with a high level of trauma and complex social and mental health challenges. Some of them have suffered brain injury and physical illnesses and diseases related to their drinking.

The residents are often referred to us as they have caused pressure on other services, such as the police and NHS services, with no other place to go. In just a few days of staying in Aspinden, our alcohol management programs aimed at harm minimisation successfully reduced their drinking behaviours that challenged other services and their ability to live healthy lives. As a result, they were

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able to decrease their alcohol intake and live a healthier life, forming positive relationships and gaining new independence.

SIG Equinox has cultivated an inspiring and successful community. At the SIG annual recognition awards, SIG Equinox Brighton Women's Service, Aspinden Care Home, Southampton Way and Lewisham Services won awards for leadership, dedication and kindness. Service residents and participants were also recognised for their remarkable journeys of progress and contributions to SIG Equinox's work and values. I am deeply honoured to have received a prestigious Social Care Leadership Award for my dedication to leadership excellence.

Looking ahead, we are committed to continuously raising the bar in service delivery, care, and support to provide impactful social change for individuals and wider communities. Standing at a crossroads for public services, we are more determined than ever to play our part in building a more just and equitable society where everyone has every opportunity to be the best version of themselves.



**Gill Arukpe, Group Chief Executive**  
27<sup>th</sup> November 2024

# Impact & Results

In 23/24 SIG Equinox supported 437 people across our different services.

95

Total departures



437

Total people seen



75

Positive move-ons



3

Unplanned return to hospital



0

Convicted of a new offence

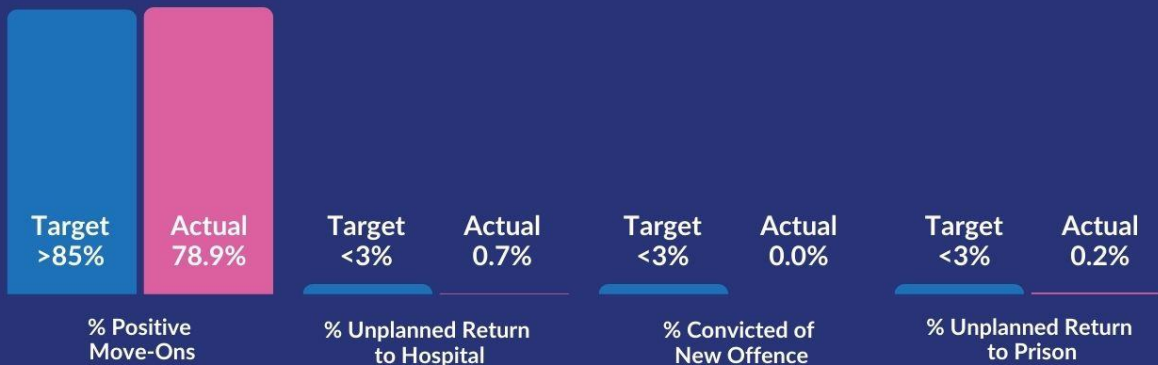


1

Unplanned return to prison



## SIG Equinox Performance Metrics



# Empowering Change

“I’ve reduced my alcohol intake, increased my independent living skills, achieved employment and signed off Universal Credit benefit.”

“My anger is managed better than before, and it’s easier for me to ask for help.”

“For the first time in my life, I feel I have a home here and am around people who care about me and this means so much to her.

“This place is special, and after so long being bounced around the system, I’m angry that I could have been helped in this way all this time, and that other women could and should be helped in this way.”

“I would not have achieved reaching abstinence and maintaining it without the service.”

“If it weren’t for the staff here, I would be dead. I want you to know that you change lives. When I’m better, I want to do a job like yours, because I so admire watching you fight for all the women who live here.”

“It’s like a family here. We all get along, and I get the support I need.”

## Our Focus

### Promoting a Positive Safety Culture

At the start of the year, we set out to cultivate a positive safety culture and made significant progress in incident reporting, safeguarding and whistleblowing. Through focus groups and webinars, training, expert advice, and practical information, we've empowered colleagues, residents, and participants, fostering a culture of curiosity, learning and constructive feedback.

Our parent company, SIG, introduced new processes and procedures for reporting accidents, incidents, and near misses (AINMs) and a new whistleblowing system. This change emphasises the importance of confidentiality, collaboration, and protection, and we have trained a team of Whistleblowing Champions from across the organisation as approachable experts who can give advice. We gained rich feedback around improving physical safety, including the provision of 'safe space' in residential settings, review of de-escalation, breakaway and team regulation training, leadership commitment to safety 'by design and default', and review of relevant policies and procedures.

We also recognise our services' challenging and unique safeguarding situations and have invested in comprehensive staff training to address complex care and support needs. Each service now has a trained local safeguarding lead who provides tailored support and training to meet the unique care requirements of the residents and participants they support. We will provide more targeted staff training to encourage reporting and align our procedures with the NHS's Patient Safety Incident Response Framework as best practice. We will also normalise shared learning in response to AINMs and ensure our response and approach to learning are trauma-informed.

### Creating a Sustainable Workforce

SIG's People & Culture team supports the staff at SIG Equinox. The team led a powerful transformation throughout the year to elevate our recruitment, training, and development capabilities. This involved expanding the team, reshaping the bank workforce strategy, streamlining workflows, enhancing management capability, reducing agency costs, and prioritising permanent role fulfilment.

The team revamped our recruitment strategy, resulting in more efficient processes and new channel partnerships. The introduction of *Reach*, our first Applicant Tracking System, ushered in automation, reduced time-to-hire, and revolutionised our onboarding process, delivering a 60% decrease in our vacancy rate across the group. They reviewed our e-learning and broader training program and successfully implemented data analytics to produce regular reports and ensure compliance. Online training across the group saw a compliance surge from 75% to 82%.

Renewing our Investors in People accreditation underscored our commitment to employees' well-being. Recognising the pivotal role of fair compensation, we collaborated with SIG and the Board to enhance pay rates and address disparities. SIG strategically established an optimal payroll solution by embedding payroll into the People & Culture team and workflows.

### Creating an Empowering and Inclusive Culture

Inclusivity ensures equity of opportunity and inclusion for all if fully embraced and understood. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Programme has flourished this year, culminating in a group-wide programme that ardently fosters a culture of collective learning and continuous improvement across every echelon of SIG Equinox and the wider group.

We've spearheaded initiatives from policy development and recruitment processes to cost-of-living support, staff training, and workshops. We've also expanded our expertise in community consultations and working with SIG's External Affairs Team. Through these concerted efforts, SIG

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Equinox ensures top-tier, inclusive support for all who need us and the influence of industry standards and best practices.

Our volunteer EDI Ambassadors recruited from across SIG, including SIG Equinox service staff teams, are dedicated to embedding inclusivity throughout our service delivery approaches, programs, and day-to-day activities. They support developing transparent career development and best practices models to ensure we provide demographic-sensitive services to residents and program participants. They nurture and retain strong links to our Participant and Resident Involvement Group, representing the voices of those accessing our services.

Together, they gauge various stakeholder opinions through workshops, support groups, community forums, and house meetings. The collective findings from these engagements inform and enhance local service delivery approaches and unroot any unconscious bias. This plan includes developing training in understanding learning-based challenges, discriminative behaviours, and learning styles of neurodiverse communities. Our plans for next year involve implementing an inclusion learning package for all staff and senior leadership.

### **Building Inclusive Communities**

We formed strong partnerships with voluntary agencies to unite marginalised communities and drive positive change. Our collaboration with key stakeholders like Lewisham's Mental Health Liaison Officer is paving the way for a more inclusive society as we prepare for the rollout of the Right Care, Right Person initiative. By aligning with Shelter Housing's HouseProud Accreditation Programme and procuring training for the East London Foundation Trust Trans and Non-Binary Working Party, we are strengthening our support for LGBTQ+ communities. Our SIG Equinox Lewisham Service's partnership with the LGBT Foundation and Lewisham Borough Council earned SIG an LGBTQ+ Inclusion Award, demonstrating our dedication to fostering diversity and inclusivity. Recognised as a Disability-Confident organisation, we aim to lead in improving behaviours and cultures internally and within our external networks and communities and reap the benefits of inclusive recruitment practices.

### **Supporting Systems Change**

In response to feedback from residents and participants regarding how they felt trapped and unsupported by the current external health, housing and criminal justice systems, SIG, our parent company, invested in and established an External Affairs Directorate. Officially launched in June, this team empowers the voices of service residents and participants so key decision-makers can hear them in local and national government. Learning from their lived experience and their vision of what they need to help create solutions to enable them to succeed. Our support has enabled service residents and participants to lobby for equity pledges from key MPs, including the Shadow Minister for disabled people.

To ensure our initiatives are firmly rooted in lived experience, on behalf of SIG Equinox, SIG conducted extensive focus groups involving residents, participants, staff, and commissioners across our services. This approach gave us intimate insights into the necessary changes to enhance health and social care services. Our research findings unveiled clear themes and areas where our residents and participants felt statutory service delivery could be improved and had failed them, revealing multiple barriers to equitable and compassionate support and treatment, especially when they have a dual diagnosis - where they feel ping-ponged between health agencies, refusing to help while they are still using drugs and alcohol but mentally unwell.

With this insight, we have developed strategic priorities for our influence and advocacy work, focusing on integrated care, community care, Mental Health Act reform, and destigmatising services through equitable practices. We launched a roadshow, supported by service residents and participants, to share our findings and proposed solutions with MPs, councillors, mental health professionals, NHS

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representatives, and police service leaders at events across our services, at parliament and in the community with partners.

Our goal is to drive positive change, particularly for marginalised groups. In response to the Metropolitan Police's Right Care Right Person initiative, we held a policy and impact forum with the lead responsible officer for mental health within the force and the former Shadow Minister for Policing.

## **Business Continuity**

We invest in continuous personal and professional development through e-learning, broader training courses, and competitive staff salaries to retain our workforce. We also focus on shaping and improving our properties through a new home standard and quality estate management. This plan prioritises safety, energy efficiency, inclusivity, and accessibility to make a social and environmental impact and exceed residents' expectations. We continue to focus on enhancing service delivery through alliances, learning, a willingness to take risks, and ambition to generate new growth opportunities, attract a wider audience, and establish ourselves as a resilient and innovative sector leader.

## **Carbon Management Plan**

We are working towards ISO14001 and are committed to the goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, which aligns with the group's sustainability policy. Our partnership with Auditel, a highly respected carbon solutions company, includes producing a PPN 06/21-compliant Carbon Reduction Plan, demonstrating our commitment. Our focus on sustainability promotes sustainable transport through initiatives such as our CycleScheme. We embrace technologies to facilitate meetings and reduce paper consumption. Our emphasis on waste minimisation includes adopting circular practices and sustainable disposal of PPE and other waste through reduction, reuse and recycling to meet legislative and regulatory requirements for waste disposal.

## **Significant Events**

### **Transformations at Aspinden Care Home**

Aspinden Care Home is a London-based 25-bed specialist service providing a managed alcohol service for adults who have been resistant or unable to change their drinking behaviours. Most have complex mental health, brain injury and other complex social and health needs. Our dedicated specialist team includes a GP and Nurses. We take referrals from across the country, and over the past year, we've seen more referrals, with more complex cases needing harm reduction - highlighting the growing need for our vital service. Our approach focuses on reducing harm and providing positive interventions to improve the health and well-being of those who stay. We have witnessed residents at Aspinden make positive strides and transition to less supported accommodation, leading to improved quality of life for many.

### ***Simon's Story***

Simon is a 45-year-old man with learning disabilities. His progress since moving into Aspinden in December 2023 has been remarkable. Before moving in, Simon lived in inadequate accommodation and could not care for himself. He was also consuming large amounts of whiskey each day, which caused his behaviour to be challenging to those around him. With the help of an alcohol management program aiming at harm reduction and the dedicated support and care of Aspinden's staff, Simon has gained a better understanding of the impact of excessive alcohol consumption. He was not judged. He was listened to and respected for the first time in a long while.

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Providing Simon with healthy meals and increasing his water intake helped him feel more relaxed and focused. He has started prioritising his health and nutrition and has successfully reduced his alcohol intake to a stable level. This positive change has also impacted how he communicates and ensures he can control his behaviour. His mindset has shifted from hopelessness to active engagement, inspiring other residents. Over the last 12 months, Simon's journey has been a source of pride for himself and the care home team, earning him a *One to Watch Award* at SIG's Annual Recognition Awards. There is optimism about his potential to return to living independently, and his future is much brighter.

### **Coronation Celebration Parties**

SIG Equinox used the historic coronation celebrations to unite people in ways few events can. Coronation parties took place across our services, inviting staff, residents, participants, and stakeholders to be part of the story and to come together to strengthen a sense of community and belonging. Planning these festivities involved residents and participants in choosing activities that reflected the joy of the occasion and created a memorable experience. Many chose BBQs, complete with decorations to mirror the splendour of the event, quizzes and DJs.

### **Using Art to Reintegrate Women Back into Their Communities**

SIG Equinox Brighton Women's Service (BWS) is passionate about challenging discrimination against women and promoting positive change. Our "I AM MORE THAN" Project challenges the stigma of homelessness and encourages the community to rethink its perceptions. Over the years, the exhibition has been a regular feature at the Brighton Fringe Festival, showcasing its multimedia and immersive art experiences, including sound installations, photography, poetry, and tapestry.

This year, we received a Brighton Fringe Festival bursary prize, supporting the continuation of the project, focusing on sharing personal stories of women residing at BWS to help inform local NHS health inequalities strategies. Partnering with Brighton University and NHS Sussex, we created a series of impactful short animations spotlighting the women's experiences and the health inequalities they faced due to homelessness. With residents' needs ranging from undiagnosed and untreated ADHD to learning difficulties and poor memory, this ground-breaking project has been an unprecedented achievement and earned students recognition at the FRAMPS "Frames Per Second Awards" in Brighton.

### **Recognising our People**

The SIG Awards celebrate the remarkable achievements of Social Interest Group staff, residents and participants. This year, SIG Equinox teams across London and the South East were recognised for their exceptional leadership and dedication. They ensure that residents and participants, even the most hard-to-reach, make significant progress. Brighton Women's Service staff won a *Leadership Award*, *Inspirational People Award* and *Spark Award* for reaching their goals, showing innovation and creativity and influencing change in SIG.

Similarly, the staff at Aspinden Care Home were recognised with a *Care and Support Award* for demonstrating exceptional care and respect to residents and participants and serving as role models to their colleagues. At SIG Equinox Lewisham Service, a supported accommodation service for adults with mental health support needs, service residents received an *Inspirational People Award* for their strong advocacy for their peers and influential contributions to SIG's lobbying and campaign efforts.

SIG Equinox Southampton Way (SWAY) residents and participants received a *Best Teamwork Award* for their exceptional collaboration with staff and positive impact on the service. Their voices and views actively contribute to decision-making and play a vital role in service provision. The award celebrated and highlighted how this has led to a diverse engagement program to complement staff support, covering cultural in-house events, newspaper and breakfast clubs, mindfulness sessions, cultivating

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produce, day trips, and community events. Residents also met the Contract Manager from the local commissioning team, who expressed their satisfaction with the service.

Sadly, due to changes in the commissioning of this service, it is likely to transfer next year to the Housing Association, which owns the property. The Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partner has decided not to let the property to us, giving them an unfair advantage in commissioning, which we have raised with the commissioning team. This is why the SIG Housing Trust property strategy is vital to the group. In this strategy, we aim to develop our own property portfolio and move to own properties to use where partner RSL decides not to partner any longer or where private renting has become too expensive.

### **Tackling Health Inequalities Research Project**

The availability of early cancer screening can significantly impact patient outcomes, but not everyone has equal access. Late-stage diagnoses reduce the chances of survival and worsen health inequalities. Addressing these disparities is crucial for ensuring everyone has a fair opportunity to lead a healthy life. People with significant health differences who need extra support are less likely to attend health appointments or struggle to get appointments. Many reasons for this, like feeling low, having more than one illness, and medication side effects, can all make it hard for people to access healthcare services.

Our latest research project, funded by NW London Integrated Care System and West London Cancer Alliance, involved residents and participants across four of our services and was part of a broader NHS campaign to tackle health inequalities. We identified multiple barriers to screening engagement and the changes needed, including offering screenings during non-traditional hours, specialist staff training to minimise anxiety, additional appointment reminders, and giving copies of letters to designated Carers.

To discuss these disparities and share our findings, SIG Equinox's Clinical Lead attended a community feedback seminar and roundtable alongside other VSOs to discuss key strategies for enhancing accessibility to screening facilities. These included increasing awareness and education about the importance of early screening through culturally sensitive public awareness campaigns and encouraging community engagement by working with health departments to build trust and develop targeted interventions. SIG Equinox is already in early discussions with the NHS in creating educational videos to help overcome engagement challenges and make content more relatable and engaging for all.

### **Financial Review 2023/24**

SIG Equinox made a surplus of £30k (2022/23 - £6k surplus) at the operating profit level. This results in an unrestricted fund balance in deficit of £2,158k at 31st March 2024 (2021/22 - £2,188k- deficit). In addition, it had a restricted fund balance of £1k (2022/23 - £1k) after receipts of £5k (2022/23 - £9k) and expenditure of £5k (2022/23 - £9k).

The pensions reserve at the end of the year was £2,285k and relates to the past service deficit liability related to the defined benefit Social Housing Pension Scheme. The triennial valuations in 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017 and 2020 resulted in member organisations being charged a levy to bring the scheme back into surplus. These triennial valuation deficit contributions are reflected in the operating costs and provisions of SIG Equinox. The charity closed its participation in this pension scheme but remains liable for an element of the deficit.

Given the broader economic environment, ongoing changes, and increased competition within the sector, the Trustees consider the results disappointing but understandable. Therefore, it is essential that, moving forward, our focus remains on developing new services, new funding models, and

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effective and financially efficient service delivery models while addressing the issues causing the deficit.

The principal funding sources remain Local Authority block contracts largely for our resettlement projects alongside funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS Trusts towards our work with people recovering or living with mental ill health or personality disorders and our work with preventing homelessness and people experiencing homelessness. The Trustees appreciate the funding from its funders, including those statutory commissioners, for the work streams they support and the vital non-statutory funding received from individuals, trusts and foundations.

### **Principle risks and uncertainties**

SIG Equinox has a risk management strategy that the trustees oversee. The risk register is reviewed monthly by the Executive Management Team, in consultation with all managers, and subsequently by the Trustees at each quarterly Board meeting. The principal risks are that a resident or participant commits a serious act and that there is class A and B drug usage on our premises. This is not surprising, given the activities undertaken by SIG Equinox. To mitigate these risks, we have robust risk management policies, a pandemic strategy and contingency plans, well-trained staff, incident and near miss reporting and learning, a safeguarding officer, a clinical lead and people safe systems, testing procedures and good relationships with experts by experience and co-production with our residents and participants, responsible officers, and the police. In addition, SIG Equinox is experiencing significant difficulties in procuring properties either for rent or outright purchase, given that we cannot expand at the rate of demand or may lose contracts.

Another significant risk is the pension deficit contributions to TPT to fund the scheme's pension liability shortfall. The risk is regularly reviewed to ensure any contributions are affordable and do not place a significant financial burden on the Charity.

### **Reserves policy and going concern**

Reserves are needed to innovate solutions for our stakeholders (residents, participants and commissioners) and bridge the funding gaps between spending on services and recovering these from subsidiaries by providing working capital. In addition, reserves are required to facilitate investment in fixed assets in the form of properties for leasing to subsidiaries for the provision of their services. The Trustees evaluated the commitment to future expenditure against likely future income streams and believe a regular review of reserve levels is appropriate. SIG Equinox aims to make a small surplus for retention and reinvestment purposes, increasing free reserves. During the year, the Trustees agreed to reduce the target for SIG Equinox to £305k. The actual free reserves, excluding the past service pension liability, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 are £2,158k in deficit (22/23 - £2,188k deficit). The Trustees will continue to review the reserves policy and position.

Actions to strengthen the financial position in the future include diversification of funding, including the growth of the business development team to secure additional funds through fundraising and securing and opening several new projects, as well as the closure of projects that were not financially viable. In addition, there are concerted management efforts to increase occupancy, reduce void rates and minimise the use of expensive agency staff.

After making enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that SIG Equinox has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements. SIG Equinox is considered to have a viable business plan and adequate support from the group to remain solvent for the foreseeable future. Consequently, the Board of Trustees believe that SIG Equinox is well-placed to manage its business risks successfully. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis when preparing SIG Equinox's financial statements. The Pension deficit is large, but there is a robust repayment plan to reduce this over time. There are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cause significant doubt

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about the ability of SIG Equinox to continue as a going concern, which has been identified by key management personnel after considering the relevant facts and circumstances.

## **Business Development**

SIG Equinox has maintained stability throughout the past year and has retained all contracts for renewal, including our highly respected and valued Brighton Women's Service. We plan to build on our reputation in Brighton and Hove and are working with commissioners to develop new services. We have also discussed expanding our Aspinden Care Home model with multiple local authorities. We have received requests to establish similar services in other parts of the country.

## **Thank You**

This report and SIG Equinox's work would not have been possible without the considerable and ongoing contributions of all our multiple partners, allies, supporters, commissioners and funders. This new and vital funding has enabled us to extend our activities, launch new projects and pieces of work, and make a difference in the lives of the people we support across our services.

## **Structure, governance and management**

SIG Equinox is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital (Number 02114430) incorporated on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1987 and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission (Number 296694) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1987.

SIG Equinox's governing instruments are its Articles of Association dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1987, as amended on 1st November 2018. With effect from 1st October 2014, Social Interest Group is the sole member of SIG Equinox, and as of 1st November 2018, the non-executive Trustees of Social Interest Group were appointed as the Trustees of SIG Equinox.

All the Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 5 to the accounts.

## **Appointment of Trustees**

The Trustees are listed on page 3. They hold office for an initial period of three years, with the possibility of a second term of three years plus; in exceptional circumstances where the trustee has specific skills, the board can extend this. The board consists of no fewer than three and no more than nine persons appointed by the members and the executive Trustees. No person under the age of 18 may be appointed as a trustee.

Trustees are recruited by the Nominations Committee using specialist recruitment agents and by advertisement. A rigorous interview process takes place, which includes residents and participants. Candidates attend board meetings and visit projects before being confirmed for a post by the Chairperson.

## **Trustee induction and training**

New Trustees must familiarise themselves with the content of the Articles of Association, their legal obligations under charity and company law, the organisational structure and its recent financial performance. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events that will facilitate the undertaking of their role. All Trustees have participated in Safeguarding training.

## **Related parties and relationships with other organisations**

SIG Equinox is a member of Social Interest Group, of which it is a subsidiary. It provides all support functions, senior management and strategic guidance. All Social Interest Group companies support

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The Charity's charitable objectives: Penrose Options, SIG Housing Trust, Safe Ground and Pathways to Independence.

**Remuneration policy for key management personnel**

Social Interest Group non-executive Trustees set the Group Chief Executive's remuneration. They and all other staff are remunerated in accordance with a job evaluation process and market rates, which external consultants review.

**Policy for employment of disabled persons**

In April 2019, we became a Disability Confident Employer.

The Charity's policy is not to discriminate against persons covered by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 because of their disability, whether in or applying for employment or in the delivery of services.

The key areas of our policy cover recruitment and employment (disabled applicants not being considered any less favourably on the grounds of their disability), service delivery (disabled applicants, residents and participants not being treated less favourably on account of their disability) and information (ensuring information is accessible to all).

**Employee information**

The Charity takes its investment in its staff's professional development seriously and aims to provide different learning opportunities. The Charity aims to see staff develop and share learning so that value can be added and staff contribute to our growth and success. We introduced a new core training programme based around the Care Certificate, which comprises face-to-face and e-learning to ensure all modules are covered.

The Trustees would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication during the year in a highly challenging climate. We confirm that the Charity pays at least the London Living Wage to our employees working in London.

**Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustees**

The Trustees (who are also directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK GAAP).

Company Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the Group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the 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 which are reasonable and prudent
- State whether the applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on an ongoing 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 the charity's financial position with reasonable accuracy at all times and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the Charity's and the Group's assets and taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

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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 maintaining the integrity of the corporate and financial information on the 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 charity's assets in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at year-end was five (2020: five). The non-executive Trustees are members of the Charity; the executive trustee is not a member and has no beneficial interest in it.

The Trustees' annual report, which includes the strategic report, has been approved by the board of Trustees on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and signed on their behalf.



**Dr Karl Marlowe**  
Chairman

## Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

### Opinion

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

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and of 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 charitable company 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 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 other information comprises the information included in the annual report, including the trustees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have

## **Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care**

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 the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report 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 trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on pages 17 and 18, the trustees (who are also the directors 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design

## Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

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 is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the group and the parent charity and determined that the most significant frameworks which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements.
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of representatives of management and the review of minutes of Trustee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of where management considers there was susceptibility to fraud and knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- Tested the authorisation of expenditure; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Review of the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Agreeing financial statements disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website

## Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### Use of our report

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



Hugh Swainson (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL

02 December 2024

**Equinox Care**  
**Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**  
**Statement of Financial Activities**

		2024				2023			
	Not	Unrestricted	Restricted	Pension	Total Funds	Unrestricted	Restricted	Pension	Total
	e	funds	funds	Reserve	Funds	funds	funds	Reserve	Funds
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Charitable Activities	2	7,691	5	-	<b>7,696</b>	7	-	-	7
Donations and legacies	2	1	-	-	<b>1</b>	6,430	9	-	6,439
Investment income		-	-	83	<b>83</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Total income</b>		<u>7,692</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>7,780</b></u>	<u>6,437</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,446</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>									
Charitable activities	4	(7,758)	(5)	-	<b>(7,680)</b>	(6,566)	(9)	135	(6,440)
Total expenditure		<u>(7,675)</u>	<u>(5)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>(7,680)</b></u>	<u>(6,566)</u>	<u>(9)</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>(6,440)</u>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	5	<u>17</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>83</u>	<u><b>100</b></u>	<u>(129)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>6</u>
<b>Other recognised gains and losses</b>									
Actuarial losses on defined benefit pension schemes		-	-	(391)	<b>(391)</b>	-	-	(762)	(762)
Net movement in funds		17	-	(308)	<b>(291)</b>	(129)	-	(627)	(756)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>									
Total funds brought forward		(2,188)	1	(1,977)	<b>(4,164)</b>	(2,059)	1	(1,350)	(3,408)
Total funds carried forward	17a	<u>(2,171)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(2,285)</u>	<u><b>(4,455)</b></u>	<u>(2,188)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(1,977)</u>	<u>(4,164)</u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17a to the financial statements.

**Equinox Care  
Balance Sheet  
As at 31 March 2024**

**Balance Sheet**

	Note	£'000	2024 £'000	£'000	2023 £'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	10		75		80
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	11	923		918	
Cash at bank and in hand		569		727	
		<u>1,492</u>		<u>1,645</u>	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(2,387)</u>		<u>(2,562)</u>	
<b>Net current liabilities</b>			<u>(895)</u>		<u>(917)</u>
<b>Total Assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>(820)</u>		<u>(837)</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after one year</b>			<u>(1,350)</u>		<u>(1,350)</u>
<b>Net liabilities excluding pension scheme provision</b>			<u>(2,170)</u>		<u>(2,187)</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme provision			<u>(2,285)</u>		<u>(1,977)</u>
<b>NET LIABILITIES</b>			<u>(4,455)</u>		<u>(4,164)</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>					
Restricted funds		1			1
Unrestricted funds					
General funds		(2,171)		(2,188)	
Pension reserve		<u>(2,285)</u>		<u>(1,977)</u>	
Total Unrestricted funds					<u>(4,165)</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	17a		<u>(4,455)</u>		<u>(4,164)</u>

Approved by the trustees on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and signed on their behalf by



Karl Marlowe  
Chair



Gill Arukpe  
Chief Executive

Equinox Care: A company limited by guarantee, Company Registration Number 02114430 (England and Wales)

Equinox Care  
Cash Flow Statements  
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Cash Flow Statement

	Note	£'000	2024 £'000	£'000	2023 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>					
Net (Loss) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(291)		(756)	
Depreciation charges		30		21	
Movement in long-term pension deficit liability		308		627	
(Increase) / Decrease in debtors		(5)		79	
(Decrease) / Increase in creditors		(175)		753	
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>			<b>(133)</b>		<b>724</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>					
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets		-		17	
Purchase of fixed assets		(25)		(83)	
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>			<b>(25)</b>		<b>(66)</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>			<b>(158)</b>		<b>658</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			<b>727</b>		<b>69</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>			<b>569</b>		<b>727</b>

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**Notes to the Financial Statements**

**1 Accounting Policies**

**a) Statutory information**

SIG Equinox is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England & Wales. The registered office is 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London, N1 1TY.

**b) Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

**c) Public benefit entity**

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

**d) Going concern**

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

The financial statements are drawn up on a going concern basis despite having net liabilities, including the pension reserve in deficit. The deficit of the pension scheme, however, does not result in an immediate cash flow impact on the charity. This deficit will be cleared by an agreed payment plan for pension contributions. For this reason, the trustees are satisfied this does not affect the going concern status of the charity.

Social Interest Group will not recall the inter-company balances within the next 12 months, unless the Trustees deem that SIG Equinox can afford to repay the balances. In addition, the trustees of both Social Interest Group and SIG Penrose have expressed their intention to continue to provide support to SIG Equinox Care, including providing working capital, for the foreseeable future.

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

**e) Income**

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

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

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

**f) Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund. Unrestricted funds are donations and other income received or generated for the charitable purposes.

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**h) Central support costs**

Central support costs are incurred by the parent company, Social Interest Group, and are for senior management, finance, human resources, payroll, workforce development, housing income management, quality & performance and information & communication technology. These departments are vital to the smooth running of Equinox's charitable activities.

**i) Leases**

Operating lease charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**j) Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use. Major components are treated as a separate asset where they have significantly different patterns of consumption of economic benefits and are depreciated separately over its useful life.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Fixtures, fittings and office equipment      Straight line over the term of the lease
- Leasehold improvements                              25% straight line

**k) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Judgement is made around the recoverability of debt and a provision is made based on the age and type of debt. Former resident arrears are provided for in full, whilst current resident arrears are provided for based on age and circumstances.

**l) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of residents and participants.

**m) Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at their settlement amount. Dilapidation provisions are held in the balance sheet at the year end, based on the estimates of cost of returning the property to the landlord at the end of the lease.

**n) Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

**o) Pensions**

SIG Equinox makes contributions into a defined benefit pension scheme, which is now closed to new SIG Equinox entrants, and a number of defined contribution schemes. For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2021. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

relevant accounting date and are used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**p) Interest receivable**

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

**2 Donations**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2023 £'000</b>
Donation and gifts	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>

**3 Charitable activities – supporting vulnerable people**

SIG Equinox's activities are to relieve people in need, including but not limited to those with mental health illness, those currently suffering from substance use or other addictive behaviour patterns, ex-offenders, the homeless, poor people, aged, disabled (whether physically or mentally) or chronically sick. This is achieved by providing support in the form of housing, or accommodation, or services including but not limited to medical, social, welfare, rehabilitative, resettlement, care services, education, training, employment, mentoring and other similar services. SIG Equinox's income is predominantly contractual income from local authorities and NHS Trusts, and rental income and service charges from residents.

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

4a **Analysis of expenditure (current year)**

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	<b>2024 Total £'000</b>	2023 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	4,061	-	883	<b>4,944</b>	4,168
Recruitment & training	-	-	117	<b>117</b>	188
Subsistence & travel	5	-	5	<b>10</b>	7
Premises Costs	1,150	-	32	<b>1,182</b>	1,015
Office running costs	107	-	76	<b>183</b>	141
Insurance	-	-	55	<b>55</b>	47
Information technology	-	-	133	<b>133</b>	109
Legal & Professional	-	-	50	<b>50</b>	62
Depreciation	30	-	13	<b>43</b>	33
Audit fees	-	18	-	<b>18</b>	22
Other Costs	763	175	7	<b>945</b>	648
<b>Total expenditure 2024</b>	<b>6,116</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>1,371</b>	<b>7,680</b>	
Total expenditure 2023	5,228	22	1,190		6,440

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

4b Analysis of expenditure (previous year)

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2023 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note XXX)	3,464	-	704	4,168
Recruitment & training	-	-	188	188
Subsistence & travel	4	-	3	7
Premises Costs	989	-	26	1,015
Office running costs	96	-	45	141
Insurance	-	-	47	47
Information technology	-	-	109	109
Legal & Professional	-	-	62	62
Depreciation	33	-	-	33
Audit fees	-	22	-	22
Other Costs	642	-	6	648
Total expenditure 2023	<u>5,228</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>1,190</u>	<u>6,440</u>

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**5 Net income / (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging :

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Depreciation	30	19
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	1,086	1,246
Auditor's remuneration (including VAT):		
Audit	18	14
	<u>18</u>	<u>14</u>

**6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel**

Staff costs were as follows

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Salaries and wages	3,183	2,718
Redundancy and termination costs	-	16
Social security costs	292	254
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	80	75
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	13	52
Agency costs	1,376	1,053
	<u>4,944</u>	<u>4,168</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2023: Nil).

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £Nil (2023: £Nil). These were borne by the parent entity Social Interest Group.

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £Nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023: £Nil).

**7 Staff numbers**

	2024	2023
Operational	107	126
Administration	-	2
	<u>107</u>	<u>128</u>

**8 Related party transactions**

SIG Equinox was charged £1,370,875 for central office functions provided by the parent charity Social Interest Group (2023: £1,120,591).

SIG Equinox owed £2,404,574 to SIG at the year-end (2023: owed £2,397,305).

SIG Equinox owed £6,593 to Penrose Options (wholly owned subsidiary of SIG) at the year-end (2023: owed £333,158).

SIG Equinox owed £55,698 to SIG Housing Trust (wholly owned subsidiary of SIG) at the year-end (2023: owed £306)

**9 Taxation**

SIG Equinox is a registered charity and is exempt from Corporation Tax on its charitable income as it is spent on charitable purposes.

The Charity is part of Social Interest Group VAT registration. However, as virtually 100% of its income is exempt, the VAT on purchases is irrecoverable and therefore included in expenditure.

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**10 Tangible fixed assets**

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £'000	Leasehold Improvements £'000	Total £'000
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>			
At the start of the year	119	98	217
Additions in year	-	25	25
At the end of the year	<u>119</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>242</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At the start of the year	110	27	137
Charge for the year	4	26	30
At the end of the year	<u>114</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>167</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At the end of the year	<u>5</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>75</u>
At the start of the year	<u>9</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>80</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

**11 Debtors**

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Trade debtors	697	368
Amounts due from Group undertakings	-	333
Other debtors	86	23
Prepayments	92	114
Accrued Income	48	80
	<u>923</u>	<u>918</u>

**12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Trade creditors	209	187
Taxation and social security	58	74
Pension contributions	49	38
Other creditors	696	718
Amounts due to Group undertakings	1,117	1,047
Accruals	258	498
	<u>2,387</u>	<u>2,562</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year**

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Amounts due to Group undertakings	<u>1,350</u>	<u>1,350</u>

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**15 Pension Schemes**

**The Pensions Trust - Social Housing Pension Scheme ("Scheme")**

SIG Equinox participates in the Scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 500 non-associated employers. The Scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK.

For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2018. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and is used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

The Scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension scheme in the UK.

The last triennial valuation of the Scheme overall for funding purposes was carried out as at 30 September 2020. This valuation revealed a deficit of £1,560m. A Recovery Plan has been put in place with the aim of removing this deficit by 31 March 2028. The Scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore, the charity is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the Scheme. Following consultation between the Pension Trustees and Employers, a new recovery plan to recover the overall scheme deficit has been agreed. This is based on a full share of liabilities approach. This is effective from 1 April 2022.

*The defined benefit scheme is now closed to new members and so under the projected unit method the current service cost would be expected to increase over time as members of the scheme approach retirement.*

**Number of active members in the scheme**

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Active	1	2
Deferred	87	91
Pensioners	<u>48</u>	<u>45</u>

**Financial assumptions**

	2024 % pa	2023 % pa
Rate of discount	5.20	5.17
Price inflation (RPI)	3.15	3.19
Price inflation (CPI)	2.78	2.75
Earnings increases	3.78	3.75
Allowance for commutation of pension for cash at retirement	<u>75%</u>	<u>75%</u>

**Other material assumptions**

	years	years
Life expectancies in retirement:		
Male currently aged 65	20.5	21.00
Female currently aged 65	23.0	23.40
Male currently aged 45	21.8	22.20
Female currently aged 45	<u>24.4</u>	<u>24.90</u>

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**15 Pension Schemes (continued)**

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Fair value of plan assets	6,984	7,391
Present value of defined benefit obligation	<u>(9,269)</u>	<u>(9,368)</u>
Net defined liability to be recognised	<u>(2,285)</u>	<u>(1,977)</u>

**Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the fair value of plan assets**

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Opening fair value of employer assets	7,391	11,657
Interest income	358	360
Experience on plan assets	(645)	(4,612)
Contributions by the employer	188	187
Withdrawals by Employees	-	-
Benefits paid and expenses	<u>(308)</u>	<u>(201)</u>
	<u>6,984</u>	<u>7,391</u>

**Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of defined benefit obligation**

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Opening defined benefit obligation	9,368	13,007
Expenses	13	13
Interest cost	450	399
Actuarial losses / (gains)	(254)	(3,850)
Benefits paid and expenses	<u>(308)</u>	<u>(201)</u>
Closing defined benefit obligation	<u>9,269</u>	<u>9,368</u>

Actual return on plan assets	<u>(645)</u>	<u>(4,252)</u>
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**Net actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension scheme**

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Actuarial gain / (loss) on plan obligations	254	3,850
Actuarial gain / (loss) on plan assets	<u>(645)</u>	<u>(4,612)</u>
Defined benefit costs recognised in the SOFA	<u>(391)</u>	<u>(762)</u>

**16a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)**

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	75	-	-	75
Net current assets/(liabilities)	(883)	-	1	(882)
Non-current liabilities	(1,350)	-	-	(1,350)
Defined benefit pension provision	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,285)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,285)</u>
	<u>(2,158)</u>	<u>(2,285)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(4,442)</u>

Equinox Care  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the year ended 31 March 2024

16b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	80	-	-	80
Net current assets/(liabilities)	(918)	-	1	(917)
Non-current liabilities	(1,350)	-	-	(1,350)
Defined benefit pension provision	-	(1,977)	-	(1,977)
	<u>(2,188)</u>	<u>(1,977)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(4,164)</u>

17a Movements in funds (current year)

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

	At 1 April 2023 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2024 £'000
<b>Restricted Funds:</b>					
Skills for Care	1	-	-	-	1
Community engagement	-	5	(5)	-	-
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>(5)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>General funds</b>	(2,188)	7,692	(7,662)	-	(2,158)
<b>Pension reserve</b>	(1,977)	-	(308)	-	(2,285)
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<u>(4,164)</u>	<u>7,697</u>	<u>(7,975)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(4,442)</u>

17b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2022 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2023 £'000
<b>Restricted Funds:</b>					
Fulfilling Lives	-	9	(9)	-	-
Skills for Care	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>(9)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>General funds</b>	(2,059)	6,437	(6,566)	-	(2,188)
<b>Pension reserve</b>	(1,350)	-	(627)	-	(1,977)
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<u>(3,408)</u>	<u>6,446</u>	<u>(7,202)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(4,164)</u>

**Equinox Care**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**17b Movements in funds (prior year) (continued)**

**Purposes of restricted funds**

- Fulfilling Lives. The SIG Equinox Brighton team is part of a nationwide Big Lottery initiative designed to affect positive change on several levels in the area of multiple and complex needs.
- Skills for Care. This is a programme of work related to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment.
- Community Engagement - NHS - ICB grant. This is grant funding from the Health Inequalities Small Grants Funding Programme to undertake community engagement or other similar work aiming to produce insight or reduce inequalities.

**18 Analysis of changes in net debt**

	At 1 April 2023 £'000	Cash flows £'000	At 31 March 2024 £'000
Cash at bank and in hand	727	(158)	569
Intercompany loans falling due after more than one year	<u>(1,350)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,350)</u>
Total	<u>(623)</u>	<u>(158)</u>	<u>(781)</u>

**19 Operating lease commitments**

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases on buildings are as follows for each of the following periods

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Less than one year	579	584
One to five years	<u>-</u>	<u>114</u>
	<u>579</u>	<u>698</u>

**20 Guarantees and ultimate parent undertaking**

Equinox Care, trading as SIG Equinox, is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. Social Interest Group became the sole member of Equinox Care on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014. Each member has guaranteed to pay £1 in the event that Equinox Care was wound up. Social Interest Group is the ultimate parent undertaking. Its charity registered number is 158402. Its company registered number is 9122052. Its registered office is: 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London N1 1TY.

**EQUINOX CARE**

England & Wales - Charity number 296694

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# Accounts

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# Equinox Care

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023



**Equinox**

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## Reference and Administrative details of the Charity, its Trustees and advisors

Equinox Care was established in 1986, incorporated as Drink Crisis Centre on the 23rd of March 1987, opened its first service in 1990 and changed its name to Equinox Care on the 13th of April 1999. Equinox Care joined Social Interest Group as a wholly owned subsidiary on the 1st October 2014. It now trades as SIG Equinox.

### Directors and Charity Trustees

The directors of the Charity are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law and throughout this document are collectively referred to as Trustees. The current Trustees and those that served during the year:

#### Chairman

Karl Marlowe

#### Other Trustees

Dylan Kerr

Stuart Jenkin

Jeff Loo

Claire Barton

#### Company Secretary

Michael Rutherford

#### Executive Officers

##### Group Chief Executive

Gill Arukpe

##### Senior Director of Operations

Cassie Newman (Resigned – 8<sup>th</sup>  
September 2023)

##### Director of Finance & Resources

Michael Rutherford

##### Director of People & Culture

Maria Speight

#### Registered office

1 Waterloo Gardens  
Milner Square  
London  
N1 1TY

#### Auditor

Buzzacott LLP  
130 Wood St  
London  
EC2V 6DL

#### Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc  
25 Gresham Street  
London  
EC2V 7HN

#### Solicitors

Russell Cooke LLP  
2 Putney Hill  
London  
SW15 6AB

#### DWF LLP

1 Scott Place  
2 Hardman Street  
Manchester  
M3 3AA

Company registration number

**02114430**

Charity registration number **296694**

[www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk](http://www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk)

[enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk)

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2023.

The reference and administration information set out on the previous page form part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

## Objectives

### Purposes and Aims

The objects of SIG Equinox as set out in the Articles of Association are for the public benefit:

- To assist, relieve and rehabilitate any person who is in need because of alcohol problems, other substance misuse problems, mental and physical health issues, age, learning difficulties, an involvement in the criminal justice system or a lack of appropriate housing, and to assist and relieve such persons' family, dependents and other carers who are in need as a result of that person's problems; and
- To further such other exclusively charitable purposes according to the law of England and Wales as the Trustees in their absolute discretion from time to time determine.

The Trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the Charity each year. This report looks at what the Charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The Trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the Charity has brought to the people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the Trustees ensure the Charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and planning its future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

### Activities

SIG Equinox provides personalised residential and community based health and social care services. For people who are furthest away from living independent lives. Residents and participants often have behaviours that can be challenging, forensic mental illness and mental health disorders, general mental health illness, long history of being in the criminal justice system, excluded previously from education and employment, substance and alcohol misuse and lengthy periods being homeless.

SIG Equinox staff are all trained to work in a trauma informed ways. Embrace enabling environments to ensure residents and participants are kept in the centre of what we do and how we work. Our residential services are also delivered using a psychologically informed framework. This helps ensure the people using our services achieve stability, rehabilitation, resettlement and long term recovery.

SIG Equinox's flagship service Aspinden Care home, provides the only residential service for treatment resistant adults using alcohol. We support adults who often cannot access other care homes due to their alcohol use and their associated behaviours. We use the Blue Light system and harm minimisation model to ensure the safety of the residents and staff. The heart and soul of SIG Equinox are providing hope without exclusion to all who come to them. SIG Equinox currently operates across London and in Brighton and has ambitions to grow.

## Chief Executive's Statement

With figures showing 1 in 4 adults predicted to experience a common mental health disorder, and 10% will experience depression in their lifetime, our services find themselves amid a mental health crisis. The pandemic's legacy effects have made access to primary and secondary healthcare increasingly difficult. Economic and social imbalances continue to grow with substantial increases in homelessness. The number of families and single people in temporary accommodation is rising daily.

We continue to see a rise in people referred to us who have spent long periods in hospitals, prison and being homeless. Often requiring a high degree of support for harm-reduction, reablement after long-term mental ill-health and disorders, increase in suicidal tendencies, depression, dual diagnosis, alcohol dependency, and illegal and prescription substance use.

Charities are under severe financial strain. Facing soaring energy bills and declining incomes as some grant givers and commissioners cut back against a significant increase in people needing our support and care. The recruitment issues in the sector continue to make staff retention and growth challenging as we compete to hire and retain the best people. Research shows a high percentage of the sector using their reserves to support contracted work, which is not sustainable. I am pleased to say we have not had to do this.

We have worked hard to make working at SIG Equinox a rewarding experience personally and professionally and to find the best ways to offer support to reduce the impacts of rising fuel and living costs. We kept salaries at the London and Living Wage, carried out a salary review, gave two staff pay awards and increased our bank pay hourly rate by 3%.

This year, we joined the lobby for the government to provide more help to our sector. In January, we launched a new vision and mission: to stop the inequity of access to public services and opportunities for a good home, health care, social support, and employment. We will address the imbalance through new partnership working, influencing policy change and driving local systems change to bridge gaps in provision and break down barriers.

We remain committed to supporting local authorities, health trusts and the Ministry of Justice and HMPPS in the development of solutions for people in prison and those experiencing homelessness, stepping down from hospital or returning from prison or living on the street. SIG Equinox is exceptionally skilled at finding solutions that support people who have the highest support needs, and this year, we took on an additional units of accommodation in Lewisham. We continue to secure our long-term financial stability through contract retention, growth and income diversification.

Our Housing and Maintenance Team increased rental income, helping improve our free funds to utilise and deliver new activities, programmes and service innovations. Finding ways to take the pressure off the NHS across mental health, personality disorders and substance and alcohol use remains a priority. We grew our Peer Mentoring Programme and volunteering driven by our certified peer mentoring training course funded by Health Education England. We continue to utilise trainees with lived experience across projects, focusing on people at the highest risk of suicide and self-harm, drug and alcohol overdose and disengagement with treatment services.

I look back at all our achievements across SIG Equinox and the Group during 2022/23. Not only have we supported thousands of people, but we continue to overcome the challenges we face, changing how we work to improve and enhance the quality and performance of our services and implementing new services and projects to grow and extend our impact.



Gill Arukpe, Group Chief Executive

6<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## Strategic Report

### Results and Impacts

#### SIG Equinox Services

SIG Equinox supported 289 people with diverse, complex support and health needs. Over 83% of move-ons were positive, including transferring into independent living and step-down accommodation. No residents returned to prison, and only two residents experienced unplanned returns to hospital during their time in our care.

KPI	TARGET	ACTUAL	
% positive move-ons	>85%	83.6%	Positive Move-on means people who secure independent accommodation or move into a safe location for continued support from any of our residential services.
% Unplanned return to hospital	<3%	0.7%	
% Convicted of new offence	<3%	0.0%	
% Unplanned return to prison	<3%	0.0%	

Total departures	134
Positive move-ons	112
Total clients seen	289
Unplanned return to hospital	2
Convicted of a new offence	0
Unplanned return to prison	0

### Client Transformations

#### Gary's Story

Gary, a resident at one of our Ealing services, has a history of alcohol dependence and a diagnosis of liver cirrhosis. He joined the service in 2018, after a mental health crisis and time in hospital, and needed accommodation and support in many areas. One of the main areas was alcohol dependency. Gary would spend all his benefits on the day it was paid solely on alcohol and would leave the project to drink heavily. Staff struggled to get him to stay in long enough to talk and engage him in the programs and support offered. The staff worked with his clinical team to agree on a Support Plan to adopt a different, person-centred approach to offer the help he needed to make life-changing actions. They learnt, at this stage, that he had depleted most of his savings.

Several attempts were made to support him in engaging with the specialist alcohol and drug support service RISE, but this wasn't successful, and he struggled to meet their requirements for ongoing support. Consequently, a financial agreement was put in place with the condition that staff would monitor and

advise Gary on what to spend his money on. Once in place, Gary was able to cut back on his alcohol spend and started prioritising his rent, food, and essentials.

At present, Gary has money in his savings account and drinks much less, eats more healthily and has more contact with his family than before. He is pleased the staff intervened with his clinical team as it allowed him to make the necessary changes to arrive at a better, more financially and healthy secure place. Staff have also built a good rapport with his relatives who live abroad, and they are very happy with the support offered to him. Gary is healthier and happier and understands that past choices do not define him. He now participates in activities at the project and is looking forward to one day moving back into the community.

## **Our Focus**

### **Cost of living and inflation support**

We prudently capped our fuel charges for all our accommodations in the Group before the beginning of the financial year, ensuring fuel increases would not heavily impact us before 2024. We started discussions with commissioners during the year regarding uplifts to service contracts. In conjunction with the two pay increases for frontline staff, we began creating a comprehensive remuneration strategy for the Group. SIG already pays the Living Wage in and outside of London. However, we engaged an external consultant to benchmark salaries against peer and competitor organisations. We started exploring realistic options for ongoing support for staff and people using our services, working through our EDI Ambassador Group and Staff Council.

### **Recruitment**

With thousands of Support Worker vacancies per week across the UK, we plan to attract new candidates into health and social care as a career choice. We focused on coherent recruitment, robust training programmes, onboarding processes and apprenticeships. Part of this work included building a dedicated careers microsite and implementing a New Applicant Tracking System (ATS) that went live at the end of the year to streamline the recruitment process.

### **Brand Refresh**

We undertook the brand refresh to strengthen and galvanise the Group and enhance our excellent reputation in supporting the hardest-to-reach to create positive change for people and communities. We worked with staff, residents, and participants across the Group to shape the vision of our rebranding and launched our new visual identity in June. This momentous change project supports our growth as we take on new areas of work and new subsidiaries, expanding our horizons on a public stage.

### **Theory of Change rollout**

Our newly developed Theory of Change articulates our unique approach to positively impacting the lives we support. This transformation journey focuses on three elements to make a crucial difference: identity, relationships and community. We launched the Theory of Change at our Staff Conference in October as we begin embedding it into our working methods to ensure best practice is achieved and evidenced. Learn more about our Theory of Change at [www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk](http://www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk).

### **Reimagining the way we work**

'Reimagine the way we work' is an organisation-wide review to use SIG's central resources better to maximise impact and income and improve quality whilst reducing risk. We launched several initiatives and implemented changes over the year to enhance the quality and performance of our services:

## Housing Management

We undertook a housing management review, working with an external housing consultant to understand how we continually improve our housing management function and accommodations. Alongside this, we rolled out a programme of property evaluations through the Best Practice Team, comprising site visits, surveys, and focus groups to gain insights into service and property satisfaction levels and any improvement needs. This significant piece of work is ongoing into 2023.

### Greater use of technology within our service model

We launched STARS, a new Staff Rota System, to embed the latest technology. STARS is a web-based application accessed through a desktop, laptop, or mobile phone, regardless of a user's location. The system allows frontline staff to view the calendar for their service and upcoming shifts, check rotas and search for available bank shifts, staff contacts, and service details. The application also provides driving directions and the latest news for each service. An all-staff webinar introduced the system, and resources made available on the staff intranet included 'How to' videos. We continue to develop new functionality into 2023.

### Quality and Performance

We grew our Compliance, Risk and Audit Team to develop further Risk Management, Governance, Safeguarding and Health and Safety within SIG. We launched new Quality and Performance meetings to support operational teams to focus on essential priorities and reduce duplication. Meetings provide a platform to share what is working well, what they are proud of, and where we, as a SIG community, need to improve processes, best practices, and training.

### Staff Safety

We are committed to creating the safest environment for staff. This year, we added two new modules to our staff risk management training to enhance support for the growing number of people coming to us with highly complex support and care needs. Additionally, we set up a Quality Review Group and Safeguarding Review Group to strengthen how we capture trends, concerns and learnings across the Group and ensure staff meet the expected standards of our Quality Handbook, a digital best practice guide introduced last year.

### Activity Forum

We launched our new Activity Forum, bringing together Activity Coordinators and Programme Facilitators from across the Group to look at how we consistently deliver interventions and activities. Discussions ensure the inclusion of participants, residents, and staff with a commitment to take forward initiatives. *SIG Run Club* is one such initiative.

### Property Strategy

With move-on options for residents continuing to dwindle, the Housing and Maintenance Team took on more accommodation units to provide greater opportunities for residents. Rental income increased to 36% of our revenue model to help towards our future sustainability. Our journey to becoming a registered social housing provider continues as part of our long-term ambition to buy accommodation to strengthen our income and retention of contracts and ensure we can provide long-term housing for people in the greatest need. We renamed SIG Investments to SIG Housing Trust to reflect our plans to develop different housing types, including supported housing and social homes 'for life.' We seek sponsors, developers, and financial bodies to help us achieve this.

## Significant Events

### Investors in People

SIG was awarded Investors in People, an important accreditation, particularly in supporting our growth plans. We worked over many months with staff to achieve this. We continue our Investors in People journey, using the findings from the review to shape our 3-year strategic plan starting next year. We started developing our reward and recognition strategy to ensure we make working at SIG a rewarding experience personally and professionally by offering growth and development.

### ISO90001

We received ISO9001 accreditation in January. ISO remains a necessary certificate held by SIG, assuring stakeholders that we have effective systems and processes and work to improve continuously. SIG has maintained certification since its inception.

### The Solace Centre

The Solace Centre is an out-of-hours mental health service supporting over 100 members and associates who have long and enduring mental ill-health, including schizophrenia, bipolar, anxiety and depression). The heart of Solace is combating loneliness and isolation through social inclusion and maintaining wellness and healthy lifestyles. Solace is a safe place where members support one another through lived experience, involve themselves in activities and seek assistance, advice and reassurance from staff who go the extra mile in tackling barriers to health and wellbeing.

Solace embraces member involvement, learning and development to support all the challenges and growth. Members collectively run and maintain the centre voluntarily, cleaning, gardening and donating items needed. This year, Solace was South Ealing Co Op's top cause, receiving £1,796.23 to support Member engagement activities. Members choose the weekly activities and special events they want to do, including creative art groups, mindfulness, silent discos, cooking and BBQs and helping to develop skills, confidence, purpose and self-esteem.

Access to a garden is a luxury often beyond members. However, with Awards For All Lottery funding this year, members launched a Garden Project, developing and extending the centre's garden utilising wasteland next door. Poor health and lifestyle choices are often linked with mental health. The new garden promotes healthy eating choices through vegetable growing, exploring the steps from seed to plate, and diabetes awareness and mindfulness in nature groups, enabling access for everyone. Members have also transformed the car park outside from an anti-social area to a positive, welcoming community space. The impact of the Solace Centre is awe-inspiring. In the last three years, there have been no instances of unplanned returns to hospital for its members. 100% of members surveyed this year declared they were either 'very satisfied' (87%) or 'satisfied' (13%) with the centre.

### Churchfield and Cherington Service

Churchfield and Cherington service provides supported housing and out-of-hours support for people with drug or alcohol dependency and mental ill-health. Operating across two sites, Churchfield offers supported housing for up to a year for people working towards abstinence from drugs or alcohol, and Cherington supports people abstaining from drugs and alcohol who need help to reintegrate back into the community.

This year, services negotiated funding increases with commissioners focused on overcoming barriers for residents accessing treatment services. Commissioners approved Cherington letting out an additional room as an 'in reach' service to the Ealing Substance Misuse Team (SMT) to enhance engagement and community-based treatment support for residents, generating much-needed additional income. Both services continue to support the SMT, and are working closely with the Rough Sleepers Drug and Alcohol Team (RSDAT), a newly set up team connected to Recovery Intervention Services Ealing (RISE).

More in-reach services have been developed, enabling residents to speak with nurses and dietitians and deliver groups and training on-site and more are in development, including mobile Blood-Borne Virus (BBV) testing and optician visits scheduled for later in 2023.

## **Aspinden Care Home**

Aspinden Care Home promotes residents' rights and provides support that preserves their dignity, choice, privacy, and independence. Most of Aspinden's residents have been drinking all their lives, resulting in poor memory and learning disabilities. At the heart of the service is a trauma-informed approach to reduce re-traumatising residents by understanding their needs and where their behaviour stems and helping them understand their boundaries and how to set healthy ones.

Importantly, Aspinden focus on creating a sense of identity, treating residents as individuals, ensuring they feel part of society, and not defining them by their circumstances or labels. The service's non-clinical and Asset-based approaches provide meaningful activities to empower residents, reconnect them with the community and help manage emotions, health and well-being. Members are involved in decision-making processes, activity planning in service life, daily catering, garden maintenance and sitting on interview panels for constructive feedback as part of Aspinden's recruitment strategy.

## **SWAY**

SIG Equinox Southampton Way provides supported accommodation and a recovery approach resettlement programme for men with enduring mental health support needs and drug and alcohol dependency. SWAY takes great care through human and personal touches to ensure positive and meaningful engagements with residents to keep them motivated, active and well. This year's activity calendar included in-house mindfulness, Tai Chi, art, cooking and newspaper clubs, fitness sessions, football and day trips and outings chosen by residents. In Spring, residents successfully grew their food, starting with spinach.

## **Brighton Women's Service (BWS)**

This year, BWS continued driving systems change and creating a holistic service to empower women to engage in circles of support:

BWS is a flagship project for local commissioners, achieving an 86% reduction in offending/Anti-Social Behaviour and a 71% reduction in A&E admissions. The service provides vital temporary accommodation and supports women experiencing long periods of homelessness related to domestic abuse, mental health and drug and alcohol use. The service works to offer a unique model, delivery, and approach focused on providing a trauma-informed, safe environment where women have choice, control and care in developing and addressing their needs.

## **Tackling Women's Health Inequalities**

BWS resident population have significant health inequalities. The service has focused on overcoming barriers to accessing local NHS primary and secondary healthcare services to meet residents' needs and prevent ill health and deterioration. The service has improved health screening uptake by implementing an In-reach Nursing Model. Nurse prescribers working in the District Nursing Team attend a regular drop-in set up by BWS to treat residents in-house, creating consistency and safety. Women who were less likely to agree to medical attention outside of the service and who have not done anything for years about their health have been very responsive and now engage with the nurses, who are making a significant difference to their recovery pathway. Nurses take blood, prescribe medications and even HRT, as many women at the service are menopausal or perimenopausal but have received no treatment and lack understanding. The service has plans to implement a cervical cancer screening programme next year.

## **Maintaining Community Safety**

BWS is there to provide safety. However, perpetrators and controlling agents can often target women living at the service. BWS approached the Community Safety Team (CST) to explore how they could create a safer space outside the service, working more closely with the Police. The result was BWS being part of a local pilot with social landlords to test the effectiveness of issuing Community Protection Warning Letters (CPWL). BWS is the only hostel in the region trained in the process, allowing BWS to implement restrictions to ensure community safety from disturbances. Referrals are made to issue a Community Protection Letter, which can escalate to giving a CPWL. A breach of a CPWL can lead to prosecution. To the best effect, all BWS staff have access to the tool centred on tackling perpetrator behaviour and the detrimental impact on women residing at the service. BWS has used the tool with a 100% success rate and is supporting the CST to present it and its effectiveness to hostel managers across the region to encourage uptake.

## **MARAC Procedures and Governance Review**

BWS's therapeutic model of trauma and shame-informed practice looks to positively challenge local systems and the stigma and shaming narrative for women with complex needs and risks by sharing insights and learnings to create positive female-led environments and respond to the need to restore trust in external frameworks. This year, the service strengthened its working relationship with Brighton and Hove Council's MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Co-ordination), initiating a review that demonstrated the need to update MARAC's procedures and governance on information reporting and sharing to enhance victim safeguarding and avoid re-traumatisation and serious harm. The team also presented to the Brighton and Hove Council on the impact of misrepresentation and misinformation.

## **Financial Review 2022/23**

SIG Equinox made a surplus of £6k (2021/22 - £652k deficit) at the operating profit level. This results in an unrestricted fund balance in deficit of £2,188k at 31st March 2023 (2021/22 - £2,059k). In addition, it had a restricted fund balance of £1k (2021/22 - £1k) after receipts of £9k (2021/22 - £153k) and expenditure of £9k (2021/22 - £153k).

The pensions reserve at the end of the year was £1,977k and relates to the past service deficit liability relating to the defined benefit Social Housing Pension Scheme. The triennial valuations in 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017 and 2020 resulted in member organisations being charged a levy to bring the scheme back into surplus. These triennial valuation deficit contributions are reflected in the operating costs and provisions of SIG Equinox. The charity closed its participation in this pension scheme but remains liable for an element of the deficit.

Given the wider economic environment and on-going changes and increased competition within the sector, the Trustees consider the results to be disappointing but understandable. Therefore, it is essential that moving forward our focus remains on developing new services, new funding models, effective and financially efficient models of service delivery whilst addressing the issues causing the deficit.

The principal funding sources remain Local Authority block contracts largely for our resettlement projects alongside funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS Trusts towards our work with people recovering or living with mental ill health and or personality disorders, and the work we do with preventing homelessness and homeless people. The Ministry of Justice funds our Criminal Justice Service via the prime contractor MTC Novo. The Trustees are appreciative of the funding received from its funders including those statutory commissioners for the work streams they support as well as the vital non-statutory funding received from individuals, trusts and foundations.

## Principle risks and uncertainties

SIG Equinox has a risk management strategy, which is overseen by the Trustees. The risk register is reviewed monthly by the Executive Management Team, in consultation with all managers, and subsequently by the Trustees at each quarterly Board meeting. The principal risks are that a resident or participant commits a serious act and that there is class A and/or B drug usage on our premises. This is not surprising in view of the activities undertaken by SIG Equinox. To mitigate these risks, we have robust risk management policies, a pandemic strategy and contingency plans, well trained staff, incident and near miss reporting and learning, a safeguarding officer, a clinical lead and people safe systems, testing procedures and good relationships with experts by experience and co-production with our residents and participants, responsible officers, and the police. In addition, SIG Equinox is experiencing great difficulties in procuring properties either for rent or outright purchase, given that we cannot expand at the rate of demand or that we may lose contracts.

Another significant risk is the pension deficit contributions made to TPT and to the KCC to fund the shortfall in the pension liability of the schemes. The risk is regularly reviewed to ensure any contributions are affordable and do not place a significant financial burden on the Charity.

## Reserves policy and going concern

Reserves are needed to innovate solutions for our stakeholders, (both residents, participants and commissioners) and bridge the funding gaps between spending on services and recovering these from subsidiaries by providing working capital. In addition, reserves are required to facilitate investment in fixed assets in the form of properties for leasing to subsidiaries for the provision of their services. The Trustees evaluated the commitment to future expenditure against likely future income streams and believe that a regular review of reserve levels is appropriate. SIG Equinox aim to make a small surplus for retention and reinvestment purposes, which increases the free reserves. During the year, the Trustees agreed to reduce the target for SIG Equinox to £368k. The actual free reserves, excluding the past service pension liability, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 are £2,188k in deficit (20/21 - £2,059k deficit). The Trustees will continue to review the reserves policy and position.

Actions to strengthen the financial position going forward include diversification of funding, including the growth of the business development team to secure additional funds through fundraising and securing and opening a number of new projects, as well as the closure of projects that were not financially viable. In addition, there are concerted management efforts to increase occupancy and reduce void rates and minimise the use of expensive agency staff.

After making enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that SIG Equinox has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements. SIG Equinox is considered to have a viable business plan and adequate support from the group to remain solvent for the foreseeable future. As a consequence, the Board of Trustees believe that SIG Equinox is well placed to manage its business risks successfully. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing SIG Equinox's financial statements. Whilst the Pension deficit is large, there is a robust repayment plan to reduce this over time, and that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cause significant doubt about the ability of SIG Equinox to continue as a going concern have been identified by key management personnel after taking into account the relevant facts and circumstances.

## Plans for the Future

At SIG Equinox, we pride ourselves on being a learning organisation, constantly developing and innovating to adapt to changes in our environments, and ensuring we continue to focus on delivering the best possible outcomes to the people we support. Over the next five years, our ambitions include:

Delivering **permanent, quality social homes** for people requiring longer-term support through SIG Housing Trust's ambitious property strategy, with support from key partners, benefactors and developers.

Decreasing the number of people rough sleeping, leaving hospital and prison with no accommodation by providing **excellent supported accommodation** services and **person-centred move-on** packages.

Becoming an employer of choice by developing a **Staff Academy of Learning**, ensuring all our staff feel safe, valued and invested, and adding value by enhancing our volunteering offer and increasing volunteer numbers to over 300.

Working with the NHS and Integrated Care Boards to **shift more mental health treatment and recovery services from the hospital to the community** by offering evidence-based and innovative alternative delivery models.

Deploying an External Affairs Team to ensure we make positive social change by sharing **frontline and lived experiences to have a meaningful influence on policy development** and provide opportunities for our participants and residents to be heard at the highest levels of government.

Supporting a fairer, more impactful criminal justice system by working collaboratively with HMPPS and other key partners to deliver positive resettlement outcomes. **Expanding our promising Approved Premises delivery model** run by SIG Penrose, a sister charity within the Group and demonstrating its impact on people leaving prison at the highest risk.

Identifying opportunities within the prison estate to roll out sister charity, SIG **Safe Ground's unique approach to providing visitor centres**. Influence and shape cultural change in how people in prison are supported through Safe Ground's methodology and our External Affairs Team.

Extending our specialist gender-based services to women with multiple complex needs and significant enduring trauma by building on our therapeutic model of trauma and shame-informed practice to create positive, female-led environments and responding to the need to restore trust in external frameworks and wider systems change, working through our **'I Am More Than'** Project and **Theory of Change** to break the stigma and shaming narrative for women with complex needs and risks.

Growth and development to support a minimum of 30,000 people, triple income to £60 million and continue to grow and flourish, adding **three new charities** to the Group to expand and enhance our range and offer to the people we support.

## New Business

### Complex Mental Health Supported Accommodation, Lewisham

SIG Equinox secured a new Complex Mental Health Supported Accommodation stepped service in Lewisham consisting of a high support service and three step-down properties, accommodating 29 residents. It followed a two-stage tendering process in spring/summer 2022. Mobilisation of the new service took place from January through to March 2023. It included merging contracts previously delivered by two organisations, requiring a significant TUPE process, and establishing agreements with two landlords across the four properties. The new service went live on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

## Other Group Activities

### Fundraising

We recruited a Grant Writer in the year to help build on our first-year successes. Our funding priorities remain capacity-building grants to develop and enhance our services and technology and implement our strategic ambitions and plans.

#### Irene Mensah Bursary

SIG Equinox Brighton Women's Service was again awarded the Irene Mensah Bursary for its '**I Am More Than**' artistic project at this year's Brighton Fringe Festival. The project supports women in the city experiencing homelessness. This bursary pays the registration fee in full and will share information on the events and activities on their social media.

#### NW London Cancer Screening Outreach

SIG secured a health inequalities grant from NHS NW London, NW London Integrated Care System and RM Partners West London Cancer Alliance to deliver cancer outreach activities across our NW London services. Led by our Group Clinical Lead, activities focused on understanding the barriers when accessing NHS national screening services and gathering feedback to understand the changes residents and participants would like to see. Our insights and findings were shared at an event attended by charities, community groups, Public Health and cancer specialists as part of a roundtable discussion. We plan to continue work in this area next year with further funding from the NW London Integrated Care System.

#### SIG Run Club launch

March saw the launch of SIG's first-ever Run Club. Run Club is a place for SIG Equinox staff, residents, and participants to share their journey to improved well-being. The club is made up of a mix of running abilities. Initially started as a virtual support group to share individual journeys, the group now arranges in-person meet-ups to officially organised running events and support each other's running challenges. The club hopes to start fundraising for SIG next year.

#### Health Education England

We continued our partnership with Health Education England to develop our Peer Mentoring Training Programme to support the increasing need for people with lived experience to support residents and participants in our services on their recovery journeys.

### Thank You

On behalf of SIG Equinox, we want to thank all our funders for their support. This new and vital funding has enabled us to extend our activities, launch new projects and pieces of work, and make a difference in the lives of the people we support across our services.

### Communications

Our focus this year has been on sustainability, growth and development. We made the decision to focus on quality rather than quantity of content, which meant reducing social media posting to focus on refreshing our vision, mission and brand and supporting the implementation of our Theory of Change. As part of our strategic aims to make positive social change, we also started developing plans for our own External Affairs Team to showcase our work and impact and share the lived experience and voices of the people using our services to ensure they are understood and heard.

'I am More Than' is an artistic project set up by SIG Equinox Brighton Women's Service. The project empowers women living at the service to use their creative voices to tell their communities who they are and that they are not defined by homelessness or any of the many issues that run alongside it. It aims to help women to challenge their negative beliefs about themselves and help them regain self-worth and confidence. This year, the project collaborated with Bloom Café, Brighton, a Safe Haven (St Peters) and Brighton Probation Service project. Despite local council elections taking much of the day's focus, the launch event presented the courageous artistic work of the women at the service and saw over 50 attendees, from staff and service residents to community partners, including Brighton and Hove Council's Homeless Unit, RISE domestic abuse charity, Change Grow Live, Just Life, and the project volunteer and student social worker.

## **Structure, governance and management**

SIG Equinox is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital (Number 02114430) incorporated on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1987 and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission (Number 296694) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1987.

SIG Equinox's governing instruments are its Articles of Association dated 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1987, as amended on 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2018. The sole member of SIG Equinox is Social Interest Group with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2014 and as of 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2018 the non-executive Trustees of Social Interest Group were appointed as the Trustees of SIG Equinox.

All the Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 5 to the accounts.

## **Appointment of Trustees**

The Trustees are listed on page 3. They hold office for an initial period of three years with the possibility of a second term of three years plus in exceptional circumstance where the trustee has specific skills, this can be extended by the board. The board consists of no fewer than three and no more than nine persons appointed by the members and the executive Trustees. No person under the age of 18 may be appointed as a trustee.

Trustees are recruited by the Nominations Committee using specialist recruitment agents and by advertisement. A rigorous interview process takes place, which includes residents and participants. Candidates attend a board meeting and visit projects before being confirmed in post by the Chairperson.

## **Trustee induction and training**

New Trustees must familiarise themselves with the content of the Articles of Association, their legal obligations under charity and company law, the organisational structure and its recent financial performance. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. All Trustees have participated in Safeguarding training.

## **Related parties and relationships with other organisations**

Equinox Care is a member of Social Interest Group of which it is a subsidiary. It provides all support functions, senior management and strategic guidance. The Charity is supported in its charitable objectives by all Social Interest Group companies: Penrose Options, SIG Housing Trust, Safe Ground and Pathways to Independence.

## **Remuneration policy for key management personnel**

The Group Chief Executive's remuneration is set by Social Interest Group non-executive Trustees. Their remuneration and all other staff are remunerated in accordance with a job evaluation process and market rates, which is reviewed by external consultants.

## **Policy for employment of disabled persons**

In April 2019 we became a Disability Confident Employer.

It is the Charity's policy not to discriminate against persons falling under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 for reasons of their disability whether in, or applying for, employment or in the delivery of services.

The key areas of our policy cover recruitment and employment (disabled applicants not being considered any less favourably on the ground of their disability) service delivery (disabled applicants, residents and participants not being treated less favourably on account of their disability) and information (ensuring information is accessible to all).

## **Employee information**

The Charity requires line managers to conduct one-to-one meetings with their staff on a regular basis together with an annual appraisal.

The Executive Management Team meet on a weekly basis and updates from this meeting and the monthly Senior Managers Team meeting are disseminated to the Managers' meeting and then to the individual projects' monthly staff meeting.

The Charity takes its investment in its staff's professional development seriously and aims to provide different learning opportunities. It is the Charity's aim to see staff develop and share learning so that value can be added, and staff contribute to our growth and success. We introduced a new core training programme based around the Care Certificate made up of face-to-face and e-learning to ensure all modules are covered.

The Trustees would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication during the year, in a climate that continues to be extremely challenging. We confirm that the Charity pays at least the London Living Wage to our employees working in London.

## Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees (who are also directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK GAAP).

Company Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the Group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the 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 which are reasonable and prudent
- State whether the applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on an ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees 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 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 company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the 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 the year-end was five (2020: five). The non-executive Trustees are members of the Charity, the executive trustee is not a member of the Charity and does not have any beneficial interest in it.

The Trustees' annual report, which includes the strategic report, has been approved by the board of Trustees on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and signed on their behalf.



**Dr Karl Marlowe**

**Chairman**

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Equinox Care (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of 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 charitable company 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 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. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care  
**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

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

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

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report including the strategic report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the charitable 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, the Trustees (who are also the directors 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.

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 is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

## Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant frameworks which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements.
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of representatives of management and the review of minutes of Trustee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of where management considers there was susceptibility to fraud and knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- Tested the authorisation of expenditure; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Review of the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Agreeing financial statements disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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

**Use of our report**

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Buzzacott LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hugh Swainson (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor

130 Wood Street

London

EC2V 6DL

22 December 2023

## Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Pension reserve £'000	2023 Total £'000	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Pension reserve £'000	2022 Total £'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Donations and legacies	2	7	-	-	7	6	-	-	6
Charitable activities	3	6,430	9	-	6,439	7,296	153	-	7,449
<b>Total income</b>		<b>6,437</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,446</b>	<b>7,302</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,455</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>									
Charitable activities	4a	(6,566)	(9)	135	(6,440)	(8,079)	(153)	125	(8,107)
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>(6,566)</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>(6,440)</b>	<b>(8,079)</b>	<b>(153)</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>(8,107)</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	5	<b>6</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>(777)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>(652)</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>(129)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>(777)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>(652)</b>
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	14	-	-	(762)	(762)	-	-	550	550
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(129)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(627)</b>	<b>(756)</b>	<b>(777)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>(102)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>									
Total funds brought forward		(2,059)	1	(1,350)	(3,408)	(1,282)	1	(2,025)	(3,306)
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	16a	<b>(2,188)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(1,977)</b>	<b>(4,164)</b>	<b>(2,059)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(1,350)</b>	<b>(3,408)</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 16 to the financial statements.

## Balance Sheet

	Note	£'000	2023 £'000	£'000	2022 £'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	10		<u>80</u>		<u>35</u>
			80		35
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	11	918		997	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>727</u>		<u>69</u>	
		1,645		1,066	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(2,562)</u>		<u>(1,809)</u>	
<b>Net current assets / (liabilities)</b>			<u>(917)</u>		<u>(743)</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>(837)</u>		<u>(708)</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after one year</b>	13		<u>(1,350)</u>		<u>(1,350)</u>
<b>Net liabilities excluding pension scheme provision</b>			<u>(2,187)</u>		<u>(2,058)</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme provision	14		<u>(1,977)</u>		<u>(1,350)</u>
<b>Total net liabilities</b>			<u><u>(4,164)</u></u>		<u><u>(3,408)</u></u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>	15a				
Restricted income funds			1		1
Unrestricted income funds					
General funds		(2,188)		(2,059)	
Pension reserve		<u>(1,977)</u>		<u>(1,350)</u>	
Total Unrestricted funds			<u>(4,165)</u>		<u>(3,409)</u>
<b>Total Charity funds</b>			<u><u>(4,164)</u></u>		<u><u>(3,408)</u></u>

Approved by the Trustees on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Chair - Karl Marlowe

SIG Equinox Care: A company limited by guarantee, Company Registration Number 02114430 (England and Wales)

## Cash Flow Statement

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>		
Net deficit for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(756)	(102)
Depreciation charges	21	19
Movement in long-term pension deficit liability	627	(675)
Decrease in debtors	79	34
Increase / (Decrease) in creditors	753	186
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>(538)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>		
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets	17	
Purchase of fixed assets	(83)	(13)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(66)</b>	<b>(13)</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>(551)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	69	620
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>69</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

## Notes to the Financial Statements

### 1 Accounting Policies

#### a) Statutory information

Equinox Care is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England & Wales. The registered office is 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London, N1 1TY.

#### b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the Trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

#### c) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

#### d) Going concern

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

The financial statements are drawn up on a going concern basis despite having net liabilities, including the pension reserve in deficit. The deficit of the pension scheme, however, does not result in an immediate cash flow impact on the charity. This deficit will be cleared by an agreed payment plan for pension contributions. For this reason, the Trustees are satisfied this does not affect the going concern status of the charity.

Social Interest Group will not recall the inter-company balances within the next 12 months, unless the Trustees deem that SIG Equinox can afford to repay the balances. In addition, the Trustees of both Social Interest Group and Penrose Options have expressed their intention to continue to provide support to SIG Equinox Care, including providing working capital, for the foreseeable future.

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

#### e) Income

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

Income from government and other grants, whether "capital" grants or "revenue" grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

#### f) Interest receivable

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

#### g) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund. Unrestricted funds are donations and other income received or generated for the charitable purposes.

#### h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

As at 31 March 2023

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**i) Central support costs**

Central support costs are incurred by the parent company, Social Interest Group, and are for senior management, finance, human resources, payroll, workforce development, housing income management, quality & performance and information & communication technology. These departments are vital to the smooth running of SIG Equinox's charitable activities.

**j) Operating leases**

Rental charges are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

**k) Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use. Major components are treated as a separate asset where they have significantly different patterns of consumption of economic benefits and are depreciated separately over its useful life.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Leasehold improvements - 25% straight line
- Fixtures, Fittings and Office Equipment - Straight line over the term of the lease

**l) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

**m) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of residents and participants.

**n) Creditors and provisions**

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

**o) Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

**p) Pensions**

SIG Equinox makes contributions into a defined benefit pension scheme, which is now closed to new SIG Equinox entrants, and a number of defined contribution schemes. For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2018. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and are used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

**2 Donations**

SIG Equinox has received a donation of £7,309 (2022: £6,000) from other donors.

**3 Charitable activities – supporting vulnerable people**

SIG Equinox's activities are to relieve people in need, including but not limited to those with mental health illness, those currently suffering from substance misuse or other addictive behaviour patterns, ex-offenders, the homeless, poor people, aged, disabled (whether physically or mentally) or chronically sick. This is achieved by providing support in the form of housing, or accommodation, or services including but not limited to medical, social, welfare, rehabilitative, resettlement, care services, education, training, employment, mentoring and other similar services. SIG Equinox's income is predominantly contractual income from local authorities and NHS Trusts, and rental income and service charges from residents.

4a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	3,464	-	704	4,168	5,206
Recruitment & training	-	-	188	188	132
Subsistence & travel	4	-	3	7	17
Premises Costs	989	-	26	1,015	1,428
Office running costs	96	-	45	141	180
Insurance	-	-	47	47	70
Information technology	-	-	109	109	159
Bank charges	-	-	-	-	1
Legal & Professional	-	-	62	62	48
Depreciation	33	-	-	33	38
Audit fees	-	22	-	22	14
Other Costs	642	-	6	648	814
Total expenditure 2023	<u>5,228</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>1,190</u>	<u>6,440</u>	
Total expenditure 2022	<u>6,476</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>1,615</u>		<u>8,107</u>

Equinox Care  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the year ended 31 March 2023

4b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2022 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	4,130	-	1,076	5,206
Recruitment & training	-	-	132	132
Subsistence & travel	12	-	5	17
Premises Costs	1,386	-	42	1,428
Office running costs	98	-	82	180
Insurance	-	-	70	70
Information technology	-	-	159	159
Bank charges	-	-	1	1
Legal & Professional	-	-	48	48
Depreciation	38	-	-	38
Audit fees	-	14	-	14
Other Costs	812	2	-	814
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total expenditure 2022	6,467	16	1,615	8,107
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**5 Net income / (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Depreciation	21	19
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	948	1,246
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	14	14
	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>

**6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel**

Staff costs were as follows

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Salaries and wages	2,718	3,913
Redundancy and termination costs	16	57
Social security costs	254	381
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	75	75
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	52	13
Agency costs	1,053	767
	<u>4,168</u>	<u>5,206</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2022: £nil).

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £nil (2022: nil). These were borne by the parent entity Social Interest Group.

The charity Trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2022: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2022: £nil).

No Trustees' expenses were paid or reimbursed £Nil (2022: £nil).

**7 Staff numbers**

	2023	2022
Operational	126	185
Administration	2	2
	<u>128</u>	<u>187</u>

**8 Related party transactions**

SIG Equinox was charged £1,120,591 for central office functions provided by the parent charity Social Interest Group (2022: £1,675,173).

SIG Equinox owed £2,397,305 to SIG at the year-end (2022: owed £1,745,365).

SIG Equinox was owed £333,158 from Penrose Options (wholly owned subsidiary of SIG) at the year-end (2022: owed £504,613).

SIG Equinox was owed £306 to SIG Housing Trust (wholly owned subsidiary of SIG) at the year-end (2022: owed £27,813)

**9 Taxation**

SIG Equinox is a registered charity and is exempt from Corporation Tax on its charitable income as it is spent on charitable purposes.

The Charity is part of Social Interest Group VAT registration. However, as virtually 100% of its income is exempt, the VAT on purchases is irrecoverable and therefore included in expenditure.

## 10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & Equipment £'000	Leasehold improvements £'000	Total £'000
<b>Cost of valuation</b>			
At the start of the year	154	40	194
Additions in year	9	74	83
Assets disposed during the year	(44)	(16)	(60)
At the end of the year	<u>119</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>217</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At the start of the year	144	15	159
Charge for the year	7	14	21
Assets disposed during the year	(41)	(2)	(43)
At the end of the year	<u>110</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>137</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At the end of the year	<u>9</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>80</u>
At the start of the year	<u>10</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>35</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

## 11 Debtors

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade debtors	368	283
Amounts due from Group undertakings	333	505
Other debtors	23	22
Prepayments	114	140
Accrued Income	80	47
	<u>918</u>	<u>997</u>

## 12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade creditors	187	149
Taxation and social security	74	19
Pension contributions	38	38
Other creditors	718	791
Amounts due to Group undertakings	1,047	422
Accruals	498	390
	<u>2,562</u>	<u>1,809</u>

## 13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Amounts due to Group undertakings	<u>1,350</u>	<u>1,350</u>

## 14 Pension Scheme

### The Pensions Trust - Social Housing Pension Scheme ("Scheme")

SIG Equinox participates in the Scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 500 non-associated employers. The Scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK.

For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2018. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and is used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

The Scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension scheme in the UK.

The last triennial valuation of the Scheme overall for funding purposes was carried out as at 30 September 2020. This valuation revealed a deficit of £1,560m. A Recovery Plan has been put in place with the aim of removing this deficit by 31 March 2028. The Scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore, the charity is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the Scheme. Following consultation between the Pension Trustees and Employers, a new recovery plan to recover the overall scheme deficit has been agreed. This is based on a full share of liabilities approach. This is effective from 1 April 2022.

### Number of active members in the scheme

	No.
Active	2
Deferred	91
Pensioners	45
	<hr/>

### Financial assumptions

	2023 %pa	2022 %pa
Rate of discount	5.17	3.09
Price inflation (RPI)	3.19	3.57
Price inflation (CPI)	2.75	3.19
Earnings increases	3.75	4.19
Allowance for commutation of pension for cash at retirement	75%	75%

### Other material assumptions

	Years	years
Life expectancies in retirement:		
Male currently aged 65	21.00	21.10
Female currently aged 65	23.40	23.70
Male currently aged 45	22.20	22.40
Female currently aged 45	24.90	25.20

### Present values of defined benefit obligation, fair value of assets and defined benefit liability

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fair value of plan assets	7,391	11,657
Present value of defined benefit obligation	(9,368)	(13,007)
Net defined liability to be recognised	(1,977)	(1,350)

14 Pension Scheme (continued)

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the fair value of plan assets

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Opening fair value of employer assets	11,657	11,352
Interest income	360	279
Experience on plan assets	(4,612)	118
Contributions by the employer	187	186
Withdrawals by Employees	-	-
Benefits paid and expenses	(201)	(278)
	<u>7,391</u>	<u>11,657</u>

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of defined benefit obligation

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Opening defined benefit obligation	13,007	13,377
Expenses	13	13
Interest cost	399	327
Actuarial losses / (gains)	(3,850)	(432)
Benefits paid and expenses	(201)	(278)
Closing defined benefit obligation	<u>9,368</u>	<u>13,007</u>

Defined benefit costs recognised in the statement of financial activities (SOFA)

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Expenses	13	13
Net interest expense	39	48
Defined benefit costs recognised in the SOFA	<u>52</u>	<u>61</u>
Actual return on plan assets	<u>(4,252)</u>	<u>397</u>

Net actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension scheme

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Actuarial gain / (loss) on plan obligations	3,850	432
Actuarial gain on plan assets	(4,612)	118
	<u>(762)</u>	<u>550</u>

15a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	80	-	-	80
Net current liabilities	(918)	-	1	(917)
Non-current liabilities	(1,350)	-	-	(1,350)
Defined benefit pension provision	-	(1,977)	-	(1,977)
	<u>(2,188)</u>	<u>(1,977)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(4,164)</u>

**15b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)**

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	35	-	-	35
Net current liabilities	(794)	-	1	(793)
Non-current liabilities	(1,300)	-	-	(1,300)
Defined benefit pension provision	-	(1,350)	-	(1,350)
	<u>(2,059)</u>	<u>(1,350)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(3,408)</u>

**16a Movements in funds (current year)**

	At 1 April 2022 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2023 £'000
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Fulfilling Lives	-	9	(9)	-	-
Skills for Care	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>(9)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>General funds</b>	(2,059)	6,437	(6,566)	-	(2,188)
<b>Pension reserve</b>	(1,350)	-	(627)	-	(1,977)
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<u>(3,408)</u>	<u>6,446</u>	<u>(7,202)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(4,164)</u>

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

**16b Movements in funds (prior year)**

	At 1 April 2021 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2022 £'000
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Fulfilling Lives	-	35	(35)	-	-
Corona Virus Grants	-	118	(118)	-	-
Skills for Care	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>1</u>	<u>153</u>	<u>(153)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>General funds</b>	(1,282)	7,302	(8,079)	-	(2,059)
<b>Pension reserve</b>	(2,025)	550	125	-	(1,350)
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<u>(3,306)</u>	<u>8,005</u>	<u>(8,107)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(3,408)</u>

**Purposes of restricted funds**

- Fulfilling Lives. The Brighton team is part of a nationwide Big Lottery initiative designed to affect positive change on several levels in the area of multiple and complex needs.
- Corona Virus Grants. These grants were received from Local Authorities to cover the increased costs of working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Skills for Care. This is a programme of work related to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment.

**17 Operating lease commitments**

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows for each of the following periods

	<b>2023</b>	2022
	<b>£'000</b>	£'000
Less than one year	<b>584</b>	835
One to five years	<b>114</b>	452
	<b><u>698</u></b>	<u>1,287</u>

**18 Guarantees and ultimate parent undertaking**

Equinox Care, now trading as SIG Equinox, is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. Social Interest Group became the sole member of Equinox Care on the 1 October 2014, previously all Trustees were members. Each member has guaranteed to pay £1 in the event that Equinox Care was wound up. Social Interest Group is the ultimate parent undertaking. Its charity registered number is 158402. Its company registered number is 9122052. Its registered office is: 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London N1 1TY.

**EQUINOX CARE**

England & Wales - Charity number 296694

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# Accounts

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# Equinox Care

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022



Social  
Interest  
Group

**equinox**

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## Reference and Administrative details of the Charity, its trustees and advisors

Equinox was established in 1986, incorporated as Drink Crisis Centre on the 23rd of March 1987, opened its first service in 1990 and changed its name to Equinox Care on the 13th of April 1999. It now trades as Equinox and joined the Group on the 1st October 2014.

### Directors and Charity trustees

The directors of the Charity are its trustees for the purposes of charity law and throughout this document are collectively referred to as trustees. The current trustees and those that served during the year:

#### Chairman

Karl Marlowe

#### Other trustees

Rami Bibi Resigned – 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022)

Dylan Kerr

Stuart Jenkin

Lindsey Wishart (Treasurer)

(Resigned – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022)

Jeff Loo (Appointed – 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022)

Claire Barton (Appointed – 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022)

#### Company Secretary

Michael Rutherford

#### Executive Officers

Group Chief Executive

Gill Arukpe

#### Senior Director of Operations

Cassie Newman

#### Director of Finance & Resources

Michael Rutherford

#### Director of People & Culture

Zainah Baker (Resigned – 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022)

Maria Speight (Appointed – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022)

#### Registered office

1 Waterloo Gardens  
Milner Square  
London  
N1 1TY

#### Auditor

Buzzacott LLP  
130 Wood St  
London  
EC2V 6DL

#### Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc  
25 Gresham Street  
London  
EC2V 7HN

#### Solicitors

Russell Cooke LLP  
2 Putney Hill  
London  
SW15 6AB

#### DWF LLP

1 Scott Place  
2 Hardman Street  
Manchester  
M3 3AA

Company registration number

**02114430**

Charity registration number **296694**

[www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk](http://www.socialinterestgroup.org.uk)  
[enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@socialinterestgroup.org.uk)

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2022.

The reference and administration information set out on the previous page form part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

## **Objectives**

### **Purposes and Aims**

The objects of Equinox as set out in the Articles of Association are for the public benefit:

- To assist, relieve and rehabilitate any person who is in need because of alcohol problems, other substance misuse problems, mental and physical health issues, age, learning difficulties, an involvement in the criminal justice system or a lack of appropriate housing, and to assist and relieve such persons' family, dependents and other carers who are in need as a result of that person's problems; and
- To further such other exclusively charitable purposes according to the law of England and Wales as the trustees in their absolute discretion from time to time determine.

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the Charity each year. This report looks at what the Charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the Charity has brought to the people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the Charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

## **Activities**

Equinox provides tailored support, health care and recovery for people whose needs challenge other services, living with trauma, mental illness, substance and alcohol issues, homelessness, forensic history, or a combination of these, preventing them from living fulfilled lives.

Equinox's expertise supports people excluded from other services due to substance and alcohol misuse. The heart and soul of Equinox are providing hope without exclusion to all who come to them. Equinox currently operates across London and in Brighton and has the ambition to grow.

## Chief Executive's Statement

I'm very proud of what we achieved at the Social Interest Group (SIG) this year, of which Equinox is a subsidiary member. We supported 4,400 residents and participants during the pandemic and managed to keep everyone safe, well, active and involved.

We developed a Peer Mentoring Programme and volunteer scheme to enhance the participant and resident's journey, increasing how we can support people who find participating or living in supported housing challenging. Health Education England helped fund this new program. As part of the business growth plan, we established fundraising, marketing and a sales team. They have made a difference, bringing in new money for us to trial new ways of working and increase the occupancy rate in our supported housing schemes.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) is the main reason for our purpose and why we are here. Ensuring our people have equal access to housing, employment, training, and health and social care services, no matter how complex their lives. To ensure EDI remains core in all we do, we appointed an EDI Program Manager who quickly established Ambassadors across the organisation, each with a particular interest in the protected groups. We included menopause as its crucial to health and wellbeing.

We retained existing services and for financial reasons, we have also had to make some hard decisions, most notably the closure of our detox service, Brook Drive. However, we finished the year strong and united as one team under one quality brand - SIG.

This year, the after-effects of the lockdowns and Covid-19 have become more apparent within the cohorts of people we support. We have seen dramatic rises in those referred to our services being more complex. Cases of dual diagnosis, depression and suicidal idealisation caused by poverty, isolation, and higher cost of living have increased. Alcohol and substance misuse continues to be a constant factor within the sector, and the number of women being exploited, trafficked and living in abusive and controlled environments is increasing. These impacts are why all of us at SIG Equinox strive for change, and this year, our most notable achievements were:

### Property Strategy

Our property strategy aims to increase the quality of estate management within Equinox and charge fairly for this service to ensure residents' satisfaction, particularly concerning repairs and easy access to our services. We continue to build enduring partnerships with local authorities to jointly invest in the communities where Equinox has accommodation to maximise social impact and boost economic growth.

### Social Impact and Value

Social value is vital to us as we deliver local services to local people with staff working and living in the local community. We devoted considerable time to finding ways to measure and understand the social impact and value of Equinox. Working with commissioners, we have been laying out plans for how each of our services engages more profoundly with the local area, infrastructure, and community.

### ICT Strategy

We invested in making our ICT infrastructure the most secure within the sector. The changes ensure we reduce risk on services and operations and increase visibility and assurance in Cyber-Security. We now have the flexibility to scale and evolve as our business needs change and provide a greater collaborative experience for all staff.

### People and Culture

Recruitment is the most significant risk in the sector. Finding and retaining the best staff is our challenge. We invested in our staff teams, deepening our connection to them by understanding what inspires, motivates, and hinders them from reaching their full potential. We implemented reflective practice at all levels to allow staff to openly discuss what they have seen, heard, or experienced in a safe environment. We brought in workplace apprenticeships, developed more in-house training around safeguarding and risk management, and focused on shaping the future of the leadership team by recognising and developing in-house talent. We

are proud of our career progression opportunities for frontline staff. Many have gone on to manage services and become senior leaders. We started to develop our pay and reward strategy and joined other thought leaders in raising the issue of pay in the sector. Without the support of commissioners and the central government, this will remain high risk.

### **Fundraising, Marketing and Development**

In closing, we onboarded new funders and trustees and overcame many challenges. My greatest sadness was making the difficult decision to close Brook Drive, as the Care Quality Commission's requirements meant we did not have the financial resources to continue to run it - the last remaining charity-led detox in London. Equinox ran the service for over 20 years. The closure has undoubtedly left a hole in the sector. However, where one door closes, another opens. Brook Drive, the building, has been transformed into a new and vital service launching in 2022.

I'm so proud of everyone at SIG Equinox for rising to the challenges we face each day and overcoming them together. I've seen strength and innovation across the Group, and I know the future will continue to be bright for the people we support and us.



**Gill Arukpe, Group Chief Executive**

**27<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

# Strategic Report

## Results and Impacts

In 21/22 we supported 1,027 people across 11 different services.

### Residential Services

Across SIG Equinox Care (trades as SIG Equinox) residential services, we supported 215 residents with diverse, complex support and health needs during FY2021-22. Over 75% of move-on in FY2021-22 were positive, including transferring into independent living and step-down accommodation. Only three residents experienced returns to prison or unplanned returns to hospital during their time in our care.

KPI	TARGET	ACTUAL
% Positive move-ons	>85%	75.6%
% unplanned return to hospital	<3%	0.3%
% convicted of new offence	<3%	0%
% unplanned return to prison	<3%	0%

- Positive Move on means people that secure independent accommodation or move into a safe location for continued support.
- Total Departures means every resident or Participant that has left the service that year.

Total departures	193
Positive move-ons	146
Total clients seen	1,027
Unplanned returns to hospital	3
Convicted of a new offence	0
Unplanned return to prison	0

## Client Transformations

### Ben's Story

At Equinox, we take care of physical, mental and emotional needs. Our Supported Housing Accommodations are not just places for people to lay their heads. We ensure their involvement with all we do and deliver. Ben joined Marron House on the 29th of June 2020. Initially, he was hesitant to join in as he wasn't sure what to expect. Staff built a relationship with him, encouraged, and motivated him to join in, helping him make decisions about his Support Plan and supporting him in taking informed risks. He wanted to change his physical and mental health from the start. Despite having a history of complicated health conditions, he did not let this bring him down. Ben had been diagnosed with Paranoid Schizophrenia and an Acoustic Neuroma (non-cancerous tumour) - which unfortunately led him to lose hearing in his left ear.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ben continued to attend every Well-Being Workout organised by his keyworker – socially distanced, of course. He was a regular attendee every time! Workouts included full-body workouts, including squats and resistance bands. He pushed himself to become stronger and even participated in weekly personal training sessions to further his progress. Through hard work and dedication alongside staff, his balance has improved dramatically, along with his strength, and he can now walk much longer distances without using a crutch or walking stick.

Ben is also a qualified architect, spending much time working on projects. Most recently, he has undertaken private work for his family, which he takes great pride in. He consistently presents no signs of relapse, behavioural issues or difficulty engaging with staff and fellow service participants. Ben continues to make fantastic progress and has aspirations of learning to drive and moving out into his flat. All the staff at Marron House are very proud of him.

## Our Focus

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

As part of our strategic objective to make access to health, social care, housing and employment more equitable, we appointed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Programme Manager to develop our three-year strategy working with our CEO. The plan provides a framework and roadmap to identify and address any barriers that limit access to our services. Among the strategy's broader aims and objectives is to challenge the over-representation of People of Colour within the Criminal Justice and Mental Health System. We made real strides toward our EDI plans. An internal audit during the year concluded Equinox as an "Age-Friendly Employer". We intend to promote this as a unique selling point as part of future social media campaigns and recruitment drives.

### Disability Confident

We achieved Level 2 certification as a registered disability accredited employer. Recognised as a Disability Confident organisation, we lead in changing attitudes for the better. We aim to change behaviours and cultures internally and within our external networks and communities where possible and reap the benefits of inclusive recruitment practices. We are working towards ensuring that all our properties have disabled access. As part of our property development strategy, we aim to replace or renovate to ensure we can offer equal access for disabled people over the next five years.

### Reflective Practice

Reflective Practice is essential to creating Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE). It provides a safe place for staff to share best practice and reflect on our work's emotional impact, facilitated by external facilitators. Monthly Reflective Practice continued in the year provided by Brett Grellier Psychology Services for frontline staff. Bi-monthly sessions took place for Managers, Deputy Managers, senior management team and members of the Executive Management Team. Sessions are online, enabling staff to share learning across various services and geographical locations.

### Best Practice

#### Project Boards

Our Best Practice Team introduced Project Boards to manage new services' development, mobilisation and implementation. Using a project management approach, they promote best practices ensuring all new contracts are delivered on time, within budget and achieve or surpass the required outcomes. Support services, subject matter experts, residents and participants, families and carers are engaged, and any potential or current obstacles to progress are resolved. A Project Management Coordinator provides support, chairing meetings for each Project Board and maintaining accurate records.

#### Theory of Change

We finalised our Theory of Change model and presented it to staff, stakeholders and the Board. We base it on three core elements; identity, community and relationships. We started work reviewing all the activities and interventions we deliver across our services and aligning them with these elements. We began embedding the Theory of Change concept early with staff ensuring they understood how their work aligns with these fundamental principles. We began to develop a communication cascade with our Communications Team, working with a small, already engaged group of employees who helped build our Theory of Change.

#### Quality Handbook

We completed work on our Quality Handbook, a new digital interactive Best Practice Guide for all staff across SIG Equinox for developing, mobilising and implementing new services. It has been a historic collaborative effort, involving over 115 staff and 18 workshops to codevelop the contents. We designed the handbook for

group settings with guides and best practice examples. We will continue to add more examples as they develop. We announced its launch and introduced its contents in July through an all-staff webinar, and it went live on our staff intranet in August. Our Director of Innovation and Impact facilitated workshops on using the handbook in August and September, the first on resident and participant involvement and the second on embedding PIE in local services.

### Development, Mobilisation and Implementation Handbook (DMI)

We introduced the DMI Handbook as part of an improvement plan to help maintain service delivery standards across each stage of the business development cycle, from bidding and winning business to mobilisation, implementation and ongoing performance review. The handbook breaks down each stage, how they intersect, and the sign-off processes for each.

### Quality and Performance

Across the organisation, we worked to improve Quality and Performance reporting and workflow management for Service Managers and Heads of Service. We established what information could be utilised and defined new governance standards for capturing and curating data to create larger datasets for evidence-based decision-making. We worked across the organisation to better accustom frontline staff to data entry, reporting, systems and software. We used bi-weekly Excel training and Inform 'Clinics' to work through issues and queries live on-screen.

### Business Intelligence Reporting

Implementing and using various reporting dashboards within Microsoft PowerBI against internal KPIs has been a priority. Reports will add valuable insight into our performance as contractual evidence related to compliance and our impact, providing invaluable data for bids, grants and fundraising opportunities. The improvements we are making will continue to feed into the work on PowerBI, increasing the level and standard of business intelligence across the organisation and live reporting functionality.

### **ISO9001 Accreditation**

The Social Interest Group achieved Certification with ISO 9001 following an assessment by The Certification Group in January 2022. The assessor inspected a portfolio of audits carried out across the organisation that demonstrate our commitment to the Quality output of our services. Audits were a collaborative effort, with representatives from a range of services and all departments of SIG involved. ISO 9001 is the market's most credible, robust and effective business improvement tool. SIG has held Certification since its inception.

### **Voids Management**

We implemented weekly void meetings and reviewed collaborative working approaches between our Operations, Housing and Business Intelligence teams to create a more targeted and supportive approach to those higher-risk voids, including clear escalation routes for unpicking barriers. In some instances, we reduced the number of voids from 11 to two within five weeks, significantly reducing any additional lost income. We developed a live void dashboard through Microsoft PowerBI to see the voids across the SIG and drill down into each service to provide an up-to-date picture. For the first time in many years, we filled all our beds in our Equinox Brent services and filled long-standing voids at Equinox Southampton Way (SWay). We are also utilising the opportunity with contract extensions to negotiate with commissioners to share the risk around void loss.

### **Learning Programmes Development and Roll Out**

The roll-out of our Programmes across services continued. Our in-house Programme Team designs and develops creative learning activities and interventions, supplementing them with e-learning and utilising practical exercises, toolkits and coaching approaches for residents and participants. Each targets specific needs and includes: *Resonate* is a 6-step process to understand better, manage and cope with emotions;

*Amplify* seeks to explore two key themes: motivation and employability creatively; *Insight* is a self-awareness programme combining CBT with theatre and storytelling to improve confidence and self-esteem.

Insight, Resonate and Amplify were delivered at Equinox Brent, Hammersmith and Fulham service. Our Programmes Team finalised the staff training programme ensuring all services had the opportunity to provide our programmes to a high standard with support and quality assurance. The team supported moving all our intervention toolkits and resources into one place, making it easier to share best practices to ensure quality and consistency of provision.

## **People and Culture**

### Service Managers Development Programme

Despite the pandemic, we delivered our staff development program and devised multiple ways to ensure staff could access onboarding and refresher training resources. Our development programme for Managers and Deputy Managers aims to support their roles with internal and external delivery of crucial topics. These have included Resilience, Be More Assertive, Working to a Budget, Introduction to Coaching and Time Management. These were delivered interactively online in three cohort groups of 15 per group. During Q2, we continued expanding our programme offer, which includes eight modules.

### Agency Reduction

Work in this area continues to improve and has been one of the significant success areas for 2021/22 with our colleagues in People & Culture. Agency use has dramatically dropped, and we continue to see a reduction in the use of bank staff and overtime per month, despite challenges with self-isolation due to Covid. The work with Microsoft PowerBI will be able to compare the salaried headcount, vacancy, agency, bank and overtime hours via a dashboard to track hours delivered. The end-of-year result demonstrated that savings made against permanent staff were not 100% offset by agency, bank or overtime spending. Whilst this is a positive result for our agency use from previous years, it has meant undertaking further scrutiny to understand better how services functioned safely with less than budgeted headcount and how we can utilise these approaches into 2022/23.

### Uptake of Apprenticeships and Increased Spending of the Levy Pot

With the Social Interest Group contributing to the apprenticeship levy pot, we have encouraged staff at all levels to take advantage of accredited qualifications in Health and Social Care, Operational Management and Housing. Currently, with 12 participants on their learning journeys, we hope to expand this in the coming years.

## Significant Events

### Aspinden Care Home

Aspinden Care Home changed its registration status with the CQC from a recovery project to a residential care home with nursing. In our first inspection following the changeover, we identified some areas we needed to strengthen to get the service to the new regulatory framework standards. Aspinden received its follow-up CQC visit in October, which showed we had proactively addressed all areas of initial concern. With the inclusion of the new Sales and Marketing Manager, we have seen a dramatic increase in interest and placements into Aspinden Care Home. This role has allowed the service staff to focus on the high-quality care and support of the residents. Going into Q1 2022/23, we anticipate meeting or exceeding our occupancy target and will be full by June/July 2022.

### Brook Drive Closure

After 30 years of delivering high-quality support to the people of London, we closed Brook Drive, our detoxification service - this was a tough decision after working alongside the Care Quality Commission (CQC) from July 2021 to reopen Brook Drive. However, the Board decided to close the service as the financial requirements needed under the new terms set by the CQC were unachievable. We deregistered from regulated activities with the CQC in January 2022.

### Seven Years of Fulfilling Lives South East Project

Operating across Brighton & Hove, Eastbourne and Hastings, Fulfilling Lives South East Partnership, led by Brighton Housing Trust (BHT) Sussex, is one of 12 projects across England funded by the National Lottery Community Fund until July 2022. Equinox Brighton Women's Service is one of three partners making up the South East Partnership since 2014. The service is working to increase access to mental health support for vulnerable women experiencing homelessness, addiction, poor mental health, and other complex needs.

This year marks the end of Fulfilling Lives, whose purpose is to leave a legacy of systems change in project areas, which will result in better service accessibility for residents. Whilst this work has been taking shape through the learning over the last seven years, we should not overlook the impact of our staff on individuals directly supported. We will be keeping a keen eye on the next stage of Fulfilling Lives to understand its plans to embed new approaches and evidence the need for more responsive and flexible services for people with complex needs.

### Therapeutic Yoga Pilot

Brighton Women's Service provides vital temporary accommodation and support for up to 18 women local to Brighton and Hove with high-multiple and complex needs, often experiencing long periods of homelessness. During the year, the service partnered with Brighton Yoga Foundation in a pilot to bring yoga to residents as part of their Care Plans and recovery journey. Combined with other interventions, we see its benefits, particularly with women suffering from severe substance misuse and trauma - and in ways that challenge their beliefs about themselves and self-worth.

It has taken several months to embed yoga classes and for women to feel comfortable with it and consider it an option. Almost half of our residents participated in the pilot, which is unprecedented, with participants' needs ranging from undiagnosed and untreated ADHT to learning difficulties, poor memory and movement. Residents are even practising yoga in their bedrooms. We now plan to permanently build yoga into Care and Recovery Plans as part of our Resident Engagement and Activity Programme to support physical and mental health.

## **SWAY Meet the Service and Cultural Day**

Southampton Way (SWAY) in Southwark provides supported accommodation and a recovery approach resettlement programme for adult men with enduring mental health support needs. The service held a 'meet the service and cultural day' on the 6th of September to celebrate diversity. The day acknowledged individual staff and residents, teams and external agencies that have supported and continue to support SWAY. Present were commissioners, staff from the NHS, neighbours, parents, Social Services, South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM) and other partner agencies. The service showcased activities offered by SWAY, including gardening, keeping fit, cooking and art classes. Residents and staff made presentations, and DJ and staff member Ola provided the music alongside food prepared by staff and residents, some of which came from the SWAY garden. Residents were integral to the event planning, preparation, and implementation.

## Financial Review 2021/22

Equinox made a deficit of £652k (2020/21 - £143k surplus) at the operating profit level before a past service deficit pension payment of £125k (2020/21 - £160k). This results in an unrestricted fund balance in deficit of £2,059k at 31st March 2022 (2020/21 - £1,282k). In addition, it had a restricted fund balance of £1k (2020/21 - £1k) after receipts of £153k (2020/21 - £139k) and expenditure of £153k (2020/21 - £139k).

The pensions reserve at the end of the year was £386k and relates to the past service deficit liability relating to the defined benefit Social Housing Pension Scheme. The triennial valuations in 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017 and 2020 resulted in member organisations being charged a levy to bring the scheme back into surplus. These triennial valuation deficit contributions are reflected in the liabilities of Equinox. The charity closed its participation in this pension scheme but remains liable for an element of the deficit.

Given the wider economic environment and on-going changes and increased competition within the sector, the trustees consider the results to be disappointing but understandable. Therefore, it is essential that moving forward our focus remains on developing new services, new funding models, effective and financially efficient models of service delivery whilst addressing the issues causing the deficit.

The principal funding sources remain Local Authority block contracts largely for our resettlement projects alongside funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS Trusts towards our work with people recovering or living with mental ill health and or personality disorders, and the work we do with preventing homelessness and homeless people. The Ministry of Justice funds our Criminal Justice Service via the prime contractor MTC Novo. The trustees are appreciative of the funding received from its funders including those statutory commissioners for the work streams they support as well as the vital non-statutory funding received from individuals, trusts and foundations.

### Principle Risks and Uncertainties

Equinox has a risk management strategy, which is overseen by the trustees. The risk register is reviewed monthly by the Executive Management Team, in consultation with all managers, and subsequently by the trustees at each quarterly Board meeting. The principal risks are that a resident or participant commits a serious act and that there is class A and/or B drug usage on our premises. This is not surprising in view of the activities undertaken by Equinox. To mitigate these risks, we have robust risk management policies, a pandemic strategy and contingency plans, well trained staff, incident and near miss reporting and learning, a safeguarding officer, a clinical lead and people safe systems, testing procedures and good relationships with experts by experience and co-production with our residents and participants, responsible officers, and the police. In addition, Equinox is experiencing great difficulties in procuring properties either for rent or outright purchase, given that we cannot expand at the rate of demand or that we may lose contracts.

Another significant risk is the pension deficit contributions made to TPT and to the KCC to fund the shortfall in the pension liability of the schemes. The risk is regularly reviewed to ensure any contributions are affordable and do not place a significant financial burden on the Charity.

### Reserves Policy and Going Concern

Reserves are needed to innovate solutions for our stakeholders, (both residents, participants and commissioners) and bridge the funding gaps between spending on services and recovering these from subsidiaries by providing working capital. In addition, reserves are required to facilitate investment in fixed assets in the form of properties for leasing to subsidiaries for the provision of their services. The trustees evaluated the commitment to future expenditure against likely future income streams and believe that a regular review of reserve levels is appropriate. Equinox aim to make a small surplus for retention and reinvestment purposes, which increases the free reserves. The target for Equinox is £500k. The actual free reserves, excluding the past service pension liability, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 are £2,058k in deficit (20/21 - £1,281k deficit). The trustees will continue to review the reserves policy and position.

**Equinox Care**  
**Trustee report**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2022**

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Actions to strengthen the financial position going forward include diversification of funding, including the growth of the business development team to secure additional funds through fundraising and securing and opening a number of new projects, as well as the closure of projects that were not financially viable. In addition, there are concerted management efforts to increase occupancy and reduce void rates and minimise the use of expensive agency staff.

After making enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that Equinox has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements. Equinox is considered to have a viable business plan and adequate support from the group to remain solvent for the foreseeable future. As a consequence, the Board of Trustees believe that Equinox is well placed to manage its business risks successfully. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing Equinox's financial statements. Whilst the Pension deficit is large, there is a robust repayment plan to reduce this over time, and that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cause significant doubt about the ability of Equinox to continue as a going concern have been identified by key management personnel after taking into account the relevant facts and circumstances.

## Plans for the Future

Our *Making Change, Changing Lives* three-year strategy ends in 2023. As we enter 2022/23, we will begin to map out the next 3-5 years to ensure we continue to meet our next five strategic objectives and change the lives of those we support. We are reimagining how we work and our long-term financial sustainability, putting equity, diversity and inclusivity at the centre for the people we serve and our staff. We will remain ambitious for our participants and residents with our growth strategy and transparent in our work. We wish to extend our geographical footprint and will develop pilots and new ways of working, delivering new services wherever possible.

The areas of health and social care continue to transform. Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) go live in 2022. We will invest time and resources to understand their needs as their strategies develop and work with them and other commissioners to find effective solutions to service gaps. Our ambitions for next year include focusing energy and resources on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda, including completing an all-staff strategy consultation. Priorities are to understand any disparities in experience and accessing our services to ensure we are inclusive. We will audit our staff, residents and participants' demographic profiles to address underrepresented cohorts and provide equitable access to suitable housing, health, training and employment options.

We will continue to work with commissioners and local authorities to grow and develop our service provision to adapt to the increasingly complex needs of the most vulnerable people with the highest needs. Alcohol and substance misuse remain among the UK's most destructive and costly addictive behaviours. Due to demand, we continue to look for regional opportunities to support people in crisis who require stabilisation and recovery from alcohol misuse, especially where there is resistance to change and an interest in the relationship between alcohol and dementia; Korsakoff, and other mental health illnesses and disorders. Aspinden Care Home in London is one of our services for people resistant to changing their alcohol use. Its unique model provides high-level specialised nursing care and supports Care Quality Commission standards. It uses a harm-reduction model for change-resistant drinkers to aid their recovery and improve health and wellbeing and is a service we want to replicate and scale.

Our interests remain to expand our services for women and develop meaningful services to stop all forms of violence, exploitation, and trauma inflicted upon women. Our focus next year includes staff training on trauma-informed practice, shame awareness and sharing the learning from our Fulfilling Lives South East Partnership, which ended this year. Moving towards stabilisation assessment will be part of our focus to ensure women with specific vulnerabilities and complex needs who do not engage well learn to trust and build sustainable support circles.

We are increasing our capacity to improve and develop our business intelligence to strengthen the quality and analysis of outcomes data compliance and ensure a cohesive approach to understand any disparities to deliver fair outcomes for staff, participants and residents. We will continue to utilise the opportunity with contract extensions to negotiate with commissioners to share the risk around void loss, aiming for a significant contribution.

We will continue to bring lived experience into our service offering by building on our Peer Support Model as part of our Volunteering Programme. Doing so will be a crucial enabler in facilitating the personal growth of our residents and participants and inspiring and motivating them to get involved in activities such as seeking employment and developing independent living skills. Due to the rising cost of living, we are increasingly aware of the financial struggles going into 2022/23, including our staff members. We have worked hard to ensure a 3% pay increase for all staff next year, but we want to do more to help address our staff reward and recognition strategy. As a well-trusted and innovative third-sector organisation, we will continue to strengthen our offering and footprint within the health and social care sector.

## **New Business**

### **New Sales and Marketing Manager**

We recruited a new post within our Communications and Marketing Team. The Sales and Marketing Manager's focus is to promote and sell our full range of residential and community care services and ensure these meet their revenue and occupancy targets. Much of their time requires working with hospitals, local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and broader to generate new leads and secure placements. This new post joined in January 2022 and has already helped provide greater oversight and support with referral pathways working closely with Service Managers and partner agencies and increasing awareness of our voids resulting in a reduction.

### **Commissioner Engagement Events**

SIG Equinox and SIG reviewed how we interacted with commissioners of drugs and alcohol services during the subsequent waves of covid and launched a series of online Open Days during December. We designed these events to properly engage the audience in real-time 'open' discussion. They allowed us to meet those interested in the service, answer questions on a wide range of topics. The event concluded with an audience Q&A session and networking to explore opportunities for joined-up work. The feedback was excellent from all that attended, and it is a model we intend to replicate across other service provisions, targeting commissioners in an informative and interactive way.

### **Equinox Lewisham**

Having secured an extension until March 2022 in the first half of the year, Lewisham Council proposed a further two-year extension to the service until March 2024. We worked closely with Lewisham over this period on a property strategy, beginning with transferring our service at New Cross Road into an 8-bed property in Brockley. Fitted to a higher standard and with lower rents, we believe it will offer better quality and value of service to our residents and commissioners. The council remain keen to partner with us on future projects.

## **Fundraising**

Having recruited a Head of Fundraising at the beginning of the year, we achieved a 40% win rate across fundraising, with 1 in 2 large grant requests being successful. We now have a pool of committed high-value donors, including Health Education England. We seek to continue to grow this and bring in new donors. Our funding priorities remain capacity-building grants to develop and enhance our services and technology and implement our strategic ambitions and plans.

### **Lottery Awards for All Funding**

We secured a grant for social inclusion by expanding and transforming the Solace Centre's back garden to allow more visitors and support new nature-based interventions and activities. The Solace Centre is a Mental Health Resource that receives referrals from partnerships with NHS mental health teams, GPs (social prescribing), The Probation Service and other charities. Awards for All will help accommodate more members and raise beds for community gardening, food-growing projects, cooking and nutrition workshops, gardening tools, and weatherproof storage. External contractors alongside Solace's Gardening Group will all help with the makeover.

### **Coop Local Community Fund**

We approached the Coop Community Foundation, which selected Equinox for their local community fund this year. Coop members will be raising funds over the year for the Solace Centre to go towards digital inclusion equipment and IT training. We plan to train community members struggling with mental health and social isolation to use digital devices, stay connected, and access online public services.

## Thank You

On behalf of Equinox, we want to thank all our funders for their support. This new and vital funding has enabled us to extend our activities, launch new projects and pieces of work, and make a difference in the lives of the people we support across our services.

## Communications

### Webinars

This year, we continued with quarterly staff webinars, focusing on strategy and quarterly updates, led by the Executive Management Team members. Additional webinars took place updating staff on significant issues affecting the business, including the closure of Brook Drive and staff consultations. We also used webinars to support staff engagement linked to our new EDI Ambassador Scheme and Support Groups hosting webinars on race, disability, menopause and LGBTQI+.

### The SIG Awards

The SIG Honours Awards is an annual ceremony reflecting the year that recognises individuals and teams for contributing to the SIG and making it what it is today. As a member of the Social Interest Group, the event is open to all Equinox staff, residents and participants. Last year's event was virtual due to covid restrictions, but we were able to host the event in London in March of this year. We screened a short film on our achievements and provided a buffet lunch. We included a networking session as part of the event programme. There were many deserving nominations, and because of this, we extended the categories, including Going the Extra Mile, Coaching Champion, Healthy Living Awards and a Social Value and Community Award. A CEO Award is a discretionary award chosen and presented by Gill Arukpe, Group CEO, for people that have particularly stood out to her within the year.

### World Mental Health Day

We continued on the success of the first online Tea & Talks, aimed at providing staff with a safe space to share experiences and information and discuss their mental wellbeing. In October, we held an organisation-wide Tea & Talk to mark World Mental Health Day. Staff, residents and participants from various services and the central office came together and had a lively discussion and shared experiences. Amongst attendees was our Clinical Lead Muriel Gutu, who advised on managing mental health. Participants and residents were in attendance from several services. They duly participated in the discussions, offering candid and insightful observations on mental health. The session closed with five minutes of mindfulness.

### Black History Month

Our Ealing-based service Marron House displayed articles on inspirational figures from the black community and had a focused discussion over food bringing everyone in the house together and educating them on subjects like black history. Not everyone at the service has family in their lives. So the service tries to have at least one monthly engagement event to foster a sense of community. Guests included Recovery Workers from other local services. Our Brent service at the Mall celebrated with a lunch preceded by discussions on the origins and history of Black History Month.

Celebrations at St. Gabriel's, another of our Brent services, embraced the significance of dance, food, games and music in uplifting the culture and as a coping mechanism. Discussions offered different perspectives about black history and culture. Staff read the achievements of inventors, activists and positive role models through the centuries and showcased these on a poster board created by residents, participants and staff. There was also time to pause and remember staff, residents and participants who shared BHM last year and acknowledge those who have now transitioned.

## Social Media Review

We continued to focus on growing our social media presence and increasing activity to showcase our work, events and activities.

PLATFORM	APRIL 2021 Followers	MARCH 2022 Followers
Facebook	718	1,450
Twitter	337	459
LinkedIn	1,001	1,187
Instagram	108	135

Key achievements over the year:

- Grew LinkedIn following by 18.5%
- Grew Twitter following by 36.2%
- Doubled our Facebook followers

## Structure, Governance and Management

Equinox is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital (Number 02114430) incorporated on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1987 and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission (Number 296694) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1987.

Equinox's governing instruments are its Articles of Association dated 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1987, as amended on 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2018. The sole member of Equinox is the Social Interest Group with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2014 and as of 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2018 the non-executive trustees of the Social Interest Group were appointed as the trustees of Equinox.

All the trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 5 to the accounts.

## Appointment of Trustees

The trustees are listed on page 3. They hold office for an initial period of three years with the possibility of a second term of three years plus in exceptional circumstance where the trustee has specific skills, this can be extended by the board. The board consists of no fewer than three and no more than nine persons appointed by the members and the executive trustees. No person under the age of 18 may be appointed as a trustee.

Trustees are recruited by the Nominations Committee using specialist recruitment agents and by advertisement. A rigorous interview process takes place, which includes residents and participants. Candidates attend a board meeting and visit projects before being confirmed in post by the Chairperson.

## Trustee Induction and Training

New trustees must familiarise themselves with the content of the Articles of Association, their legal obligations under charity and company law, the organisational structure and its recent financial performance. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. All trustees have participated in Safeguarding training.

## Related Parties and Relationships with other Organisations

Equinox is a member of the Social Interest Group of which it is a subsidiary. It provides all support functions, senior management and strategic guidance. The Charity is supported in its charitable objectives by all Social Interest Group companies: Equinox Care, Penrose Options, SIG Investments and Pathways to Independence.

## Remuneration Policy for Key Management Personnel

The Group Chief Executive's remuneration is set by the Social Interest Group non-executive trustees. Their remuneration and all other staff are remunerated in accordance with a job evaluation process and market rates, which is reviewed by external consultants.

## Policy for Employment of Disabled Persons

In April 2019 we became a Disability Confident Employer.

It is the Charity's policy not to discriminate against persons falling under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 for reasons of their disability whether in, or applying for, employment or in the delivery of services.

The key areas of our policy cover recruitment and employment (disabled applicants not being considered any less favourably on the ground of their disability) service delivery (disabled applicants, residents and participants not being treated less favourably on account of their disability) and information (ensuring information is accessible to all).

## Employee Information

The Charity requires line managers to conduct one-to-one meetings with their staff on a regular basis together with an annual appraisal.

The Executive Management Team meet on a weekly basis and updates from this meeting and the monthly Senior Managers Team meeting are disseminated to the Managers' meeting and then to the individual projects' monthly staff meeting.

The Charity takes its investment in its staff's professional development seriously and aims to provide different learning opportunities. It is the Charity's aim to see staff develop and share learning so that value can be added, and staff contribute to our growth and success. We introduced a new core training programme based around the Care Certificate made up of face-to-face and e-learning to ensure all modules are covered.

The trustees would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication during the year, in a climate that continues to be extremely challenging. We confirm that the Charity pays at least the London Living Wage to our employees working in London.

## Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK GAAP).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the Group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the 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 which are reasonable and prudent
- State whether the applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on an ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

**Equinox Care**  
**Trustee report**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2022**

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The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees 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 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 company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the 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 the year-end was five (2020: five). The non-executive trustees are members of the Charity, the executive trustee is not a member of the Charity and does not have any beneficial interest in it.

The trustees' annual report, which includes the strategic report, has been approved by the board of trustees on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and signed on their behalf.



**Dr Karl Marlowe**  
**Chairman**

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Equinox Care (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of 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 charitable company 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 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. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report including the strategic report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the charitable 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, the trustees (who are also the directors 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.

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 is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant frameworks which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect

## Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

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on the financial statements.

- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of representatives of management and the review of minutes of Trustee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of where management considers there was susceptibility to fraud and knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- Tested the authorisation of expenditure; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Review of the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Agreeing financial statements disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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

### Use of our report

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



Hugh Swainson (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL

01 December 2022

Equinox Care  
Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)  
For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Pension reserve £'000	2022 Total £'000	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Pension reserve £'000	2021 Total £'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Donations and legacies	2	6	-	-	6	1	-	-	1
Charitable activities	3	7,296	153	-	7,449	8,131	139	-	8,270
<b>Total income</b>		<b>7,302</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,455</b>	<b>8,132</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,271</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>									
Charitable activities	4a	(7,954)	(153)	-	(8,107)	(7,989)	(139)	-	(8,128)
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>(7,954)</b>	<b>(153)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(8,107)</b>	<b>(7,989)</b>	<b>(139)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(8,128)</b>
<b>Net (expenditure) / income for the year</b>	5	<b>(652)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(652)</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>143</b>
Transfers between funds		(125)	-	125	-	(160)	-	160	-
<b>Net (expenditure) / income before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>(777)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>(652)</b>	<b>(17)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>143</b>
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	14	-	-	550	550	-	-	(1,665)	(1,665)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(777)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>(102)</b>	<b>(17)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,505)</b>	<b>(1,522)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>									
Total funds brought forward		(1,282)	1	(2,025)	(3,306)	(1,265)	1	(520)	(1,784)
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	16a	<b>(2,059)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(1,350)</b>	<b>(3,408)</b>	<b>(1,282)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(2,025)</b>	<b>(3,306)</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 16 to the financial statements.

Equinox Care  
Balance Sheet  
As at 31 March 2022

	Note	£'000	2022 £'000	£'000	2021 £'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	10		<u>35</u>		<u>42</u>
			35		42
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	11	997		1,031	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>69</u>		<u>620</u>	
		1,066		1,651	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(1,809)</u>		<u>(1,624)</u>	
<b>Net current assets / (liabilities)</b>			<u>(743)</u>		<u>27</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>(708)</u>		<u>69</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after one year</b>	13		<u>(1,350)</u>		<u>(1,350)</u>
<b>Net liabilities excluding pension scheme provision</b>			<u>(2,058)</u>		<u>(1,281)</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme provision	14		<u>(1,350)</u>		<u>(2,025)</u>
<b>Total net liabilities</b>			<u>(3,408)</u>		<u>(3,306)</u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>	15a				
Restricted income funds			1		1
Unrestricted income funds					
General funds		(2,059)		(1,282)	
Pension reserve		<u>(1,350)</u>		<u>(2,025)</u>	
Total Unrestricted funds			<u>(3,409)</u>		<u>(3,307)</u>
<b>Total Charity funds</b>			<u>(3,408)</u>		<u>(3,306)</u>

Approved by the trustees on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and signed on their behalf by



Dr Karl Marlowe  
Chairman

Equinox Care  
Cashflow statements  
For the year ended 31 March 2022

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	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>		
Net (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(102)	(1,522)
Depreciation charges	19	21
Movement in long-term pension deficit liability	(675)	1,505
Decrease in debtors	34	492
Increase / (Decrease) in creditors	186	(45)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>(538)</b>	<b>451</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>		
Purchase of fixed assets	(13)	(19)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(13)</b>	<b>(19)</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>	<b>(551)</b>	<b>432</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	<hr/> <b>620</b>	<hr/> <b>188</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<hr/> <b>69</b> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>620</b> <hr/>

## 1 Accounting Policies

### a) Statutory information

Equinox is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England & Wales. The registered office is 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London, N1 1TY.

### b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

### c) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### d) Going concern

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

The financial statements are drawn up on a going concern basis despite having net liabilities, including the pension reserve in deficit. The deficit of the pension scheme, however, does not result in an immediate cash flow impact on the charity. This deficit will be cleared by an agreed payment plan for pension contributions. For this reason, the trustees are satisfied this does not affect the going concern status of the charity.

The Social Interest Group will not recall the inter-company balances within the next 12 months, unless the Trustees deem that Equinox can afford to repay the balances. In addition, the trustees of both Social Interest Group and Penrose Options have expressed their intention to continue to provide support to Equinox Care, including providing working capital, for the foreseeable future.

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

### e) Income

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

Income from government and other grants, whether "capital" grants or "revenue" grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**f) Interest receivable**

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

**g) Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund. Unrestricted funds are donations and other income received or generated for the charitable purposes.

**h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**i) Central support costs**

Central support costs are incurred by the parent company, Social Interest Group, and are for senior management, finance, human resources, payroll, workforce development, housing income management, quality & performance and information & communication technology. These departments are vital to the smooth running of Equinox's charitable activities.

**j) Operating leases**

Rental charges are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

**k) Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use. Major components are treated as a separate asset where they have significantly different patterns of consumption of economic benefits and are depreciated separately over its useful life.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Fixtures, fittings and office equipment – 25% straight line
- Leasehold improvements – Straight line over the term of the lease

**l) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

**m) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of residents and participants.

**n) Creditors and provisions**

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

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**o) Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

**p) Pensions**

Equinox makes contributions into a defined benefit pension scheme, which is now closed to new Equinox entrants, and a number of defined contribution schemes. For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2018. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and are used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

**2 Donations**

Equinox has received a donation of £6,000 (2021: £1,000) from other donors.

**3 Charitable activities – supporting vulnerable people**

Equinox's activities are to relieve people in need, including but not limited to those with mental health illness, those currently suffering from substance misuse or other addictive behaviour patterns, ex-offenders, the homeless, poor people, aged, disabled (whether physically or mentally) or chronically sick. This is achieved by providing support in the form of housing, or accommodation, or services including but not limited to medical, social, welfare, rehabilitative, resettlement, care services, education, training, employment, mentoring and other similar services. Equinox's income is predominantly contractual income from local authorities and NHS Trusts, and rental income and service charges from residents.

4a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2022 Total £'000	2021 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	4,130	-	1,076	5,206	5,458
Recruitment & training	-	-	132	132	81
Subsistence & travel	12	-	5	17	18
Premises Costs	1,386	-	42	1,428	1,376
Office running costs	98	-	82	180	144
Insurance	-	-	70	70	49
Information technology	-	-	159	159	124
Bank charges	-	-	1	1	-
Legal & Professional	-	-	48	48	19
Depreciation	38	-	-	38	33
Audit fees	-	14	-	14	19
Other Costs	812	2	-	814	807
Total expenditure 2022	<u>6,476</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>1,615</u>	<u>8,107</u>	
Total expenditure 2021	<u>6,864</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>1,245</u>		<u>8,128</u>

**4b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)**

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2021 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	4,603	-	855	5,458
Recruitment & training	-	-	81	81
Subsistence & travel	13	-	5	18
Premises Costs	1,334	-	42	1,376
Office running costs	82	-	62	144
Insurance	-	-	49	49
Information technology	-	-	124	124
Bank charges	-	-	-	-
Legal & Professional	-	-	19	19
Depreciation	33	-	-	33
Audit fees	-	19	-	19
Other Costs	799	-	8	807
<b>Total expenditure 2021</b>	<b>6,864</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>8,128</b>

## 5 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Depreciation	19	21
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	1,246	1,298
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	14	12
	<u>14</u>	<u>12</u>

## 6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Salaries and wages	3,913	4,184
Redundancy and termination costs	57	–
Social security costs	381	389
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	75	97
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	13	30
Agency costs	767	758
	<u>5,206</u>	<u>5,458</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2021: £nil).

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £nil (2021: nil). These were borne by the parent entity Social Interest Group.

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2021: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2021: £nil).

No trustees' expenses were paid or reimbursed £Nil (2021: £nil).

## 7 Staff numbers

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Operational	185	164
Administration	2	2
	<u>187</u>	<u>166</u>

## 8 Related party transactions

Equinox was charged £1,675,173 for central office functions provided by the parent charity Social Interest Group (2021: £1,354,650).

Equinox owed £1,745,365 to SIG at the year-end (2021: owed £1,648,148).

Equinox was owed £504,613 from Penrose Options at the year-end (2021: owed £378,490).

Equinox owed £27,813 to SIG Investments at the year-end (2021: £106,099)

## 9 Taxation

Equinox is a registered charity and is exempt from Corporation Tax on its charitable income as it is spent on charitable purposes.

The Charity is part of the Social Interest Group VAT registration. However, as virtually 100% of its income is exempt, the VAT on purchases is irrecoverable and therefore included in expenditure.

## 10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & Equipment £'000	Leasehold improvements £'000	Total £'000
<b>Cost of valuation</b>			
At the start of the year	154	27	181
Additions in year	-	13	13
At the end of the year	154	40	194
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At the start of the year	128	11	139
Charge for the year	16	4	20
At the end of the year	144	15	159
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At the end of the year	10	25	35
At the start of the year	26	16	42

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

## 11 Debtors

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Trade debtors	283	400
Amounts due from Group undertakings	505	378
Other debtors	22	29
Prepayments	140	71
Accrued Income	47	153
	997	1,031

**12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Trade creditors	149	436
Taxation and social security	19	124
Pension contributions	38	40
Other creditors	791	399
Amounts due to Group undertakings	422	404
Accruals	390	221
	<u>1,809</u>	<u>1,624</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year**

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Amounts due to Group undertakings	<u>1,350</u>	<u>1,350</u>

**14 Pension Scheme**

**The Pensions Trust – Social Housing Pension Scheme (“Scheme”)**

Equinox participates in the Scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 500 non-associated employers. The Scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK.

For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2018. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and is used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

The Scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension scheme in the UK.

The last triennial valuation of the Scheme overall for funding purposes was carried out as at 30 September 2020. This valuation revealed a deficit of £1,560m. A Recovery Plan has been put in place with the aim of removing this deficit by 31 March 2028. The Scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore, the charity is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the Scheme. Following consultation between the Pension Trustees and Employers, a new recovery plan to recover the overall scheme deficit has been agreed. This is based on a full share of liabilities approach. This is effective from 1 April 2022.

14 Pension Scheme (continued)

Number of active members in the scheme

	No.
Active	3
Deferred	95
Pensioners	44

Financial assumptions

	2022 %pa	2021 %pa
Rate of discount	3.09	2.47
Price inflation (RPI)	3.57	3.28
Price inflation (CPI)	3.19	2.86
Earnings increases	4.19	3.86
Allowance for commutation of pension for cash at retirement	75%	75%

Other material assumptions

	Years	years
Life expectancies in retirement:		
Male currently aged 65	21.10	21.60
Female currently aged 65	23.70	23.50
Male currently aged 45	22.40	22.90
Female currently aged 45	25.20	25.10

Present values of defined benefit obligation, fair value of assets and defined benefit liability

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Fair value of plan assets	11,657	11,352
Present value of defined benefit obligation	(13,007)	(13,377)
Net defined liability to be recognised	(1,350)	(2,025)

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the fair value of plan assets

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Opening fair value of employer assets	11,352	10,278
Interest income	279	243
Experience on plan assets	118	872
Contributions by the employer	186	183
Withdrawals by Employees	-	-
Benefits paid and expenses	(278)	(224)
	11,657	11,352

14 Pension Scheme (continued)

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of defined benefit obligation

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Opening defined benefit obligation	13,377	10,798
Current service cost	-	-
Expenses	13	13
Interest cost	327	253
Contributions by members	-	-
Withdrawals by Employees	-	-
Actuarial losses / (gains)	(432)	2,537
Benefits paid and expenses	(278)	(224)
Closing defined benefit obligation	<u>13,007</u>	<u>13,377</u>

Defined benefit costs recognised in the statement of financial activities (SOFA)

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Current service cost	-	-
Expenses	13	13
Net interest expense	48	10
Defined benefit costs recognised in the SOFA	<u>61</u>	<u>23</u>
Actual return on plan assets	<u>397</u>	<u>1,115</u>

Net actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension scheme

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Actuarial gain / (loss) on plan obligations	432	(2,537)
Actuarial gain on plan assets	118	872
	<u>550</u>	<u>(1,665)</u>

15a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	35	-	-	35
Net current liabilities	(794)	-	1	(793)
Non-current liabilities	(1,300)	-	-	(1,300)
Defined benefit pension provision	-	(1,350)	-	(1,350)
	<u>(2,059)</u>	<u>(1,350)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(3,408)</u>

**15b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)**

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	42	-	-	42
Net current liabilities	(24)	-	1	(23)
Non-current liabilities	(1,300)	-	-	(1,300)
Defined benefit pension provision	-	(2,025)	-	(2,025)
	<u>(1,282)</u>	<u>(2,025)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(3,306)</u>

**16a Movements in funds (current year)**

	At 1 April 2021 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2022 £'000
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Fulfilling Lives	-	35	(35)	-	-
Corona Virus Grants	-	118	(118)	-	-
Skills for Care	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>1</u>	<u>153</u>	<u>(153)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>General funds</b>	<u>(1,282)</u>	<u>7,455</u>	<u>(8,107)</u>	<u>(125)</u>	<u>(2,059)</u>
<b>Pension reserve</b>	<u>(2,025)</u>	<u>550</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>(1,350)</u>
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<u>(3,306)</u>	<u>8,158</u>	<u>(8,260)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(3,408)</u>

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

**16b Movements in funds (prior year)**

	At 1 April 2020 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2021 £'000
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Fulfilling Lives	-	125	(125)	-	-
Corona Virus Grants	-	14	(14)	-	-
Skills for Care	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>(139)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>General funds</b>	<b>(1,265)</b>	<b>8,271</b>	<b>(8,128)</b>	<b>(160)</b>	<b>(1,282)</b>
<b>Pension reserve</b>	<b>(520)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,665)</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>(2,025)</b>
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<b>(1,784)</b>	<b>8,410</b>	<b>(9,932)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(3,306)</b>

**Purposes of restricted funds**

A. Fulfilling Lives. The Equinox Brighton team is part of a nationwide Big Lottery initiative designed to affect positive change on several levels in the area of multiple and complex needs.

B. Corona Virus Grants. These grants were received from Local Authorities to cover the increased costs of working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

C. Skills for Care. This is a programme of work related to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment.

**17 Operating lease commitments**

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows for each of the following periods

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Less than one year	835	960
One to five years	452	509
Over five years	-	22
	<b>1,287</b>	<b>1,491</b>

**18 Guarantees and ultimate parent undertaking**

Equinox is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. The Social Interest Group became the sole member of Equinox on the 1 October 2014, previously all trustees were members. Each member has guaranteed to pay £1 in the event that Equinox was wound up. Social Interest Group is the ultimate parent undertaking. Its charity registered number is 158402. Its company registered number is 9122052. Its registered office is: 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London N1 1TY.

**EQUINOX CARE**

England & Wales - Charity number 296694

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# Accounts

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Charity registered number 296694  
Company registration number 2114430

# Equinox Care

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

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## Reference and Administrative details of the Charity, its trustees and advisors

Equinox was established in 1986, incorporated as Drink Crisis Centre on the 23rd of March 1987, opened its first service in 1990 and changed its name to Equinox Care on the 13th of April 1999. It now trades as Equinox and joined the Group on the 1st October 2014.

### Directors and Charity trustees

The directors of the Charity are its trustees for the purposes of charity law and throughout this document are collectively referred to as trustees. The current trustees and those that served during the year:

#### Chairman

Karl Marlowe

#### Other trustees

Rami Bibi

Dylan Kerr

Stuart Jenkin

Lindsey Wishart (Treasurer)

#### Company Secretary

Michael Rutherford

#### Executive Officers

Group Chief Executive

Gill Arukpe

#### Senior Director of Operations

Cassie Newman

#### Director of Finance & Resources

Michael Rutherford

#### Director of People & Culture

Zainah Baker

#### Registered office

1 Waterloo Gardens

Milner Square

London

N1 1TY

#### Auditor

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Company registration number **2114430**

Charity registration number **296694**

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The reference and administration information set out on the previous page form part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

## **Objectives**

### **Purposes and Aims**

The objects of Equinox as set out in the Articles of Association are for the public benefit:

- To assist, relieve and rehabilitate any person who is in need because of alcohol problems, other substance misuse problems, mental and physical health issues, age, learning difficulties, an involvement in the criminal justice system or a lack of appropriate housing, and to assist and relieve such persons' family, dependents and other carers who are in need as a result of that person's problems; and
- To further such other exclusively charitable purposes according to the law of England and Wales as the trustees in their absolute discretion from time to time determine.

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the Charity each year. This report looks at what the Charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the Charity has brought to the people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the Charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

### **Activities**

Equinox provides individually tailored support, health care and recovery for people whose behaviours and trauma, mental ill-health, substance and alcohol issues, homelessness, forensic history, or any combination of these issues have prevented them from living fulfilled lives.

Equinox's expertise is in supporting people excluded from other services due to their substance and alcohol misuse. The heart and soul of Equinox are providing hope without exclusion to all those who come to them. Equinox currently operates across London and in Brighton and has the ambition to grow.

## Chief Executive's Statement

### A Changing Landscape

As I look back on 2020/21, I am thankful that all our services continued to deliver services throughout the Pandemic, thanks to our caring and dedicated staff. We were fortunate that due to the early move to our Strategic Pandemic Business Plan and our infection controls, we stayed open and had no deaths in service due to the Pandemic and minimal Service Users and staff sickness.

The Pandemic has affected and changed the landscape of the health and social care needs across the UK and us as voluntary sector providers. Many more people were forced into poverty. There has been a dramatic increase in mental ill-health, creating greater demands on NHS hospitals and community teams and longer waiting times for treatment. And a societal change, with increased misuse of substances and alcohol and people suffering from poor mental health and wellbeing, creating a massive demand for our services.

The Pandemic affected everyone differently, but importantly, it made people more willing to talk openly about their mental health concerns. With 1 in 4 adults predicted to experience a common mental disorder, and 10% will experience depression in their lifetime, we are more than ready to take this opportunity to get involved in the conversation and encourage those stepping forward wanting support to keep mentally and physically well. Rough sleeping and homelessness had seen a positive Government response during the Pandemic. With hotels secured for rough sleepers to move them off the streets, we hope to see a new legacy for the future.

### Staffing

Whilst staff retention rates are good, there are recruitment issues in the sector, with over 100,000 support worker vacancies per week across the UK. Staff retention will become increasingly difficult as organisations compete to hire and retain the best staff. We have dedicated time to ensure that working at Equinox is a rewarding experience personally and professionally by offering more growth and development opportunities. Everyone within Equinox is focused and committed to:

- Keeping the Service User at the heart of everything we do by living our culture, purpose and values daily.
- Securing our long-term financial stability through contract retention, growth and diversifying income.
- Continue improving and enhancing the quality and performance of our services.
- Growing and extending our impact to our Service Users and society.
- Influencing positive social change on a broader scale.

We will do this by:

- Rolling out the work we do within the criminal justice arena and develop opportunities with partners in rough sleeping, homelessness, complex needs, prison leavers, prevention and early intervention.
- Finding ways to take the pressure of the NHS in the areas of mental illness, personality disorder, substance and alcohol misuse.
- Support development of local authorities' solutions for homeless people, rough sleepers, women specialist services, and people stepping down or failing in other supported housing and housing pathways, especially for those with high complex needs and living with trauma.
- Developing better employment pathways for our staff, experts by experience and encouraging new entrants into the fields of support and care work.
- Creating a formal volunteering and peer network.
- We will develop our long-term housing strategy and look for funding partners and developers to create housing opportunities for our participants and residents.
- Maximising our income by attracting independent funding and funding packages to take the burden away from overstretched public funding.

**Equinox Care**  
**Trustee report**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2021**

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In closing, I want to thank all staff for the hard work and commitment they show every day to fulfil our charity mission and achieve the best possible outcomes for the people we support. We have everything we need to make these next coming years even more successful than the last, and I can't wait to see what the future holds for us all.



**Gill Arukpe, Group Chief Executive**

**8<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

## Strategic Report

In 20/21 we supported 1,409 people across 11 different services.

Across Equinox residential services, we supported 678 Service Users during FY2020-21. Over 83% of move-ons in FY2020-21 were positive, including transferring into independent living and step-down accommodation. Less than 1% of our Service Users experienced returns to prison or unplanned returns to hospital during their time in our care.

KPI	TARGET	ACTUAL
% Positive move-ons	>85%	83.5%
% unplanned return to hospital	<3%	0.2%
% convicted of new offence	<3%	0.1%
% unplanned return to prison	<3%	0.1%

- Positive Move on means people that secure independent accommodation or move into a safe location for continued support.
- Total Departures means every Service User that has left the service across the year.

Total departures	424
Positive move-ons	354
Total clients seen	1,409
Unplanned returns to hospital	3
Convicted of a new offence	1
Unplanned return to prison	1

## Rising to the Challenges of Covid-19

### Recruitment

As we moved towards lockdown, we prioritised recruiting Bank/Relief staff anticipating staff shortages. Our teams worked together to set up a system to recruit people outside our sector who had been furloughed or made redundant and had transferable skills. The response was significantly higher throughout March than any previous recruitment campaign, with over 1,000 CVs submitted. To help us shortlist, we invited all applicants to complete an online psychometric test that scores emotional stability and intelligence, diligence, resilience and empathy. We benchmarked this against qualities and attitudes required for a generic Healthcare Worker. We scored completed assessments and shortlisted over 100 applicants within two weeks, with a target of 50 new Bank Staff recruited by May.

### Staff Wellbeing and Engagement

We provided laptops and mobile phones for staff to work from home and connect to the server securely. Welfare check to services included day and night staff check-in calls, virtual meetings, and all staff webinars and staff intranet as ways to keep employees engaged. As part of the daily calls, the Executive Management Team (EMT) reviewed Government announcements from the day before and sent daily emails to staff and managers informing them of critical updates and actions required. We devoted a section of the staff intranet home page to COVID-19, where emails are also saved, alongside updated guidance from Public Health England.

We promoted the stress App under our MediCash private health care provider and other applications, including Headspace, MIND's website and shared advice and tips on maintaining mental health. We also introduced Mental Health Champions and Happier Coaches alongside virtual interactive group sessions to maintain engagement and human connection focusing on wellbeing.

## **PPE Supply and Support from Commissioners**

The EMT chaired weekly all staff webinars via MS Teams, giving staff across the organisation an opportunity to ask questions and share any concerns. The most pressing matter for operational teams was supply levels of PPE. We introduced a monitoring tool to track PPE usage across each service to ensure supplies could be sourced and distributed promptly. A strong relationship with local Commissioning teams provided a healthy, regular supply of PPE equipment for some services. Many accessed additional support for Service Users via individual Council's Covid response services and funding. Our Brighton Services received regular updates from their local commissioning team, who supported them with early testing, setting up a specific Covid+ hostel and running online training.

## **Adapting our Residential Services**

With care homes seeing the most significant increases in infection rates and deaths across the country, our staff teams within our residential services had to rethink everything and redesign services around Covid. Many of our Resident and Service User activities had to reduce across our services. Before the Pandemic, residents could enter and leave services freely. Now, they faced restrictions, having to stay indoors and not see their families or support network. Communal mealtimes and activities had to stop. One of the team's biggest challenges was getting a structure in place and meaningful activity to take residents away from the boredom of daily isolation.

Staff had to implement new operating procedures quickly and think creatively. Running such complex services meant added pressures to get residents to understand and follow directions and social distancing to help keep them safe and protected. They had more barriers to consider and work around as they doubled up on PPE, wearing masks, shields, aprons and gloves. Knowing residents well, they prepared them mentally for the changes ahead and designed them to help minimise their anxiety. They considered every detail - big and small, to protect residents and keep them safe. Staff had to explain changes daily, multiple times, so residents didn't feel intimidated, especially when medicated; it can be confusing. Despite this, our teams overcame the physical barriers of PPE through human and personal touches to ensure positive engagements with residents to support the changes and work in harmony to protect each other. All our staff team's efforts ensured that 100% of services remained open and Covid-free.

## **Client Transformations**

### **Michael's Story**

Michael has made fantastic progress during his time in our Hammersmith and Fulham Service. He initially came to live at the service in May 2020 and worked closely with staff and Turning Point. He has a history of drug use, specifically crystal meth. His drug use was fed by acquaintances, especially his ex-partner, a relationship involving heavy drug use, partying, and physical abuse. Although this relationship came to an end, it took time for Michael to change his lifestyle. Michael started taking online courses during the lockdown, alongside focusing on his physical health. Before the third lockdown, he went to the gym, and when this stopped, he began running. Michael has been going on runs in the mornings and continues to lead a healthy lifestyle. He takes advantage of the donated food deliveries and mentions that he uses fruit and vegetables to make healthy drinks. He has always shown an artistic side, decorating and creating furniture in his flat. He has been using YouTube videos and collecting materials as canvases to draw on. He is now ready to move on, has accepted a flat, and is waiting to pick up his flat keys. Additionally, he has secured a part-time job in hospitality, working below 16 hours per week and volunteering. Michael has shown tremendous potential during his time with us and is succeeding and meeting his goals.

## **Our Focus**

### **Equality Diversity and Inclusion**

One of the main objectives of our EDI Programme is to recruit Ambassadors across our staff service teams to support the development of transparent models of career development and models of best practice, offering demographic-sensitive services to our residents and programme participants. During the next year, our EDI program will utilise the life experiences of our participants and Service Users as experts to influence and develop responses on how mental health and social care can be delivered to enable them better to access treatment early.

### **Women and Safety**

Equinox takes the safeguarding of all staff, participants and residents (Service Users) seriously. Enhancing our measures related to the safeguarding of women has been a priority. We adapted some of our programs for women-only. We introduced a specialist women's support worker role and new projects to support women affected by violence and exploitation, including trauma-informed support. Our Brighton Service is a specialist women's service. In these services, we have created and will continue to develop specific programs and ways of working to improve the lives of women who have been traumatised earlier in their lives and have survived much mental and physical abuse.

### **Reflective Practice**

Reflective Practice is an essential component of creating Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE). It provides a safe place for staff to share best practices and reflect on the emotional impact of our work, facilitated by external facilitators. One of the challenges we faced during the COVID pandemic was maintaining Reflective Practice sessions for our frontline staff, which we did, using video conferencing.

### **Quality Handbook**

Our staff and Service Users developed our digital Quality Handbook through a series of reflective workshops identifying and gathering best practices across Equinox. The Handbook is a best practice guide and a learning resource, showcasing the excellent work in our services to help us learn from each other and continue to improve the quality of the services we deliver. Each section of the Handbook includes top tips, guidance, and real-world examples of best practices across Equinox's services.

### **PIE Project Board**

We introduced the Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) Project Board to embed PIE across Equinox. The board's role is to promote the EDI programme and values of ambition, empowerment, transparency and inclusivity through the implementation of PIE. Members of the PIE Project Board are representatives across the whole of Equinox including, Participants and Residents, volunteers and staff. We aim to have a changing membership who will be champions of PIE and lead in creating happier, healthier environments where Participants and Residents develop their full potential and staff feel supported and skilled to provide the best possible support and care.

### **Participant and Resident Involvement**

The Participant and Resident Council represent the voices of the people we care for across Equinox. At a formal meeting, they chose to be called the Participant and Resident Involvement Group. Due to the pandemic, meetings moved online, which gave the advantage of becoming more accessible to representatives from services across and outside London. The group completed and submitted a collective response to the Government's consultation on proposed changes to the Mental Health Act.

## **Disability Confident**

We are a disability accredited employer registered and certified. Being recognised as a Disability Confident organisation, we take a leading role in changing attitudes for the better. We aim to lead changing behaviours and cultures within Equinox, external networks and communities where possible and reap the benefits of inclusive recruitment practices. We aim to ensure that all our properties have disabled access. As part of our property development strategy, we aim to replace or renovate to ensure we can offer equal access for disabled people over the next five years.

## **CHAS Accreditation**

In September, we received our CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme) accreditation, demonstrating compliance with UK health and safety legislation. In addition to evidencing that Equinox has and implements a robust Health and Safety Management System, we evidenced compliance with government advice on working safely during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **Environment**

Equinox aims to be 100% renewable by developing Waste Management and Sustainability targets. To put this into practice and align with the Government's sustainable development strategy, we will continue developing, implementing, and maintaining our plan to set sustainability objectives, targets, and indicators.

## **Social Impact and Value**

Work started in January to develop our strategic Theory of Change. This consisted of several workshops, including developing a measurement framework defining our core outcomes to measure our social impact as an organisation. Outcomes include a mixed approach incorporating some academically validated scales measuring wellbeing and resilience, alongside specialist pieces of work assessing return on investment and longitudinal impact.

## **ICT Strategy**

This year we upgraded our cyber essentials to guarantee as far as possible that our ICT system is safe - especially in the securing of data. We invested in Cyber Essentials Accreditation and Microsoft PowerBI so all our systems can speak to each other and report more accurate and timely outcomes.

## **People and Culture**

We moved online, including an online application option, online psychometric testing and virtual meetings for new starters to show their DBS and right to work documents in line with government guidelines. We reduced agency staff spending and introduced a new process for booking agency staff and an Additional Hours Policy. We rolled out the Benni Benefit Platform to all staff. Learning and Development implemented a Management Development Programme alongside recruitment of a Training and Development lead as part of the learning culture.

## Significant Events

### Solace Centre Pandemic Response

The Solace Centre offers a unique community. During the early stages of the COVID pandemic, we had no choice but to close the Solace Centre according to Government guidelines, leaving 105 members with no access to face-to-face support and activities. Led by the Service Manager, the team worked together to develop a plan to run the centre in a virtual capacity. They regularly engaged with members, making two phone calls to every member every week, offering emotional and practical support and positive ways to make the best out of time at home.

These calls helped develop ongoing conversations where members shared feedback and opinions to help adapt activities and shape new ones during the lockdown. Wellbeing walks started, and seeds were sent to members to grow flowers. The team also published a monthly newsletter with input from Solace members, providing news, puzzles, quizzes and information on available support, which they shared with every member, local commissioners and community partners.

### Lewisham Outdoor Gym

In October 2020, our Lewisham service completed the installation of an outdoor gym. The idea came from staff and residents in response to the impacts of lockdown and the need to offer additional resources for residents' wellbeing and socialisation. We consulted residents on the type of equipment they wanted, and the service team worked with our Housing and Maintenance department to install the equipment within two months of the request. It has been extremely popular with Service Users, and we are analysing its impact on both wellbeing and incidents at the service.

### Brook Drive Pandemic Response

In partnership with Guys and St Thomas' Hospital, SIG Equinox joined the direct fight to help people recover from COVID-19. Equinox Brook Drive is a vital health service and the only third sector residential service of its kind in London. The service consists of 26 beds and is open 24 hours, 365 days a year, providing medically supervised alcohol and drug detoxification programmes for adults, saving many lives daily. When the pandemic hit, most community drug and alcohol services had to close and suspend all referrals. Brook Drive, therefore, had nursing capacity. The NHS were crying out for qualified nurses, and we have some brilliant ones.

We contacted NHS Guys and St Thomas' to see if we could assist them in the COVID-19 fight. In two weeks, we converted Brook Drive into a new stepdown hospital service to support Guys and St Thomas' Hospital and Kings College Hospital. We welcomed patients deemed medically fit for discharge but were homeless or vulnerable to help them get well - many frail and elderly, needing round the clock care. We put in the necessary arrangements for patients to safely return to home or into stable accommodation, allowing Guys and St Thomas' Hospital and Kings College Hospital to free up 347 more bed nights within their acute bed wards for Covid-19 patients.

### Marron House Pandemic Response

Our Marron House team encourages residents to engage in learning opportunities and outdoor physical activities. These conversations led to a discussion on mini-workouts. Thus, began Fitness Fridays, teaching low impact exercises by one of Marron House staff, a qualified fitness instructor and gives nutritional advice. Activities were designed to be easy to follow and recorded, and shared with other services across the SIG so all Service Users could participate. Some Service Users have gone from doing very little physical activity to now jogging. Marron House shared over 25 mini-workout sessions with SIG services during the pandemic.

## Financial Review 2020/21

Equinox made a surplus of £143k (2019/20 - £148k deficit) at the operating profit level before a past service deficit pension payment of £160k (2019/20 - £290k). This resulted in an unrestricted fund balance in deficit £1,282k (2019/20 - deficit £1,265k). In addition, it had a restricted fund balance of £1k (2019/20 - £1k) after receipts of £139k (2019/20 - £340k) and expenditure of £139k (2019/20 - £340k).

The restricted reserves transactions mainly relate to the Fulfilling Lives projects in Brighton with a balance of £Nil continuing into the new financial year.

The pensions reserve relates to the past service deficit liability relating to the defined benefit Social Housing Pension Scheme. The triennial valuations in 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017 and 2020 resulted in member organisations being charged a levy to bring the scheme back into surplus. These triennial valuation deficit contributions are reflected in the liabilities of Equinox. The charity closed its participation in this pension scheme but remains liable for an element of the deficit.

Given the wider economic environment and on-going changes and increased competition within the sector, the trustees consider the results to be disappointing but understandable. Therefore, it is essential that moving forward our focus remains on developing new services, new funding models, effective and financially efficient models of service delivery whilst addressing the issues causing the deficit.

The principal funding sources remain Local Authority block contracts largely for our resettlement projects alongside funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS Trusts towards our work with people recovering or living with mental ill health and or personality disorders, and the work we do with preventing homelessness and homeless people. The trustees are appreciative of the funding received from its funders including those statutory commissioners for the work streams they support as well as the vital non-statutory funding received from individuals, trusts and foundations.

### Principle Risks and Uncertainties

Equinox has a risk management strategy, which is overseen by the trustees. The risk register is reviewed monthly by the Executive Management Team, in consultation with all managers, and subsequently by the trustees at each quarterly Board meeting. The principal risks are that a Service User commits a serious act and that there is class A and/or B drug use by a Service User on our premises. This is not surprising in view of the activities undertaken by Equinox. To mitigate these risks, we have robust risk management policies, a pandemic strategy and contingency plans, well trained staff, incident and near miss reporting and learning, a safeguarding officer, a clinical lead and people safe systems, testing procedures and good relationships with experts by experience and co-production with our Service Users, responsible officers, and the police. In addition, Equinox is experiencing great difficulties in procuring properties either for rent or outright purchase, given that we cannot expand at the rate of demand or that we may lose contracts.

Another significant risk is the pension deficit contributions made to TPT and to the KCC to fund the shortfall in the pension liability of the schemes. The risk is regularly reviewed to ensure any contributions are affordable and do not place a significant financial burden on the Charity.

### Reserves Policy and Going Concern

Reserves are needed to innovate solutions for our stakeholders, (both Service Users and commissioners) and bridge the funding gaps between spending on services and recovering these from subsidiaries by providing working capital. In addition, reserves are required to facilitate investment in fixed assets in the form of properties for leasing to subsidiaries for the provision of their services. The trustees evaluated the commitment to future expenditure against likely future income streams and believe that a regular review of reserve levels is appropriate. Equinox aim to make a small surplus for retention and reinvestment purposes, which increases the free reserves. The target for Equinox is £500k. The actual free reserves, excluding the past service pension liability, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 are £1,281k in deficit (19/20 - £1,264k deficit). The trustees will continue to review the reserves policy and position.

Actions to strengthen the financial position going forward include diversification of funding, including the growth of the business development team to secure additional funds through fundraising and securing and opening a number of new projects, as well as the closure of projects that were not financially viable. In addition, there are concerted management efforts to increase occupancy and reduce void rates and minimise the use of expensive agency staff.

After making enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that Equinox has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements. Equinox has financial resources together with long-term cash generating assets. As a consequence, the Board of Trustees believe that Equinox is well placed to manage its business risks successfully. For this reason they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing Equinox's financial statements. Whilst the Pension deficit is large, there is a robust repayment plan to reduce this over time, and that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cause significant doubt about the ability of Equinox to continue as a going concern have been identified by key management personnel after taking into account the relevant facts and circumstances.

## **Plans for the Future**

We want to build on the strong foundations we have created that has seen us continue to grow. We want to increase the number of people we support and the organisation's long term financial stability. To do this, we need the best people to come and work for us. We will be implementing a staff personal development pathway during the year ahead and looking at ways to reward, so they choose to stay with us. We will be developing our apprenticeship and training for entry-level to encourage people to come and work in the sector and partner with other providers who wish to do the same. We will also try and influence key decision-makers for better wages for the people who work in our sector.

Our main objective for the next three years is to continue to offer services for people who have the highest social and health care needs. People whose complex lives and traumatised life experiences would benefit from our specialist support. We will continue to fill gaps and alleviate the strain on our over pressed NHS services and Local Authorities to deliver community-based responses that relieve pressure by providing the best charitable services.

This annual report shows how far we have come, but also where we aim to be.

Planning for growth can be a daunting task in this climate. Still, we know the amazing work achieved across Equinox. We have read the service reports, listened to staff and Service Users, and seen the positive outcomes for people, and this gives us the confidence to be bold in our aspirations because we know we can achieve them.

We have won new contracts, invested in new staff and begun diversifying our funding streams to enable fundraising to be a part of our income generation. We've also broadened our social media and online presence, raised Service User involvement, started working on understanding and quantifying our social value and invested in more staff training. It is an exciting time for us.

The people who arrive at our services are some of the most complex and vulnerable people within our society; we can't change their past, but we can support and empower them to change their future. We achieve this through our professional staff teams' dedication and perseverance, who work tirelessly to deliver the best possible outcomes for people and keep the Service User at the centre of everything we do.

## New Business and Fundraising

### New Fundraising Department

Equinox hasn't ventured into fundraising previously, but we decided it was the right time to take our first steps with the sector becoming more financially challenged. We recruited a Head of Fundraising and a part-time Assistant Fundraiser to take the work forward in helping diversify our income.

### New Bid Team

It was a challenging year as many local authorities did not release tenders due to the Pandemic. It was an excellent opportunity to consolidate what the department wanted to achieve in the later stages of 2020 and begin to build a new team that would be ready for when the tenders came out again. We recruited three new posts and inducted them. In early 2021, the team redefined our tendering processes and began winning their first pieces of work. The team won eleven tenders, including frameworks, from domiciliary care to detox and hostel provision.

## Communications

### Achieving a One Team Ethos

Our staff intranet became a focal point for the communications team as Equinox had never worked in isolation. The need to deliver vital information in a format that everyone could access was critical. We undertook a complete overhaul of our intranet, creating spaces dedicated to sharing covid information and areas for staff and Service Users to share personal stories, blogs, poems and artwork they were making. The intranet burst into life in a matter of weeks and brought the charity together in a way we hadn't expected; sentiments came flooding in from staff regarding how they had never felt so 'together' and how they looked forward to the next blog or story.

### Webinars

Equinox had not hosted a webinar before, and the technology was new to us all. Our first webinar was not without technical challenges and 'you're on mute' moments, but we got better with each attempt. Across the year, we ran webinars regularly and especially when changes to covid rules happened. Staff were able to access the EMT in a way they hadn't experienced before, and the information flowed freely in the sessions. During the year, we also hosted our first webinar where Service Users from across the charity joined to discuss matters close to them and share their experiences of the support they receive with the EMT. It wasn't all work, though, as we also hosted several quiz nights and 'Tea & Talk' wellbeing sessions that were well-received by all.

### Staff 'TEA & TALK'

Equinox understands the pressures our teams are under to keep services, Service Users and staff safe, which only increased due to the prevalence of COVID-19, affecting their stress levels. We wanted to address this by promoting mental health and supporting staff by starting the conversation through a Tea & Talk Series - because mental health is as important as any other health issue. Tea & Talks support staff by providing a safe and acceptable space to share and tell their co-workers where they are struggling. It opened up the conversation on how they can best support each other to tackle common mental health challenges as anxiety and stress.

## Social Media Review

This year, we focused on growing our social media presence and increasing our activity. We created new social media pages on Facebook and Instagram. We revamped our other platforms to showcase the work done at Equinox so audiences could stay involved and updated on our events and campaigns.

PLATFORM	APRIL 2020 Followers	MARCH 2021 Followers
Facebook	0	707
Twitter	154	337
LinkedIn	362	1,001
Instagram	0	113

Key achievements over the year:

- Grew LinkedIn following by 176%
- Grew Twitter following by 118%
- Gained 707 Facebook followers

## New Website

We launched our new Website, which combined the individual websites of Equinox and the other SIG subsidiaries into one vibrant site. It was a complicated task, but we used in-house talent to build the website from scratch and engaged staff and Service Users to develop it as user-friendly as possible. A key factor was to provide information to stakeholders and be an engaging space for new and interested parties that follow links from our social media pages. The website has been popular and has grown in hits since its launch.

## Structure, Governance and Management

Equinox is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital (Number 2114430) incorporated on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1987 and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission (Number 296694) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1987.

Equinox's governing instruments are its Articles of Association dated 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1987, as amended on 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2018. The sole member of Equinox is the Social Interest Group with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2014 and as of 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2018 the non-executive trustees of the Social Interest Group were appointed as the trustees of Equinox.

All the trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 5 to the accounts.

## Appointment of Trustees

The trustees are listed on page 2. They hold office for an initial period of three years with the possibility of a second term of three years plus in exceptional circumstance where the trustee has specific skills, this can be extended by the board. The board consists of no fewer than three and no more than nine persons appointed by the members and the executive trustees. No person under the age of 18 may be appointed as a trustee.

Trustees are recruited by the Nominations Committee using specialist recruitment agents and by advertisement. A rigorous interview process takes place, which includes Service Users. Candidates attend a board meeting and visit projects before being confirmed in post by the Chairperson.

## Trustee Induction and Training

New trustees must familiarise themselves with the content of the Articles of Association, their legal obligations under charity and company law, the organisational structure and its recent financial performance. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. All trustees have participated in Safeguarding training.

## **Related Parties and Relationships with other Organisations**

Equinox is a member of the Social Interest Group of which it is a subsidiary. It provides all support functions, senior management and strategic guidance. The Charity is supported in its charitable objectives by all Social Interest Group companies: Equinox Care, Penrose Options, SIG Investments and Pathways to Independence.

## **Remuneration Policy for Key Management Personnel**

The Group Chief Executive's remuneration is set by the Social Interest Group non-executive trustees. Their remuneration and all other staff are remunerated in accordance with a job evaluation process and market rates, which is reviewed by external consultants.

## **Policy for Employment of Disabled Persons**

In April 2019 we became a Disability Confident Employer.

It is the Charity's policy not to discriminate against persons falling under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 for reasons of their disability whether in, or applying for, employment or in the delivery of services.

The key areas of our policy cover recruitment and employment (disabled applicants not being considered any less favourably on the ground of their disability) service delivery (disabled applicants and service users not being treated less favourably on account of their disability) and information (ensuring information is accessible to all).

## **Employee Information**

The Charity requires line managers to conduct one-to-one meetings with their staff on a regular basis together with an annual appraisal.

The Executive Management Team meet on a weekly basis and updates from this meeting and the monthly Senior Managers Team meeting are disseminated to the Managers' meeting and then to the individual projects' monthly staff meeting.

The Charity takes its investment in its staff's professional development seriously and aims to provide different learning opportunities. It is the Charity's aim to see staff develop and share learning so that value can be added, and staff contribute to our growth and success. We introduced a new core training programme based around the Care Certificate made up of face-to-face and e-learning to ensure all modules are covered.

The trustees would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication during the year, in a climate that continues to be extremely challenging. We confirm that the Charity pays at least the London Living Wage to our employees working in London.

## **Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustees**

The trustees (who are also directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK GAAP).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the Group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the 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 which are reasonable and prudent

- State whether the applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on an ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees 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 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 company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the 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 the year-end was five (2020: five). The non-executive trustees are members of the Charity, the executive trustee is not a member of the Charity and does not have any beneficial interest in it.

The trustees' annual report, which includes the strategic report, has been approved by the board of trustees on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and signed on their behalf.



**Dr Karl Marlowe**  
**Chairman**

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Equinox Care (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of 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 charitable company 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 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. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

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

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

## **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report including the strategic report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the charitable 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, the trustees (who are also the directors 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.

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 is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant frameworks which are directly relevant

## Independent auditor's report to the members of Equinox Care

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to specific assertions in the financial statements;

- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements.
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of representatives of management and the review of minutes of Trustee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of where management considers there was susceptibility to fraud and knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- Tested the authorisation of expenditure; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Review of the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Agreeing financial statements disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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

### Use of our report

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

*Buzzacott LLP*

22.12.2021

Hugh Swainson (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL

**Equinox Care**  
**Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2021**

	Note	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Pension reserve £'000	2021 Total £'000	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Pension reserve £'000	2020 Total £'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Donations and legacies	2	1	-	-	1	9	-	-	9
Charitable activities	3	8,131	139	-	8,270	8,235	340	-	8,575
<b>Total income</b>		<b>8,132</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,271</b>	<b>8,244</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,584</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>									
Charitable activities	4a	(7,989)	(139)	-	(8,128)	(8,392)	(340)	-	(8,732)
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>(7,989)</b>	<b>(139)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(8,128)</b>	<b>(8,392)</b>	<b>(340)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(8,732)</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	5	143	-	-	143	(148)	-	-	(148)
Transfers between funds		(160)	-	160	-	(290)	-	290	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>(17)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>(438)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>(148)</b>
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	14	-	-	(1,665)	(1,665)	-	-	2,727	2,727
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(17)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,505)</b>	<b>(1,522)</b>	<b>(438)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,017</b>	<b>2,579</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>									
Total funds brought forward		(1,265)	1	(520)	(1,784)	(827)	1	(3,537)	(4,363)
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	16	<b>(1,282)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(2,025)</b>	<b>(3,306)</b>	<b>(1,265)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(520)</b>	<b>(1,784)</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 16 to the financial statements.

Equinox Care  
Balance Sheet  
As at 31 March 2021

	Note	£'000	2021 £'000	£'000	2020 £'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	10		<u>42</u>		<u>44</u>
			42		44
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	11	1,031		1,523	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>620</u>		<u>188</u>	
		1,651		1,711	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(1,624)</u>		<u>(3,019)</u>	
<b>Net current assets / (liabilities)</b>			<u>27</u>		<u>(1,308)</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>69</u>		<u>(1,264)</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after one year</b>	13		<u>(1,350)</u>		<u>-</u>
<b>Net liabilities excluding pension scheme provision</b>			<u>(1,281)</u>		<u>(1,264)</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme provision	14		<u>(2,025)</u>		<u>(520)</u>
<b>Total net liabilities</b>			<u>(3,306)</u>		<u>(1,784)</u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>	15a				
Restricted income funds			1		1
Unrestricted income funds					
General funds		(1,282)		(1,265)	
Pension reserve		<u>(2,025)</u>		<u>(520)</u>	
Total Unrestricted funds			<u>(3,307)</u>		<u>(1,785)</u>
<b>Total Charity funds</b>			<u>(3,306)</u>		<u>(1,784)</u>

Approved by the trustees on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Chair

Dr Karl Marlowe

Equinox Care: A company limited by guarantee, Company Registration Number 2114430 (England and Wales)

Equinox Care  
Cashflow statements  
For the year ended 31 March 2021

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	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>		
Net (expenditure) / income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(1,522)	2,579
Depreciation charges	21	30
Movement in long-term pension deficit liability	1,505	(3,017)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	492	(278)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(45)	474
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>(212)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>		
Purchase of fixed assets	(19)	(15)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(19)</b>	<b>(15)</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>(227)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	<hr/> <b>188</b>	<hr/> 415
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<hr/> <b>620</b>	<hr/> 188

## 1 Accounting Policies

### a) Statutory information

Equinox is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England & Wales. The registered office is 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London, N1 1TY.

### b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

### c) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### d) Going concern

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

The financial statements are drawn up on a going concern basis despite having net liabilities, including the pension reserve in deficit. The deficit of the pension scheme, however, does not result in an immediate cash flow impact on the charity. This deficit will be cleared by an agreed payment plan for pension contributions. For this reason, the trustees are satisfied this does not affect the going concern status of the charity.

The Social Interest Group will not recall the inter-company balances within the next 12 months, unless the Trustees deem that Equinox can afford to repay the balances. In addition, the trustees of both Social Interest Group and Penrose Options have expressed their intention to continue to provide support to Equinox Care, including providing working capital, for the foreseeable future.

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

### e) Income

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

Income from government and other grants, whether "capital" grants or "revenue" grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**f) Interest receivable**

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

**g) Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund. Unrestricted funds are donations and other income received or generated for the charitable purposes.

**h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**i) Central support costs**

Central support costs are incurred by the parent company, Social Interest Group, and are for senior management, finance, human resources, payroll, workforce development, housing income management, quality & performance and information & communication technology. These departments are vital to the smooth running of Equinox's charitable activities.

**j) Operating leases**

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**k) Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use. Major components are treated as a separate asset where they have significantly different patterns of consumption of economic benefits and are depreciated separately over its useful life.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Fixtures, fittings and office equipment – 25% straight line
- Leasehold improvements – Straight line over the term of the lease

**l) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

**m) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

**n) Creditors and provisions**

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

**1 Accounting Policies (continued)**

**o) Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

**p) Pensions**

Equinox makes contributions into a defined benefit pension scheme, which is now closed to new Equinox entrants, and a number of defined contribution schemes. For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2018. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and are used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

**2 Donations**

Equinox has received a donation of £nil (2020: £nil) from its parent undertaking, the Social Interest Group and £1,000 (2020: £9,000) from other donors.

**3 Charitable activities – supporting vulnerable people**

Equinox's activities are to relieve people in need, including but not limited to those with mental health illness, those currently suffering from substance misuse or other addictive behaviour patterns, ex-offenders, the homeless, poor people, aged, disabled (whether physically or mentally) or chronically sick. This is achieved by providing support in the form of housing, or accommodation, or services including but not limited to medical, social, welfare, rehabilitative, resettlement, care services, education, training, employment, mentoring and other similar services. Equinox's income is predominantly contractual income from local authorities and NHS Trusts, and rental income and service charges from service users.

4a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2021 Total £'000	2020 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	4,603	-	855	5,458	5,968
Recruitment & training	-	-	81	81	147
Subsistence & travel	13	-	5	18	9
Premises Costs	1,334	-	42	1,376	1,361
Office running costs	82	-	62	144	93
Insurance	-	-	49	49	17
Information technology	-	-	124	124	149
Bank charges	-	-	-	-	-
Legal & Professional	-	-	19	19	48
Depreciation	33	-	-	33	30
Audit fees	-	19	-	19	10
Other Costs	799	-	8	807	900
Total expenditure 2021	<u>6,864</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>1,245</u>	<u>8,128</u>	
Total expenditure 2020	<u>7,299</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>1,419</u>		<u>8,732</u>

**4b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)**

	Charitable activities £'000	Governance costs £'000	Support costs £'000	2020 Total £'000
Staff costs (Note 6)	5,151	-	797	5,968
Recruitment & training	-	-	147	147
Subsistence & travel	-	-	9	9
Premises Costs	1,208	-	153	1,361
Office running costs	68	-	25	93
Insurance	-	-	17	17
Information technology	-	-	149	149
Legal & Professional	-	-	48	48
Depreciation	30	-	-	30
Audit fees	-	10	-	10
Other Costs	822	4	74	900
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total expenditure 2020	7,299	14	1,419	8,732
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**5 Net income / (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging :

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Depreciation	21	30
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	1,298	1,181
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	12	14
	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>

**6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel**

Staff costs were as follows

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Salaries and wages	4,184	4,052
Social security costs	389	360
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	97	93
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	30	15
Agency costs	758	1,448
	<u>5,458</u>	<u>5,968</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2020: £nil).

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £nil (2020: nil). These were borne by the parent entity Social Interest Group.

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2020: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2020: £nil).

No trustees' expenses were paid or reimbursed £Nil (2020: £nil).

**7 Staff numbers**

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Operational	110	147
Administration	2	2
	<u>112</u>	<u>149</u>

**8 Related party transactions**

Equinox was charged £1,354,650 for central office functions provided by the parent charity Social Interest Group (2020: £1,358,000)

Equinox owed £1,648,148 to SIG at the year end (2020: owed £1,202,000).

Equinox was owed £378,490 from Penrose Options at the year end (2020: owed £478,000).

Equinox owed £106,099 to SIG Investments at the year end (2020: £8,000)

## 9 Taxation

Equinox is a registered charity and is exempt from Corporation Tax on its charitable income as it is spent on charitable purposes.

The Charity is part of the Social Interest Group VAT registration. However, as virtually 100% of its income is exempt, the VAT on purchases is irrecoverable and therefore included in expenditure.

## 10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & Equipment £'000	Leasehold improvements £'000	Total £'000
<b>Cost of valuation</b>			
At the start of the year	142	20	162
Additions in year	12	7	19
At the end of the year	154	27	181
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At the start of the year	110	8	118
Charge for the year	18	3	21
At the end of the year	128	11	139
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At the end of the year	26	16	42
At the start of the year	32	12	44

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

## 11 Debtors

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Trade debtors	400	693
Amounts due from Group undertakings	378	478
Other debtors	29	309
Prepayments	71	43
Accrued Income	153	-
	1,031	1,523

**12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Trade creditors	436	771
Taxation and social security	124	293
Pension contributions	40	44
Other creditors	399	460
Amounts due to Group undertakings	404	1,210
Accruals	221	241
	<u>1,624</u>	<u>3,019</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year**

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Amounts due to Group undertakings	<u>1,350</u>	<u>-</u>

**14 Pension Scheme**

**The Pensions Trust – Social Housing Pension Scheme (“Scheme”)**

Equinox participates in the Scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 500 non-associated employers. The Scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK.

For financial years ending on or before 28 February 2019, it had not been possible for the charity to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme, therefore the charity accounted for the Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

For financial years ending on or after 31 March 2019, it is possible to obtain sufficient information to enable the charity to account for the Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. For accounting purposes, an actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with effective date of 31 March 2018. The liability figure from the valuation is rolled forward to the relevant accounting date and is used in conjunction with the charity's fair share of the Scheme's total assets to calculate the charity's net deficit or surplus at the accounting period start and end dates.

The Scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension scheme in the UK.

The last triennial valuation of the Scheme overall for funding purposes was carried out as at 30 September 2020. This valuation revealed a deficit of £1,560m. A Recovery Plan has been put in place with the aim of removing this deficit by 31 March 2028. The Scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the charity is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the Scheme. Following consultation between the Pension Trustees and Employers, a new recovery plan to recover the overall scheme deficit has been agreed. This is based on a full share of liabilities approach. This is effective from 1 April 2022.

14 Pension Scheme (continued)

Number of active members in the scheme

	No.
Active	3
Deferred	396
Pensioners	44

Financial assumptions

	2021 %pa	2020 %pa
Rate of discount	2.47	2.66
Price inflation (RPI)	3.28	2.60
Price inflation (CPI)	2.86	1.60
Earnings increases	3.86	2.60
Allowance for commutation of pension for cash at retirement	75%	75%

Other material assumptions

	years	years
Life expectancies in retirement:		
Male currently aged 65	21.60	21.50
Female currently aged 65	23.50	23.30
Male currently aged 45	22.90	22.90
Female currently aged 45	25.10	24.50

Present values of defined benefit obligation, fair value of assets and defined benefit liability

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Fair value of plan assets	11,352	10,278
Present value of defined benefit obligation	(13,377)	(10,798)
Net defined liability to be recognised	(2,025)	(520)

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the fair value of plan assets

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Opening fair value of employer assets	10,278	10,159
Interest income	243	233
Experience on plan assets	872	100
Contributions by the employer	183	381
Withdrawals by Employees	-	-
Benefits paid and expenses	(224)	(595)
	11,352	10,278

14 Pension Scheme (continued)

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of defined benefit obligation

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Opening defined benefit obligation	10,798	13,696
Current service cost	-	-
Expenses	13	14
Interest cost	253	310
Contributions by members	-	-
Withdrawals by Employees	-	-
Actuarial losses / (gains)	2,537	(2,627)
Benefits paid and expenses	(224)	(595)
Closing defined benefit obligation	<u>13,377</u>	<u>10,798</u>

Defined benefit costs recognised in the statement of financial activities (SOFA)

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Current service cost	-	-
Expenses	13	14
Net interest expense	10	77
Defined benefit costs recognised in the SOFA	<u>23</u>	<u>91</u>
Actual return on plan assets	<u>1,115</u>	<u>333</u>

Net actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension scheme

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Actuarial (loss) on recognising full scheme liability	-	-
Actuarial (loss) / gain on plan obligations	(2,537)	2,627
Actuarial gain on plan assets	872	100
	<u>(1,665)</u>	<u>2,727</u>

15a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	42	-	-	42
Net current liabilities	(24)	-	1	(23)
Non current liabilities	(1,300)	-	-	(1,300)
Defined benefit pension provision	-	(2,025)	-	(2,025)
	<u>(1,282)</u>	<u>(2,025)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(3,306)</u>

15b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £'000	Pension Reserve £'000	Restricted £'000	Total funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	44	-	-	44
Net current liabilities	(1,309)	-	1	(1,308)
Defined benefit pension provision	-	(520)	-	(520)
	<u>(1,265)</u>	<u>(520)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(1,784)</u>

16a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2020 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2021 £'000
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Fulfilling Lives	-	125	(125)	-	-
Corona Virus Grants	-	14	(14)	-	-
Skills for Care	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>1</u>	<u>139</u>	<u>(139)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>General funds</b>	<u>(1,265)</u>	<u>8,271</u>	<u>(8,128)</u>	<u>(160)</u>	<u>(1,282)</u>
<b>Pension reserve</b>	<u>(520)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,665)</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>(2,025)</u>
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<u>(1,784)</u>	<u>8,410</u>	<u>(9,932)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(3,306)</u>

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

16b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2019 £'000	Income & gains £'000	Expenditure & losses £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2020 £'000
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Fulfilling Lives	-	186	(186)		-
Female Offender Community Investment fund	-	154	(154)		-
Skills for Care	1	-			1
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>(340)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>General funds</b>	<b>(827)</b>	<b>8,244</b>	<b>(8,392)</b>	<b>(290)</b>	<b>(1,265)</b>
<b>Pension reserve</b>	<b>(3,537)</b>	<b>2,727</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>(520)</b>
<b>Total funds including pension fund</b>	<b>(4,363)</b>	<b>11,311</b>	<b>(8,732)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,784)</b>

**Purposes of restricted funds**

A. Fulfilling Lives. The Equinox Brighton team is part of a nationwide Big Lottery initiative designed to affect positive change on several levels in the area of multiple and complex needs.

B. Female Offender Community Investment Fund – this grant was for the Women’s Programmes run in Brighton and

London and funding for the Domestic Violence Trauma Specialist at Brighton Women’s Service.

C. Skills for Care. This is a programme of work related to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment.

D. Corona Virus Grants. These grants were received from Local Authorities to cover the increased costs of working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

17 **Operating lease commitments**

The charity’s total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Less than one year	960	957
One to five years	509	512
Over five years	22	-
	<b>1,491</b>	<b>1,469</b>

**18 Guarantees and ultimate parent undertaking**

Equinox is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. The Social Interest Group became the sole member of Equinox on the 1 October 2014, previously all trustees were members. Each member has guaranteed to pay £1 in the event that Equinox was wound up. Social Interest Group is the ultimate parent undertaking. Its charity registered number is 158402. Its company registered number is 9122052. Its registered office is: 1 Waterloo Gardens, Milner Square, London N1 1TY.