

Annual Report



2023
2024



Champion of Sunderlands
Independent VCSE Sector



 **VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ACTION SUNDERLAND**

Letter from the CHAIR

Covering the period from April 2023 to March 2024.

As Chairman of VCAS over the last 12 month period, I would initially like to thank our funders, trustees, staff and volunteers for their continued support and hard work.

Secondly I would like to thank our members, now at 378 for their continued support. It is encouraging to see how our members engage with the services and resources we provide. We are as always led by our members on what services are needed and how we can support VCSE organisations to be more resilient and provide the resources and support that are needed in communities across the city.

Thank you!



Stephen Armstrong

VCAS CHAIR

VCAS Mission

Mission

VCAS are dedicated to supporting and promoting an inclusive, equitable, resilient and vibrant Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) for Sunderland and the local communities they serve.

We actively enable the diverse VCSE sector in Sunderland to have opportunities for support, collaboration and ongoing organisational development enabling resilience and sustainability.



Vision

“To achieve positive community development by supporting stronger communities and transforming lives through community-led action”

- **ENGAGE:** Enable all of the VCSE Sector to have the opportunity to engage, develop and improve services.
- **INSPIRE:** A stronger VCSE Sector that is based on good practices that help to build from the ‘bottom-up’
- **EMPOWER:** Provide representation to improve equity and equality across the sector, to support and influence real change.

VCAS HIGHLIGHTS

At the heart of VCAS are its members and the support they need to thrive and development for the benefit of the community.

VCAS has increased its membership in 2024 and have through staff developments been able to offer much needed additional support and opportunities to the VCSE Sector across Sunderland. Our ambition moving forward is to offer even more opportunities next year and help those organisations thrive.

378

VCAS
MEMBERS
ENGAGED

240

VCSE SECTOR
ORGANISATIONS
SUPPORTED

65

VCSE SECTOR
ORGANISATIONS
ATTENDED
FUNDERLAND & FUNDER
EVENTS

125

VCSE SECTOR
ORGANISATIONS
ACCESSED TRAINING

VCAS HIGHLIGHTS

Funding and other VCSE Sector Support

These activities and figures directly related to our funding support, which includes 1:1 support, outreach and organised events with funders. The funding officer worked with 85 organisations, supporting funding applications and funding strategies for organisations.

These groups were supported through:

- 1:1 and group funding appointments
- Outreach and drop in sessions across the City
- £150k was secured for VCSE Sector organisations community groups

- 60 local VCSE Organisations were provided with opportunities to meet the The National Lottery Community Fund, The Community Foundation, Coalfields Regeneration Trust and BBC Children in Need, benefitting from the funding information sessions.
- Other work with VCS groups has included; governance support, developing a funding strategy, improving their organisational structure, having the correct policies in place and planning for their long term sustainability.
- 8 new groups have received support and advice on setting up their group, writing a constitution and putting safeguarding procedures in place for their organisation so they can start to raise funds for their work in the community.

£137,000

VCAS have supported VCSE Sector organisation's to access new grant making programmes that targeted small voluntary groups at the heart of community engagement.

£10,000

£400,000

Mackem Money



40 Sunderland Organisations received funding through the Community Foundations Participatory Grant Making Programme



The Ballinger Trust

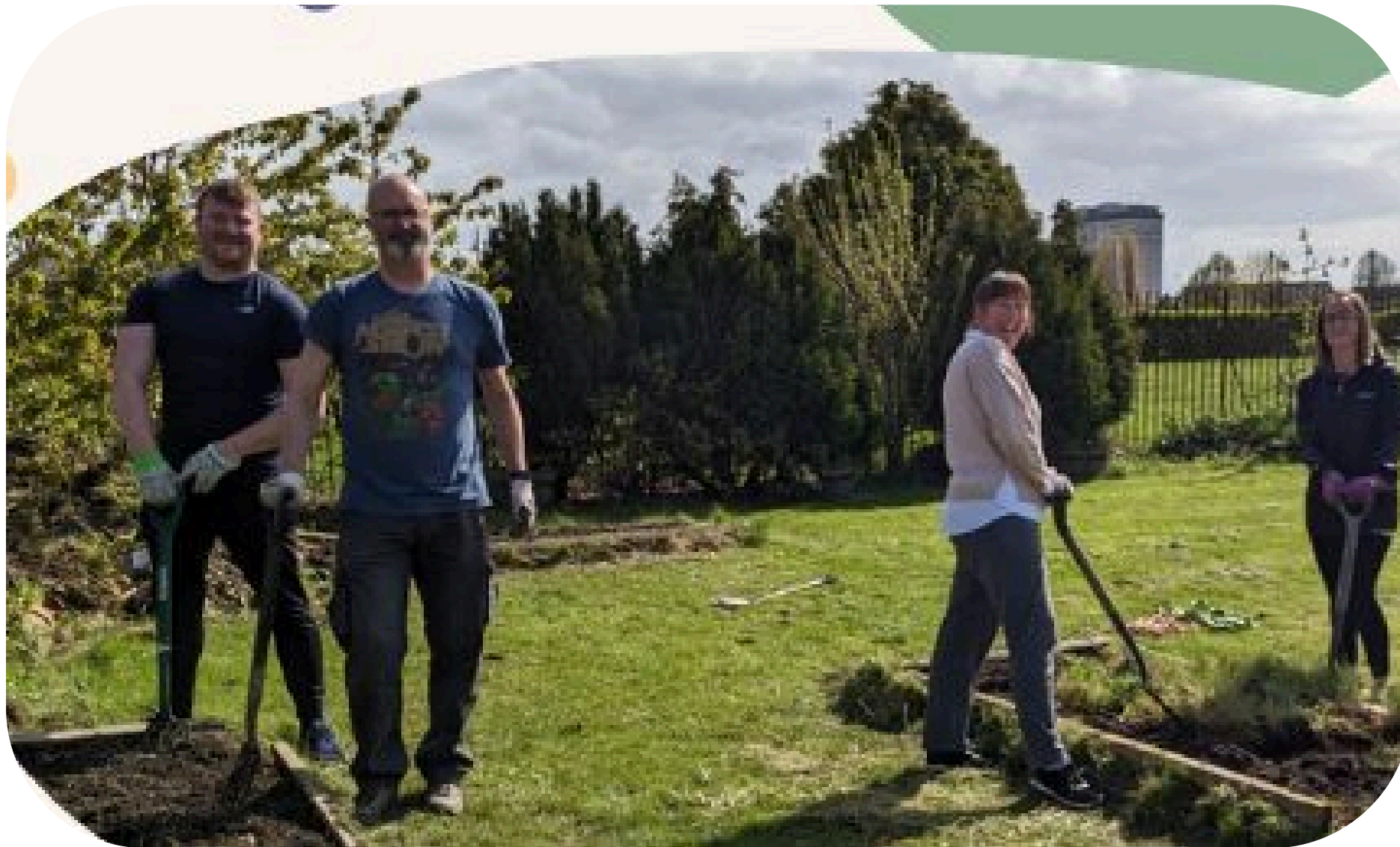
15 Small VCSE Sector organisations received funding



Other funding

VCAS have help to secure additional funding for groups across the city

Volunteering Partnerships



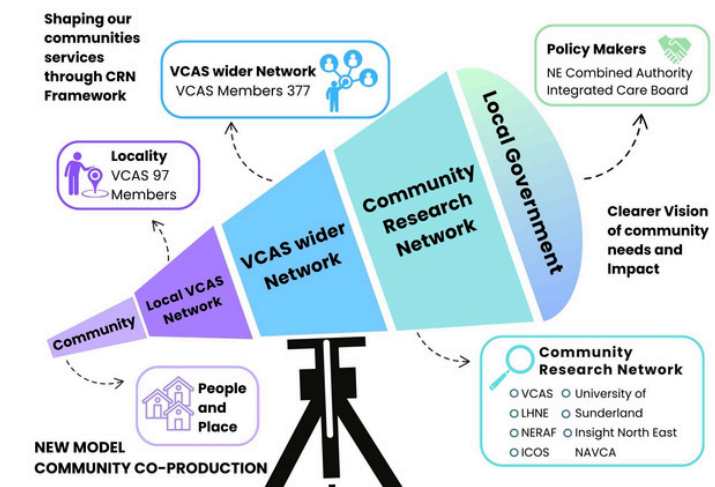
**Sunderland Association
Football Club - SAFC**

**Northern Housing
Consortium**

**70 new volunteering
opportunities**

UK Research Innovation

COMMUNITY RESEARCH NETWORK



VCAS were one of only 25 organisations across the UK to secured research funding to consider a new community research network that could implement an effective 'bottom-up', community driven methodology that values the community's 'authentic voice' for those often overlooked, marginalised or even invisible.

This was an opportunity to consider a secondary funding application., where communities were at the heart of the development of a new CRN, and to co-create effective tools to develop a framework for change and new learning. This proposal was to enable the 'reversal of the telescope' that would enable VCSE organisations to impact policy and decision makers; creating new effective mechanisms for meaningful community change and sustainability.

The East End

7 Partners

£50,000

spanning two financial years

Supporting Ukrainian Refugees and other displaced people in Sunderland

NAVCA Ukrainian Refugee Fund

The objective of this project was to:

- Build capacity and capability in communities
- Enhance community cohesion and integration through developing stronger links
 - Improved relationships and stronger cross sector collaboration between VCS and statutory bodies

This initial research worked with Sunderland for Ukrainians (SfU International Community Organisation of Sunderland (ICOS); Young Asian Voices (YAV) Friends of the Drop In (FODI); Hope Vineyard Sunderland Church Sunderland Black and Minority Ethnic Network who have 10-member organisations.; North East Business and Innovation Centre, to identify need and co-produce an Implementation Plan.

Other agencies contacted included: Sunderland City Council; Sunderland Connect Network; Integrated Care Services; Erasma Group; Vonne Health Network; Chris Howson – Interfaith Forum; Sunderland Community Soup Kitchen; Swan Lodge and NERAF – addiction support. This programme of work was an initial development to support a new strategy for cohesion going forward.



**19 Organisations
Identified**

**9 Participating
organisations**

£8,822
Awarded

THE OPEN ARMS AWARDS 2023

VCAS Open Arms Awards is a real opportunity to show case and celebrate the VCSE Sector in Sunderland and the phenomenal impact it has on all of the communities we live in.



415
Nominations

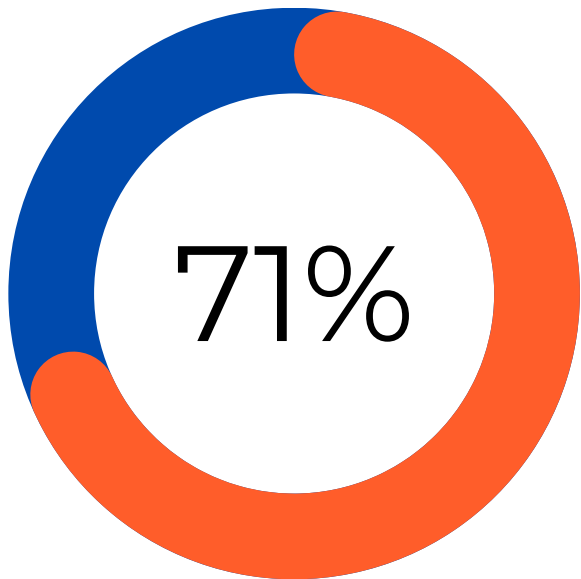
37,000
Votes

22 VCSE
AWARDS

2024 Highlights: VCSE Sector -Taking The Temperature

VCAS is dedicated and committed to providing resources and support to its members that will enable their organisations to thrive and develop. VCAS has build on previous information form the Taking The Temperature surveys and ongoing evaluation to understand sector needs and develop appropriate engagement and training opportunities. This year was no exception!

Over the last year VCAS has worked alongside its members to nurture their success and provide appropriate services. Over 240 VCSE sector organisations in Sunderland have accessed many of those services.



**Increase in demand
for services**



Networking



Funding advice



Funding applications and strategies



Funding & financial surgeries



Governance, trusteeship and board development



Accountancy support

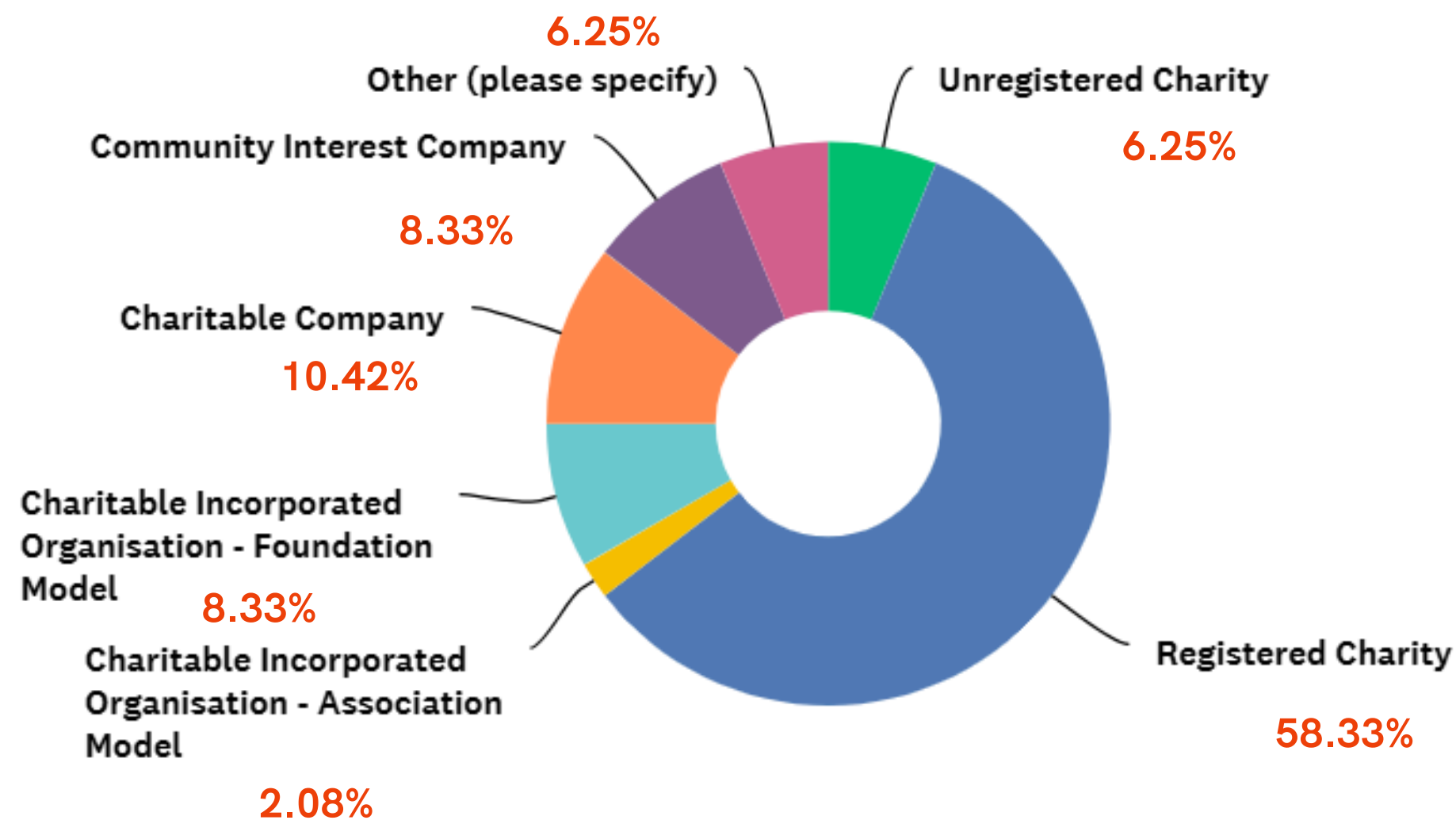


Financial systems



Training

VCAS conduct an annual survey of Sunderland's VCSE Sector, known as 'Taking The Temperature.' This Survey has been undertaken since 2015 to help provide a consistent snapshot about the state of the sector. This year 49 organisations responded an increase of 1 from 2023.



Organisational Structures

Of the 49 organisations that responded to the survey 48 answered this question. Just over 58% were registered charities operating across Sunderland and the outlying districts. This was a 28% increase from last year's survey. In contrast only 8.33% of CICs responded, which was a decrease of over 25%.

It should be noted that a number of organisations are seeking advice and support about governance and legal structures. Many of the CICs that have sought support from VCAS are looking at either the potential to transfer to a CIO or operate other models more appropriate for their operations and activities.

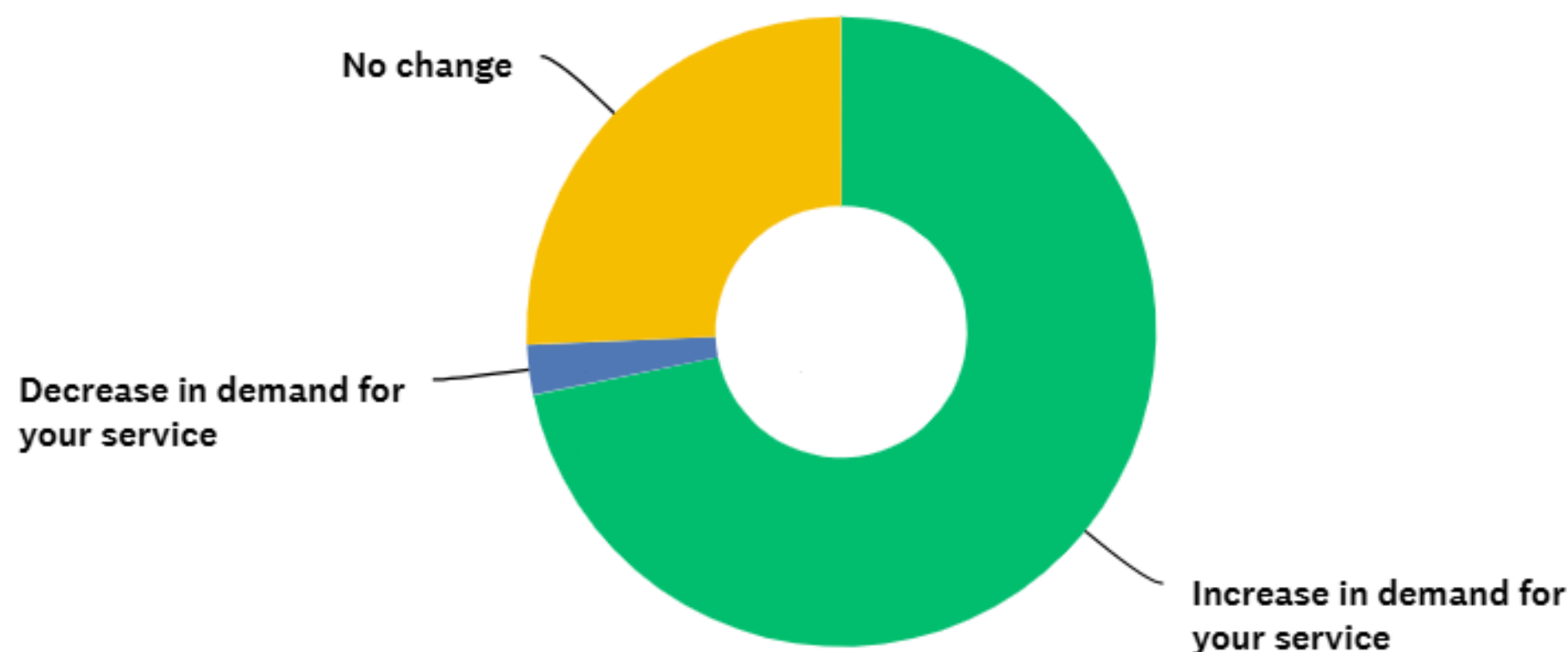
It should also be noted that following many challenges, charities are consolidating their efforts and re-engaging at a number of levels to meet growing community need.

As VCSE Sector organisations across Sunderland have responded throughout the year and adapted to various challenges. WE note that as always despite the challenges these organisations face, many increase delivery to meet increase in demand.

Meeting The Community Needs

Of the 49 organisations that responded to the survey 39 answered this question about the demand for their services.

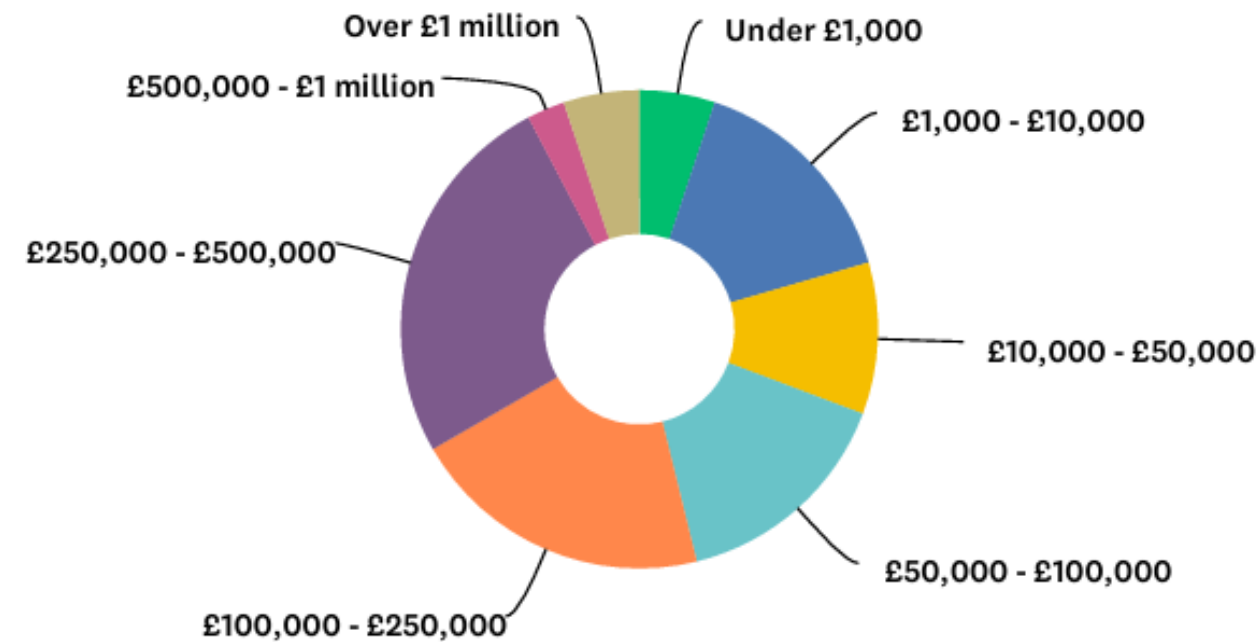
- 72% of those organisations had seen an increase in demand of their services. This shows a consistent trend across both 2023 and 2024. In their responses the primary driver was the continuing impact cost of living crisis
- Approximately 26% saw no change, with only 2.5 % seeing a decrease in demand for services.



“We have seen more of a need for community support, more of a need for support with the cost of living crisis”.

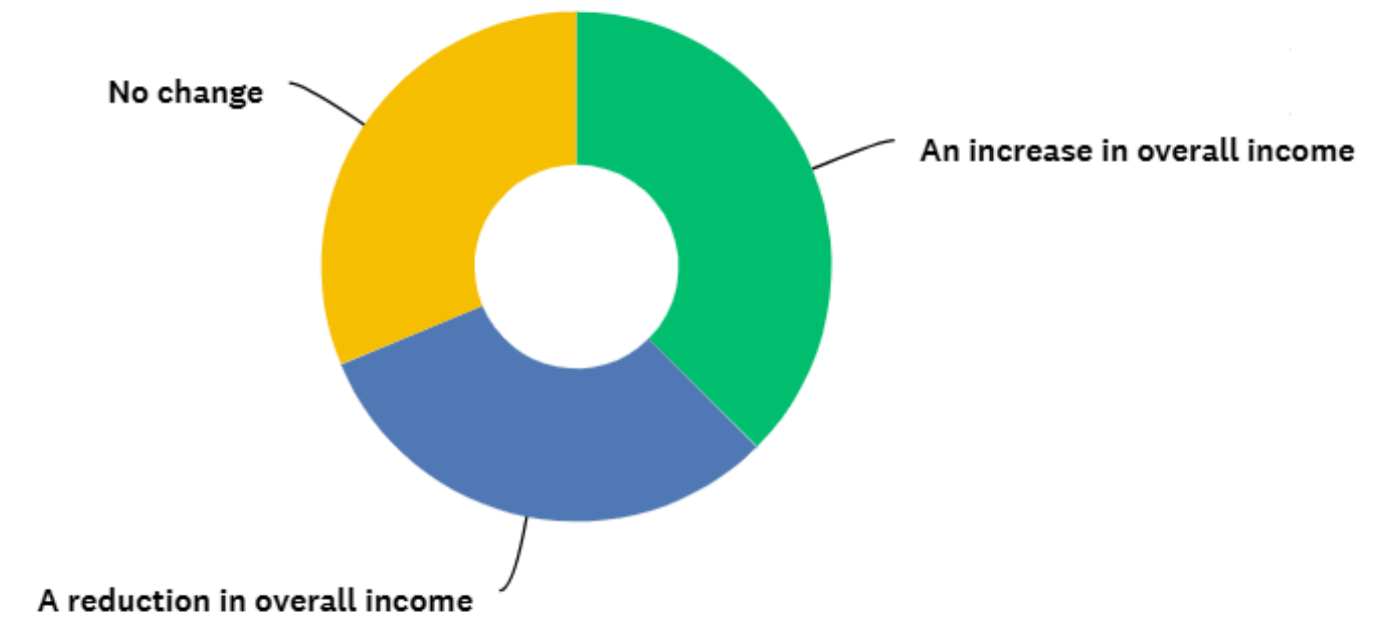
“We have started to support more older people who are unemployed or looking to do volunteering to improve their skills and confidence”

Income in the last 12 month period for VCSE Sector Organisations



Of the 49 organisations who responded, 39 answered this question.
25.6% of those that responded had an income of between £250k-£500k. This response showed over 20% increase in those organisations responding within this income bracket .
Interestingly, those organisations reporting in the £50k-£100k nearly doubled. While those at lower end under £10k fell by 10%

Impact on Organisational Income



From the period 2023 to 2024, the survey results suggest that the impact on organisational income, whether that is an increase, decrease or remains the same, seems to have stabilized. These consecutive surveys are showing consistent results, which suggest the VCSE sector is beginning to navigate out of the previous challenges of the pandemic and Brexit, whilst still navigating increases in demand on services due to ongoing cost of living crisis.

VCAS are dedicated to understanding the needs of the sector enabling those organisation to respond effectively to community need. Those that responded identified 81 categories . These included the following:



FUNDING:

Funding is always one of the key issues that affect organisations. Not surprisingly this came out strongest. It included issues around core funding, long term staff costs, financial responsibilities for assets. This all has an impact on the future proofing of an organisation and long term planning



VOLUNTEERS:

This area continues to be a challenge for many organisation following the pandemic. Many organisations identified recruitment and retainment of volunteers to support thier organisations and services. They also noted a need for younger volunteers and developing a leadership programme.



RISING PRICES:

Not surprisingly the increase in core costs, energy process and the overall increase in services and demand has an a impactful affect on an organisation's cost calculations

VCAS are dedicated to understanding the needs of the sector enabling those organisation to respond effectively to community need. Those that responded identified a number of areas . These included:



GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE:

The challenges for organisations are ongoing as they need to refresh and review all their policies and procedures and try and ensure best practice for their organisations. This includes the right legal structure .



MARKETING AND RECOGNITION:

Many of the organisations we work with an so busy delivering and supporting service users, often consistent marketing and promotion gets left behind. However having a consistent presence is a valuable commodity for your users and for funders.



DEMONSTRATING IMPACT:

Not surprisingly organisations sometimes struggle with showing and effectively measuring the impact of their work.

Statement of Accounts



Net cash used in investing	(5,568)	(1,570)	(7,883)	(6,527)
Equivalents, end of	\$ 10,610	\$ 4,023	\$ 10,610	\$ 4,023



Expenditure

£84,679



Income

£55,212

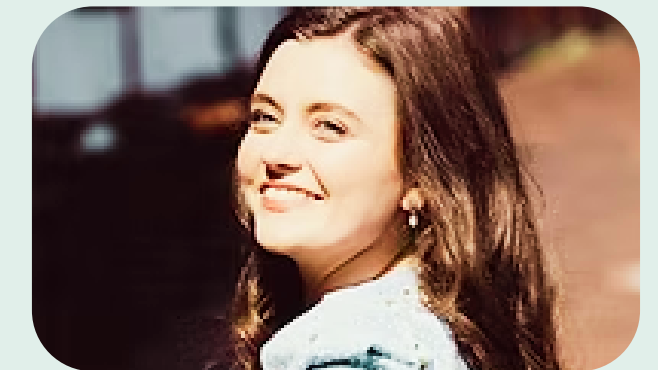
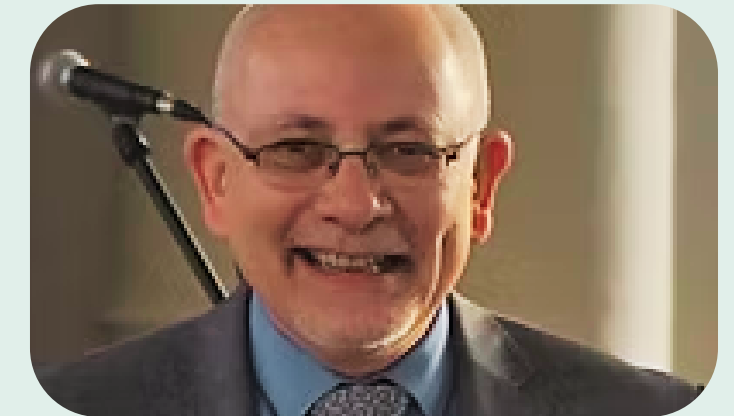


Assets

£102,208

Connect With Us

🏠 15 Norfolk St



🌐 Website

[www..vcas2020.org.uk](http://www.vcas2020.org.uk)

✉ E-mail

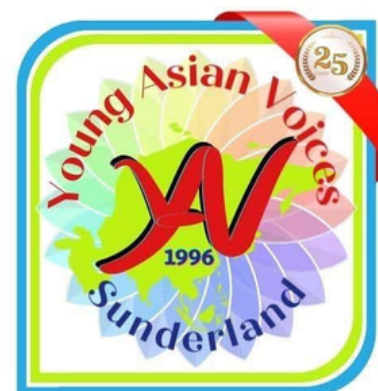
info@vcas.org.uk

📞 Phone

01915651566

📍 Address

15 Norfolk Street, Sunderland SR1 1EA



Thank you to all our partners
and funders who
have supported and worked
with us to meet the needs of
our VCSE Sector organisations
in Sunderland



VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ACTION SUNDERLAND

(A Company limited by Guarantee)

Directors Report and Financial Statements

For the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

Company No. 01759477

Charity No. 702930



Prepared By:

Julie Maxwell MICB
JM Bookkeeping
11 Edith Street
Jarrow
NE32 5HS

Legal and Administrative

Registered office address

15 Norfolk Street
Sunderland
Tyne and Wear
SR1 1EA

Company Number: 01759477

Charity Number: 702930

Officers

J Hilton	Chair
S Armstrong	Vice Chair
R Bikaya	
K Lowe	
K Ramanathas	
P Brigham	(appointed 23 rd November 2023)
A Cummings	(appointed 20 th November 2023)
A Lowery	(appointed 10 th February 2024)
K Stabler	(resigned 5 th December 2023)
M Bulmer	(resigned 20 th November 2023)

Bankers

Unity Trust

The directors for the purposes of company law have pleasure in presenting their report and the unaudited financial statements of Voluntary and Community Action Sunderland (The Company) for the period ended 31st March 2024

Principle Activity

To support voluntary and community sector organisations which reside or operate in the City of Sunderland and its immediate surrounding area (hereinafter called "the area of benefit") so that they can function more effectively.

To promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community, in the area of benefit and in particular the advancement of education, sport and leisure, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness.

To promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the above purposes and to that end bring together representatives of the voluntary organisations and statutory authorities with the area of benefit.

Statement of trustee's responsibilities

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.
- The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and the group and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Approved On behalf of the board

Director Signature



.....

NameStephen Armstrong

Date4th December 2024

Independent Examiners Report

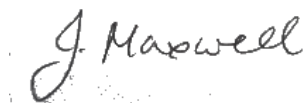
I report on the financial statements of The Company for the period ended 31st March 2024.

Independent Examiners Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - i. To keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - ii. To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (the FRSSE) (effective January 2015);
- (2) To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable to proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed



Date 19/11/2024

Julie Maxwell – MICB - Independent Examiner

JM Book keeping
11 Edith Street
Jarrow
Tyne and Wear
NE32 5HS

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Income and Expenditure Account

Period ending 31/03/2024

Income	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Grant Income				
Community Foundation	10,000		10,000	15000
Other	1,724		1,724	
James Knott	7,000		7,000	
Ballinger Trust	12,500		12,500	7000
NAVCA	8,822		8,822	
UKRI Grant	15,166		15,166	
Other Trading Activity	0		0	62
Bank Interest	0		0	1724
Total Income	55,212	0	55,212	23,786
Expenditure				
Staff Salaries	43,121	0	43,121	39,584
Repayments	2,100	0	2,100	1,736
Project Costs	9,580	0	9,580	1,348
Insurance	292	0	292	302
Utilities	1,332	0	1,332	1,286
Consultancy	15,520		15,520	0
Office Costs	10,496	0	10,496	6,962
Alarms / Maintenance	0	0	0	358
Subs	84		84	267
Travelling	170	0	170	0
Accounts	651	0	651	350
Depreciation			0	24,635
Bank Charges	1,334	0	1,334	72
Total Expenditure	84,679	0	84,679	76,901
Surplus/(deficit) for year	-29,467	0	-29,467	-53,115
Opening Reserves	130,344	0	130,344	183,449
Closing Reserves	100,877	0	100,877	130,334

Statement of Financial Position – Voluntary and Community Action Sunderland – period ended 31/03/2024

	2023 2024	2023 2024	2022 2023
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Assets			
Depreciation	<u> </u>	0	
Current Assets			
Unity Current Account	102,208		<u>130,684</u>
		102,208	<u>130,684</u>
Debtors			
Total Assets		102,208	130,684
Current Liabilities			
Accruals	<u>1,341</u>		<u>350</u>
		1,341	350
Current Assets less		100,867	130,334
Current Liabilities			
Net Assets		<u>100,867</u>	<u>130,334</u>
 Represented by:			
Profit and Loss Account 31/03/2024	-29,467		-53,115
Funds C/fwd.	130,334		183,449
Balance as at			
01/04/2024		<u>100,867</u>	<u>130,334</u>

The company was entitled to an exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

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

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

Approved by the Board for issue on 4th December 2024.....

Director Name ...Alan Cummings.....

Director Signature



Notes

1. Accounting Policies

1.1 Accounting Convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008)

1.2 Income

Income from fees is recognised in the accounts when invoiced unless it relates to future accounting periods, in which case it is deferred and included in creditors

Grants / Income receivable are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate specifically to a future accounting period, in which case, they are deferred.

Where a grant is received relating to a future accounting period, the profit and loss account shows the gross amount together with the changes in the amount deferred to future accounting periods. Deferred grant income at the year-end is included in creditors.

1.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is brought in to the financial statements on the accruals basis

1.4 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed Assets are initially recorded at cost

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of the assets, less its estimated residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

20% straight line

2 Operating Loss

	2024
	£
Operating Profit is stated after charging:	(29,467)
Depreciation of owned fixed assets	0
	<hr style="width: 100%; border: 0.5px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> (29,467)

3 Taxation on ordinary activities

	2024
Current Tax	£
Tax based on period 31st March 2022	0
Amount written back from previous period	0
Tax Charge to Income and Expenditure	<u>0</u>

4 Tangible Fixed Assets

	£
Net Book Value on transfer	0
Additions in period	0
Cost at 31 st March 2023	<u>0</u>
Depreciation	0
Sale of Fixed Asset	<u> </u>
Total as at 31 st March 2024	<u><u>0</u></u>
Net Book Value	<u> </u>
At 1 st April 2024	0

5 Debtors:

2024
£ 0

£ 0

6 Creditors: falling due in one year

2024
£

Trade Creditors

Accruals - Accounts	350
Accruals - other	991

1,341

7. Funds	2024
	£
Opening Balance	130,334
Decrease in Assets	(29467)
Balance carried forward	<div></div> <div>100,867</div>

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Director Signature 

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Independent Examiners Report

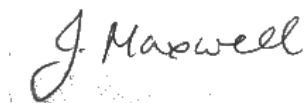
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Total Assets		102,208	130,684
Current Liabilities			
Accruals	<u>1,341</u>		<u>350</u>
		1,341	350
Current Assets less		100,867	130,334
Current Liabilities			
Net Assets		<u>100,867</u>	<u>130,334</u>
Represented by:			
Profit and Loss Account 31/03/2024	-29,467		-53,115
Funds C/fwd.	130,334		183,449
Balance as at			
01/04/2024		<u>100,867</u>	<u>130,334</u>

The company was entitled to an exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

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

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

Approved by the Board for issue on 4th December 2024.....

Director Name ...Alan Cummings.....

Director Signature



Notes

1. Accounting Policies

1.1 Accounting Convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008)

1.2 Income

Income from fees is recognised in the accounts when invoiced unless it relates to future accounting periods, in which case it is deferred and included in creditors

Grants / Income receivable are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate specifically to a future accounting period, in which case, they are deferred.

Where a grant is received relating to a future accounting period, the profit and loss account shows the gross amount together with the changes in the amount deferred to future accounting periods. Deferred grant income at the year-end is included in creditors.

1.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is brought in to the financial statements on the accruals basis

1.4 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed Assets are initially recorded at cost

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of the assets, less its estimated residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

20% straight line

2 Operating Loss

	2024
	£
Operating Profit is stated after charging:	(29,467)
Depreciation of owned fixed assets	0
	<hr style="width: 100%; border: 0.5px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> (29,467)

3 Taxation on ordinary activities

	2024
Current Tax	£
Tax based on period 31st March 2022	0
Amount written back from previous period	0
Tax Charge to Income and Expenditure	<u>0</u>

4 Tangible Fixed Assets

	£
Net Book Value on transfer	0
Additions in period	0
Cost at 31 st March 2023	<u>0</u>
Depreciation	0
Sale of Fixed Asset	<u> </u>
Total as at 31 st March 2024	<u><u>0</u></u>
Net Book Value	<u> </u>
At 1 st April 2024	0

5 Debtors:

2024
£ 0

£ 0

6 Creditors: falling due in one year

2024
£

Trade Creditors

Accruals - Accounts	350
Accruals - other	991

1,341

7. Funds	2024
	£
Opening Balance	130,334
Decrease in Assets	(29,467)
Balance carried forward	<hr/> 100,867 <hr/>