

Annual report & accounts

Year to 31 March 2024

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About us

Our vision

That everyone who becomes a parent feels confident, connected, and safe, because we believe that parents help build the foundations of the future.

Our mission

We're the charity that supports people as they become parents.

Through pregnancy, birth and early parenthood:

- We create opportunities for parents to connect with others.
- We share evidence-based information that parents can trust.
- We empower parents to make decisions that are right for them.
- We listen to parents' experiences and campaign to make things better.
- We build local capacity in communities so we can be there for parents, now and in the future.

Our values

Our values guide everything we do at NCT. They help us to navigate the way we work and behave and are interwoven throughout our strategy.

The next five years will see our commitment to these values deepen and grow, as we continue to embed them across our work.

At NCT, we are:

- **Welcoming** – We are always welcoming, creating connections, and building communities.
- **Collaborative** – We achieve better outcomes by working together.
- **Inclusive** – We ensure equity and inclusion are core to who we are and what we do.
- **Bold** – We are bold, brave, and progressive.
- **Trusted** – We provide trusted, high-quality, evidence-based information, support, and services.

Our impact in numbers

Support in the community...

70,000

hours given by 3,000 volunteers
to support local parents.



Over

95,000

people attended nearly 7,000
community events, including
over 1,450 NCT Walk & Talk
events and more than 3,155
NCT Bumps & Babies events.



3,700

parents were supported
through our perinatal peer
support programmes.



Responding to the cost of living crisis

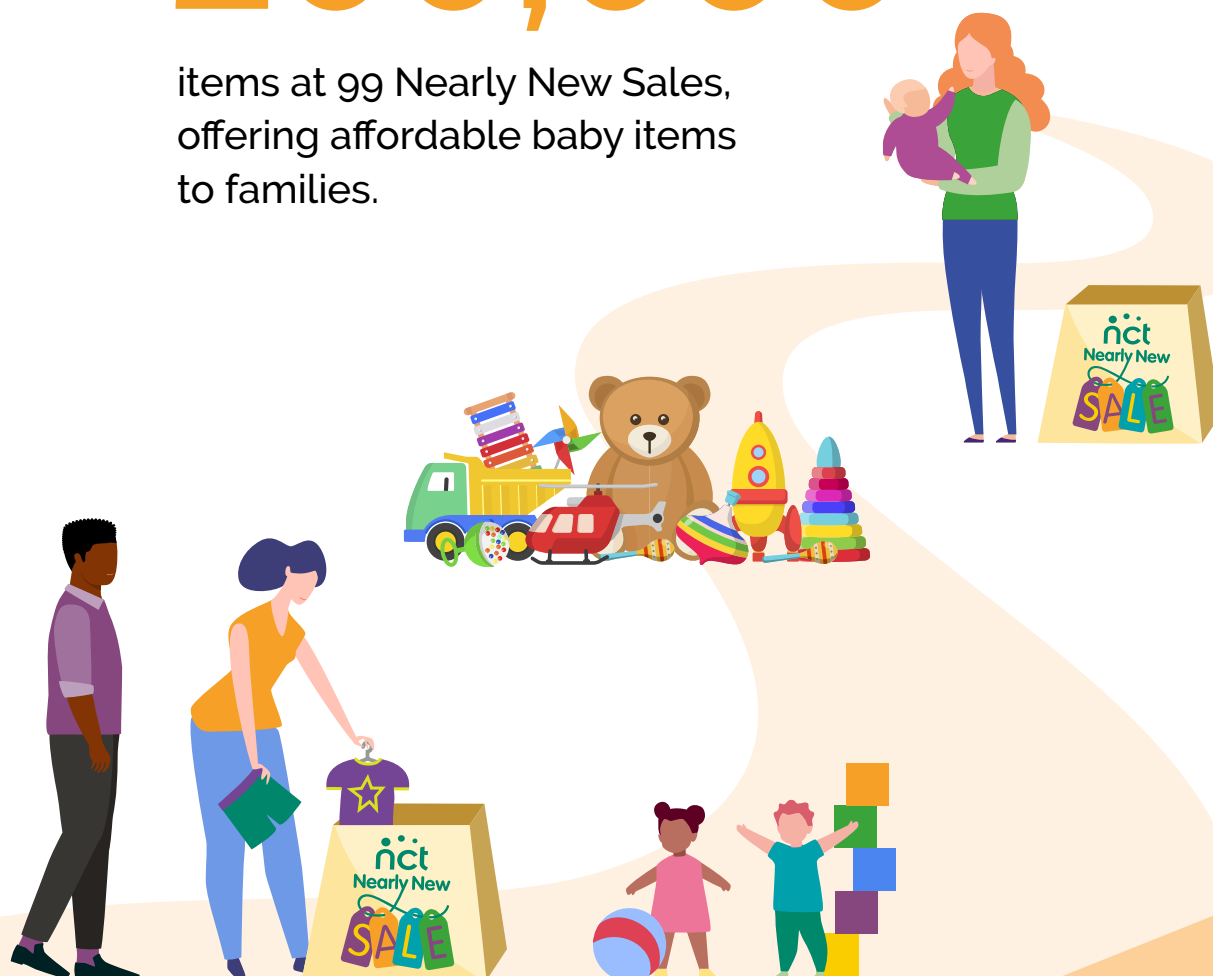
Over
3,000



Baby Bundle items sent
to new families in need.

Sold
200,000

items at 99 Nearly New Sales,
offering affordable baby items
to families.



Trusted antenatal and postnatal education

Nearly

66,500

parents were supported through NCT courses, run by over **530 practitioners**.



95%

of parents rated their NCT Antenatal course as 'good' or 'excellent'.

90%

of course attendees felt part of a supportive group of parents and 96% are still in touch after they have had their baby.

Infant feeding...

Grew

our **breastfeeding peer support** to support nearly **10,000 people** – 3,000 more than the year before – in postnatal and neonatal wards, as well as in community drop-in groups, NCT Baby Cafes, clinics, and home visits.



Over

6,300

parents attended NHS infant feeding sessions, facilitated by NCT across four NHS Trusts.

Ran

60

weekly NCT Baby Cafes providing feeding support to 7,580 parents in their local community.



Spoke to

7,740

people who called the NCT Infant Feeding Line and made the service available over bank holidays and religious festivals.

Information parents can trust...

Over
41 million

people reached via the media.



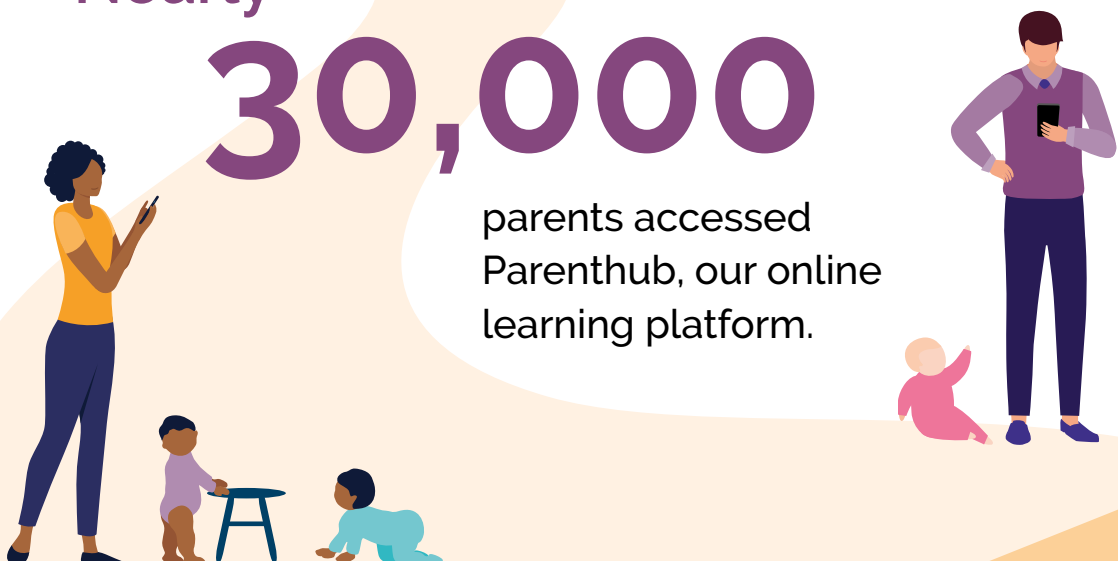
Over
7 million

people visited our website, including over 5 million views for our pregnancy, birth and life as a parent content.



Nearly
30,000

parents accessed Parenthub, our online learning platform.





Chair's welcome and farewell



This year marked my last as Chair of Trustees of this incredible charity. It has been my pleasure and privilege to be part of NCT's Board for the last seven years, and to have had the opportunity to Chair has been an honour.

I've witnessed first-hand the enormous difference NCT makes to so many pregnant women and expectant and new parents across the UK in those vital early stages of parenting. As we embark on the next phase of our *For Every Parent* strategy, the time is right for me to hand the baton over to someone new.

But what a high to leave on. Following the launch of *For Every Parent*, NCT grew in impact and reach, continued to innovate and be there for parents. To think that the number of parents who we supported in-person last year exceeded the capacity of Wembley Stadium is amazing.

There are no days off at NCT, because there's always someone who needs our support. Today might be your antenatal class, the day of your baby's birth, the moment you need help with feeding your baby, or to talk to someone about your mental health. I would like to thank the staff, volunteers and practitioners who work tirelessly to make life better for parents. They give and they go the extra mile every day.

Last year we continued to strengthen and diversify our Board of Trustees. At our 2023 AGM, members elected two new Trustees, Mikayla Pencross and Julien Haye, to the NCT Board to help us continue our vital work to support people as they become parents. Julien has actively advised NCT on EDI matters, shaping our strategy, mission, and values. He brings a perspective as an LGBTQIA+ parent to the Board. Mikayla has been an NCT Antenatal Practitioner and Breastfeeding Counsellor since 2020 and brings a wealth of experience of NCT's grassroots communities and delivering services to parents on the ground. We are delighted to have them both on the Board.

My sincere thanks to all the Trustees who give their time to steward our charity. I would particularly like to thank Susy Broekhuizen, who has been actively involved with NCT for over 25 years and who served on the Board until the end of the 2023 Annual General Meeting. I am also grateful to the six independent committee and other group members who support the Trustees and bring a wide range of perspectives to critical issues, helping us to stay on top of rapid changes in the external environment.

I am proud of who we are and what we have achieved together.

We remain focused on supporting and empowering parents to make decisions that are right for them. This commitment runs through everything we do.

I know we can reach more parents, do more to support them, and work hard to create a system that works better for them at this critical, life-changing stage of their lives. I look forward to seeing our impact continue to grow once the new NCT Chair is in place.

Stephanie Maurel

Chair of Trustees

President's welcome



This past year has been an extraordinary journey for our charity, one that has seen us grow stronger and more impactful in our mission to support parents. Our charity's values—being welcoming, collaborative, inclusive, bold, and trusted—are the pillars upon which we build our vision of a thriving, supportive community. The stories in this report paint a vivid picture of the positive changes we've made and how we bring these values to life.

Welcoming to all

At the heart of our charity lies the commitment to be welcoming. This year, our local community groups have flourished, creating safe spaces where parents can connect, share experiences, and build lasting friendships. Take Emma, for instance, a new mother who felt isolated after moving to a new town. Volunteering as an NCT Community Builder, Emma built a network of welcoming, supportive parents and hosted local events, which filled a gap in her local community. Now she welcomes other new parents to the community – it's amazing to see this impact grow.

The power of collaboration

The success of our charity is deeply rooted in collaboration. By working together within our own NCT community and with our local delivery partners, we have achieved remarkable outcomes. Lauren's story is a great example of this - she received support from NCT's Glasgow Breastfeeding Buddies after a traumatic birth. Lauren was supported by our specially trained Neonatal Peer Supporters who provided essential information, as well as emotional and practical assistance, to help Lauren establish breastfeeding and feel confident and informed to introduce combination feeding for her newborn. Collaborating closely with our NHS colleagues – and thanks to funding from the Scottish Government and NHS – we helped thousands of parents like Lauren to feel supported and empowered to make the decision that are right for them and their babies.

Championing inclusivity

Inclusion is core to who we are and what we do. Be that launching our inclusive NCT Language Guide to our community, rolling out our Allyship Programme, or co-producing a new service to support a specific local group, we ensure that we cater to the diverse needs of the communities we partner with. Listen to Christie's* experience, for example. She reached out to me, as a Breast Feeding Councillor, for support on inducing lactation so that both she and her pregnant partner could breastfeed their baby. Months later, when the birth mother faced challenges with latching, I made a home visit and helped resolve the issue. Realising later that these two instances were connected, affirmed for me that our inclusive support for LGBTQIA+ parents is making a meaningful impact.

Embracing boldness and progress

We are bold and progressive in our approach, continuously evolving to meet the changing needs of families. This year we have co-produced new services with local parents. NCT *Parents in Mind for Dads and Partners* in Newham launched last year – with thanks to generous support of Newham Council – to offer a community-based support system for fathers and non-birthing partners experiencing mild to moderate mental health challenges. At a time when community services in the UK could become more impactful through co-production, NCT is really leading the way in just how meaningful and extensive community-based solutions can be.

Earning parents' trust

Trust is the cornerstone of our relationship with communities and parents. We provide high-quality, evidence-based information, support, and services that families can rely on. Last year my own local NCT Baby Café welcomed hundreds of parents through our doors.

“ *This space has become more than just a café; it's a sanctuary of support which parents trust.* ”

Looking ahead with hope and focus

None of our work would be possible without the dedication of our volunteers, the generosity of our donors and partners, and the resilience of the parents we serve. Despite the challenges today's parents face, entering an underfunded and understaffed NHS maternity system, our resolve is firm – we're here to support everyone who becomes a parent to navigate their unique experiences of pregnancy, birth, and early parenthood.

Here's to another year of living our values and making a difference, one parent at a time.

Sherry Bevan

NCT President

Chief Executive's welcome



Becoming a parent changes you. It shifts your priorities. It can change your body, the way your brain is wired, and how you sleep. Parenthood changes how we think about ourselves and our place in the world. And it can change how we spend our time, energy, and money.

Being cared for during this monumental life change is a human right. That's why our charity has a clear and unwavering mission: to support people as they become parents and ensure that they feel confident, connected, and safe.

Over the last four years, NCT has been changing too. We have been transforming and modernising our charity, so we are equipped to make our mission a reality by supporting and educating all new and expectant parents as they navigate pregnancy, birth, and the early weeks and months with a new baby.

As NCT evolves, we are building on our proud 70-year history of advocating for pregnant women and new parents, listening to them, campaigning for their maternity rights, and striving to provide the most accurate, comprehensive, and impartial information and services.

Becoming a parent has always had its challenges, but today we are preparing people to enter a broken NHS maternity system in which they have an unacceptably high likelihood of negative¹ or traumatic experiences², where they may receive little or no postnatal support³, and after which they will raise their child in an incredibly tough social and economic environment.

It's shocking that in 2023 almost half of NHS maternity services were regarded as inadequate or requiring improvement when judged on safety⁴. All are dangerously underfunded and understaffed⁵. The stark reality is, this means in the UK today, a pregnant woman or person is just as likely as not to enter a maternity ward that doesn't meet basic safety standards.

Black and Asian women, as well as women living in deprivation, are disproportionately affected by these failings⁶. They are more likely to die in childbirth. So are their babies. These are devastating inequities in healthcare access, quality, and treatment, which have lasting, and often traumatic, impacts of the lives of women, parents, and their babies.

Rising cost of living pressures are felt more acutely by new parents too. Many struggle to adapt to the new expenses and changes to financial circumstances involved in raising a child⁷. Some face severe financial stress and social isolation.

Parents need urgent help to tackle these complex and unprecedented challenges, along with the day-to-day realities of life being an expectant or new parent. We know that education and personalised care this time improves the health and wellbeing of babies, which goes on to secure lifelong positive social outcomes. There's just so much for the UK to gain in getting this right.

“It's time to make change happen.”

With a new Government in Westminster, there is a huge opportunity ahead of us to address the crisis in maternity and postnatal care. Some changes won't be possible overnight. Rebalancing the shortage in midwives, for example, will take time, leadership, and dedicated investment. But other changes are possible now, such as setting an explicit target to close the Black and Asian maternal and neonatal mortality gap.

In NCT's *For Every Parent* strategy, which launched last year, we committed to reigniting our focus on campaigning and community action. We're here to listen to parents' experiences, amplify their voices, and collaborate to achieve this urgently needed change.

As we respond to the changing needs of parents, we have also committed to reaching more parents with more impact, tackling health inequalities, and making our services and content more inclusive and accessible. We have expanded our free-to-access services ensuring every parent can access education and support, regardless of their circumstances. We've grown and developed our services for women and new parents needing support with their mental health or with infant feeding challenges, as we know these issues are among the top challenges facing new parents.

We have been chosen by increasing numbers of funders – from NHS Trusts and local authorities to The National Lottery – to work together to deliver programmes of support in local communities. And we have been delighted to receive new forms of support from trusts and foundations, like the City Bridge Foundation and Royal Docks Trust.

We now have more services online, and in the community, and we continue working to make everything we do accessible, inclusive and culturally safe. Last year, for example, we started rolling out new trauma-informed and anti-discriminatory practice CPD (continuous professional development) for our course tutors, so they have the necessary skills to support all parents and their unique experiences.

I am extremely grateful to all those who have supported our work this year in so many ways – individual members, practitioners, students, staff, volunteers and peer supporters, health professionals, partner organisations, supporters and funders – and without whom our work and impact simply wouldn't be possible.

My message to our partners and communities is to keep up your energy, momentum, and dedication – parents need us now more than ever and we've got big plans ahead.

As parents steward the next generation, they bring about great change. Together, we can ensure that every parent has the education and support they need to help build strong and positive foundations for the future.

Angela McConville

Chief Executive

¹ Maternity survey 2023 - Care Quality Commission (cqc.org.uk)

² Birth Trauma Inquiry Report for Publication_May13_2024.pdf (theo-clarke.org.uk)

³ CDP-2022-0174.pdf (parliament.uk)

⁴ Maternity survey 2023 - Care Quality Commission (cqc.org.uk)

⁵ NHS maternity staffing crisis putting babies' lives at risk (rcm.org.uk)

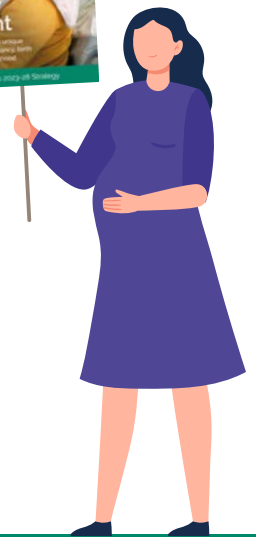
⁶ MBRRACE-UK Perinatal Mortality Surveillance: Report for births in 2022, Reports | MBRRACE-UK | NPEU (ox.ac.uk)

⁷ Barnardo's report 'At what cost? The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on children and young people', 2022, Cost-of-living report: impacts on children and young people | Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)



Strategic review

Our *For Every Parent* strategy, which launched last year, provides us with a bold and clear plan for the next five years, with a focus on four strategic pillars:



More parents, more impact

Real lives, real change

Great people, great results

Strong foundations, strong future

We're proud of the progress we've made in the last 12 months to reach more people, do more to support new and expectant parents, and work to create an equitable system that supports all parents at this critical, life-changing stage of their lives.

More parents, more impact

We support and empower all people as they become parents – through pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, infant feeding, and early parenthood. Over the past year we've been building even bigger communities of new parents, tackling health inequalities, and making our services and content more inclusive and accessible.

Community based support, powered by volunteers

From Cardiff to Aberdeen and everywhere in-between, we create opportunities for parents to connect with other parents. It is through the dedication and passion of our volunteers and practitioners that we continue to make a meaningful difference and host safe, non-judgmental spaces for parents to share experiences, gain insights and build connections in their local communities.

Last year more than **3,000 volunteers** gave **70,000 hours** of their time to support local parents. Their efforts enabled over **95,000 people** to attend nearly **7,000 community events**, including over **1,450 NCT Walk & Talk** events and more than **3,155 NCT Bumps & Babies** events. And around 3,700 parents were supported through our perinatal peer support programmes, such as NCT Parents in Mind.

We created a new volunteer role – NCT Community Builders – to talk to parents to understand what they need in their local area, and then encourage people to get involved, volunteer, and build inclusive communities from the ground up. We've recruited 13 new NCT Community Builders in the first year alone, and we're excited to see these communities flourish in the years to come.



Local parent grows support group – one parent at a time

Last year we created a new volunteer role called the NCT Community Builder to encourage new, parent-led communities to grow. Emma saw the role advertised and started volunteering in September. “I moved to the area while on maternity leave and loved the idea of having a project that would help me to build connections with – and between – other parents, so I started an NCT Walk & Talk in September 2023,” Emma told us. Soon after that, as Emma’s volunteer community began to grow, together they responded to requests from parents and set up a regular NCT Bumps & Babies group. “Our sessions are led by an NCT Breastfeeding Counsellor, who gives support and guidance for all stages of the infant feeding journey.”

As an NCT Community Builder, Emma is focused on linking up with other community and charitable groups. “Warwickshire Family Service recently came in to tell parents what they offer, and we also have a good relationship with Stratford Baby Bank. It is an honour to see the branch activity grow and reach more parents. We hope to open a Sling Library and Nearly New Sales soon.” Emma Waight, NCT Community Builder, Stratford Upon Avon.



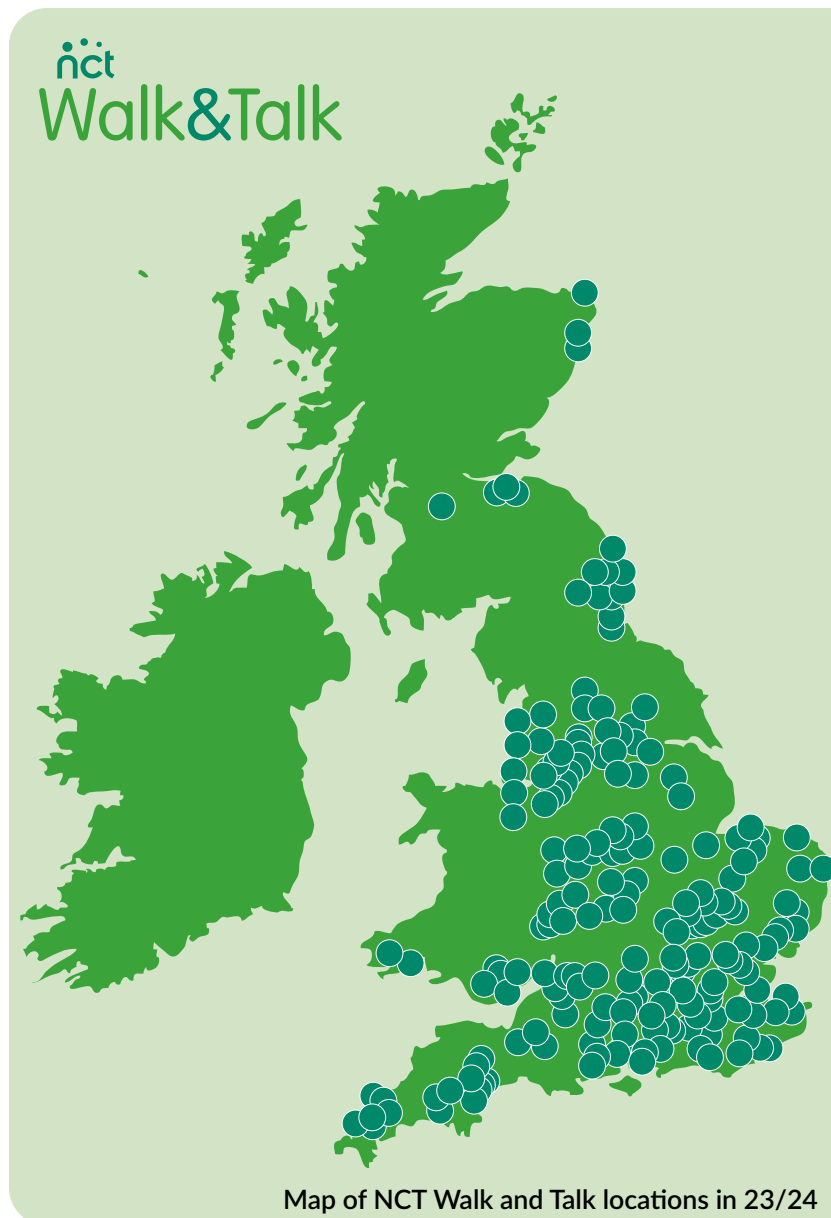
Parents gather for an NCT Walk & Talk in Stratford Upon Avon



Emma Waight, NCT Community Builder, Stratford Upon Avon

Walking and talking under rainbows

This year NCT volunteers hosted thousands of NCT Walk and Talks across the country, creating moments to meet new parents in the great outdoors. One NCT student and volunteer, Laurène Bizarro, decided to host her Walk & Talks in Brighton to mark Pride. “Seven years ago, while expecting my son, I vividly recall feeling isolated and struggling to connect with other families. As an NCT volunteer and student, my priority is to create an environment where no LGBTQIA+ family feels alone, anxious about others’ opinions, and where they can be confident that they are seen, heard, and safe. What better moment than to go for a walk together to mark Pride.”



Parents supporting parents to navigate mental health challenges

NCT's local peer-to-peer support groups play a crucial role in assisting parents with mild to moderate mental health challenges. Delivered by local parent volunteers, NCT Parents in Mind provides safe, non-judgmental spaces where people can share their experiences, talk about how they are feeling, and gain insights from others facing similar struggles.

Groups are led by Volunteer Peer Supporters, who each have lived experience of the challenges early parenthood can present and are passionate about making sure new parents don't feel alone. With the support of NCT's accredited training, and through their own experiences, they can help to bridge the gap between professional mental health services and the individual's personal journey.

We're proud of how this support network has grown – last year our Volunteer Peer Supporters were there for 3,700 parents who were struggling with their own mental health. Our thanks to all the parents, trainers, and funders who have helped make this work so far possible.

We are looking to expand this work to be there for more parents. To discuss support options and the possibility of commissioning Parents in Mind in your local area, please contact programme.delivery@nct.org.uk.



NCT Parents in Mind timeline

NCT secured Department for Education funding for two-year pilot programme to explore what good quality volunteer-led community care for women and people who are pregnant or have given birth, experiencing mild-moderate mental health difficulties should look like. Our inaugural NCT Parents in Mind peer support programme began supporting parents in Coventry & Warwickshire.



2016



NCT wins national award from Maternal Mental Health Alliance for Parents in Mind.

2017

NCT's Parents in Mind peer support programme launched in Widnes and Runcorn and London Borough of Newham.

2019

All Parents in Mind sites that launched during the pilot were awarded continuation funding through Local Authorities, NHS Trusts, and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

Parents in Mind support extended in the North-West of England, to Halton, Warrington, and St Helens. A service for dads and non-birthing partners was also set up in St Helens.



NCT launches its 'Hidden Half' campaign, highlighting research that showed that around half of new mothers' mental health problems don't get picked up by a health professional and calling for funding for dedicated, 6-week GP check-ups.

2020

The English government listened to #HiddenHalf supporters and announced that GP postnatal checks will be funded in England from April 2020, so every new mother will be entitled to a dedicated appointment with her GP practice to discuss her own health and mental health at around 6-8 weeks after she has a baby.

2022

Parents across Newham start working together to co-produce a service for fathers and non-birthing partners with mental health challenges.



2023

NCT pilots a peer support programme in Newham for fathers and non-birthing partners and goes on to establish a well-attended group, awarded funding from Newham Council.

Our impact continues to grow! 3,673 parents were supported through NCT's perinatal peer support programmes in the last year.

2023/24

We now have over 250 peer supporters volunteering across NCT's services.



NCT is awarded funding from East Sussex Family Hubs to offer mental health support for new dads and non-birth partners.

NCT is awarded funding from Hartlepool Borough Council to run support groups across the community and in Family Hubs.

Bonds between fathers reduces isolation in Newham

NCT's Parents in Mind Group in Newham launched last year – with thanks to the support of Newham Council – to offer a community-based support system for fathers and non-birthing partners. Co-produce with local parents, this service is specifically designed to address barriers in receiving accessible support for mild-moderate mental health challenges.

Malik* came to NCT during a turbulent period in his life, struggling to adapt to his new role as a father and single parent amidst personal upheavals and unresolved trauma. Feeling overwhelmed and isolated, he reached out to the NCT group, seeking support and guidance.

The group provided a safe space for Malik to connect with other fathers who had faced similar challenges. Through regular meetings via What'sApp, phone and groups, Malik engaged in open discussions that addressed not only practical aspects of parenting but also emotional and mental health support.

Malik developed bonds with the other parents through peer-to-peer mentorship. One of the peer-to-peer supporters who had spent time with Malik, shared, "When I first joined the group, I felt like I was drowning. But here, I found my anchor. I knew I had to pass that lifeline on." Malik said: "Joining the Dad's Group gave me a new perspective on fatherhood and helped me see that my struggles don't define my ability to be a good dad."

*Names have been changed to protect the parent's identity.



Newham parent attends NCT's group for fathers and non-birthing partners



One-to-one support helps mother overcome fears

Jamilla* was referred to Parents in Mind by her Health Visitor after experiencing heightened anxiety since the birth of her 7-week-old baby. Despite having a supportive partner and family, Jamilla felt that this support was often focused on the baby, leaving her without a space to express her own feelings.

Jamilla's speech impediment, which worsened when she was feeling anxious, meant that she lacked the confidence to attend baby groups and meet new people, so NCT's Parents in Mind team offered one-on-one support over the phone. "I'm really grateful to have had the one-to-one phone calls," Jamilla recalled, "[it] gave me time to build up my confidence to going to group as I stutter when nervous, the thought of walking into a group full of people I didn't know made me feel anxious." At its worst, this anxiety often led to her avoiding new spaces or leaving abruptly due to her stutter, feeling embarrassed and judged.

Thanks to the strong connection she built with her peer supporter over the phone, Jamilla grew in confidence to eventually meet in person. "Without this encouragement, I wouldn't have attended the group," reflected Jamilla.

She went on to attend NCT's Parents in Mind Warrington and Halton weekly sessions. "Parents in Mind has helped me find more mums and feel less alone. It's just so nice to speak to others going through the same. I loved the art therapy and felt great afterwards." Jamilla met other mums, and found that having a safe, non-judgmental space focused on her feelings, made her feel less anxious and more connected to other parents. "I enjoy talking to the other mums every week," Jamilla said, "and I started a baby group [at the children's centre] that I wouldn't have ever thought I could do."

As Jamilla prepared to return to work full-time, she experienced a resurgence of anxiety, and worried about losing the group support. To help her transition back into work, Parents in Mind offered further one-on-one conversations to explore other support options available while working. This support meant that Jamilla could continue to access the NCT Parents in Mind service remotely providing her with a continuing safe space to focus on her feelings.

*Names have been changed to protect the parent's identity



Team spotlight: Cristina's journey to supporting parents

It's been quite the year for Newham NCT *Parents in Mind* Perinatal Coordinator, Cristina Galis!

Cristina began volunteering with NCT in 2023 as a Volunteer Peer Supporter with *NCT Parents in Mind* in Newham, to make a difference and help parents to feel less isolated and alone. "I started volunteering with NCT because the Parents in Mind mission was very close to my heart. I was the mum that needed the help when I had my son, and I didn't receive it."

Cristina wanted help to lift the stigma around postnatal mental health. While volunteering for NCT she attended the Volunteer Peer Support training which she found "amazing."

“After my training, I began supporting mums in groups and on a one-to-one basis. I loved doing something that made such a difference in someone's life.”



Cristina (right), Parents in Mind Perinatal Co-ordinator, and her manager Carol, Project Manager Parents in Mind

And then earlier this year, when an opening came up to become NCT Newham's Parents in Mind Perinatal Coordinator role, Cristina was encouraged to apply.

NCT National Perinatal Peer Support Manager, Emily Henson, said: "When the role came up, I encouraged Cristina to apply. Her passion and commitment to helping parents is truly inspiring."

Responding to the cost-of-living crisis

The birth of a new baby can result in financial hardship, when the costs of raising a child combine with a possible reduction in income as parents or caregivers take time off work to care for their new baby. Many parents already struggle to afford the basics, but as the cost living continues to soar, parents and families on a low income or living in poverty can face even greater financial stress or deprivation⁸. We know this in turn impacts parents' mental health and wellbeing overall⁹.

Parents tell us that the cost of living is impacting their safety, their confidence, and how connected they feel to other parents in their communities.

We have worked hard to address these challenges and disparities through our services, support, and information. We have:

- Distributed over **3,000 essential Baby Bundle** items to new families in need.
- Sold **200,000 items** at **99 NCT Nearly New Sales**, offering affordable baby items to families.
- Continued to expand our free-to-access services, including our antenatal education, infant feeding support, postnatal community groups and mental health services.
- Established partnerships that help parents save money on essentials.
- Asked for support for Baby Bundles as one part of our 2023 Big Give appeal. Our thanks to the amazing generous individual donors who answered this call and offered support.
- **Expanded our course discounts** so we can help more families to access quality education and support.
- Worked closely with other local services such as **food banks, baby banks, clothing banks, and emergency accommodation** to help parents and families who need support, particularly during the winter months, when the cost-of-living crisis was felt particularly acutely.



⁸ Cost-of-living report: impacts on children and young people | Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)

⁹ ihv.org.uk/news-and-views/news/health-visitors-raise-the-alarm-as-more-families-struggle-with-poverty-and-poor-health/

NCT Bumps & Babies

£1 stay and play session sees Skipton group grow

NCT volunteers in Skipton have created an affordable, flexible, and welcoming space for parents and families with young children at their weekly NCT Bumps & Babies group.

Thanks to a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund, parents pay just £1 to stay and play, enjoy a brew and a slice of cake. Keeping the group truly affordable has enabled new families from the area to attend.

NCT Volunteer, Sammi Orrah said “Countless parents have formed lasting friendships, and this sense of community is my greatest reward. Keeping the costs down has meant that the community can continue to grow.”



Parents gather in Skipton for the weekly meet up



NCT Baby Bundles

New families given emergency essentials

Last year we provided over 3,000 items like nappies, newborn vests, sanitary pads, and baby wipes to families through emergency NCT Baby Bundles. Our volunteers worked closely with local healthcare professionals to run 18 different services across the country, ensuring that the bundles reach those who need them. Thanks to the Big Give 2023, NCT raised £7,000 in donations to support this vital work and other NCT services and support.

If you missed this appeal and would like to find out more about donating, please get in touch via fundraising@nct.org.uk



“The NCT team have been amazing; they have ensured that we have a constant stock of “kit” for women and new parents who are vulnerable and may not be able to afford the basic essentials for coming into hospital and having a baby.”

NHS Midwife, Sussex.

NCT Nearly New Sales

100 sales across the country help parents keep costs down

From clothes to cots, playmats to pushchairs, last year NCT Nearly New Sales helped parents sell and recycle over 200,000 items. With prices starting as low as 50p, our sales helped parents stock up on much needed baby essentials at a fraction of the price of the high street. Every item is quality checked by NCT volunteers, so that parents can trust the quality.



Expanding infant feeding support for all

We believe that parents need unbiased, evidence-based information and support to enable them to feed their babies in the way they decide. Statistics show that a high proportion of parents, especially women and birthing parents, do not get the support and information they need during their feeding journey – be that breastfeeding, expressing, using bottles, using formula milk, mixed feeding, introducing solids, stopping breastfeeding or bottle feeding, and variations of all of these.



We understand that this can sometimes have a negative impact on feeding outcomes, and on the health of their child, as well as on a parent's own emotional wellbeing,

We offer women and parents support with all types of infant feeding, provide evidence-based information that is impartial and unbiased and empower people to make and sustain the decisions that feel right for them and their families.

Over the last year we have extended our free community-based breastfeeding and infant feeding provision, so even more parents can be supported and can gain confidence in their feeding decisions.

Last year we:

- Grew our **breastfeeding peer support** to support nearly **10,000 women** – 3,000 more than the year before – in postnatal and neonatal wards, as well as in community drop-in groups, clinics, and home visits.
- Launched new support in Hartlepool, Hackney, and increased our support in Scotland, Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.
- Over **6,300 parents attended NHS infant feeding sessions**, facilitated by NCT across four NHS Trusts.
- Ran **60 weekly NCT Baby Cafes** providing feeding support to 7,580 new parents.
- Supported **7,740 people who called the NCT Infant Feeding Line** and made the service available over bank holidays and religious festivals.

Feeding support on neonatal ward provides vital reassurance

Parents in Glasgow and Clyde have access to invaluable, free infant feeding support, generously commissioned by both the Scottish Government and the NHS. Last year NCT Glasgow and Lothian Breastfeeding Buddies gave over 3,800 instances of emotional and practical support to parents both in hospital wards and at local community drop-in support groups.

Our support extends into the postnatal and neonatal wards of five hospitals across Glasgow and Lothian. Our specially trained Neonatal Peer Supporters offer essential information, emotional, and practical assistance to help new parents, like Lauren, find a feeding solution that works for them and

their babies, immediately after birth and throughout their baby's stay in the hospital ward.

Lauren and her daughter were in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) when they met Rosie, an NCT Neonatal Peer Supporter.

When Lauren's baby was born by unplanned caesarian, her body "went into shock" she recalls. "When my baby was taken to neonatal unit, I hand expressed colostrum to try and support her while she was tube fed." Later, once mother and baby had both got the hang of latching, Lauren would breastfeed her around tube feeds and would also pump to stimulate her supply.

"But when she developed jaundice," said Lauren, "I decided to start bottle feeding her with formula, combining this with breastfeeding. She had a big appetite and we found she needed formula feeds to remain calm under the blue lights.



Lauren holding hands with her daughter under blue lights

"I was exhausted, conflicted, emotional and desperately needing reassurance that I wasn't sabotaging our chances of breastfeeding by combination formula feeding too", and this is when Lauren met NCT Neonatal Peer Supporter Rosie.

"Rosie was kind, non-judgmental and listened gently to my concerns, which was exactly the support I needed. She'd seen combination feeding work and helped me learn feeding techniques with the bottle that would mimic the breast.

"Rosie visited us around five times in the two weeks we were in hospital. I felt reassured in my moment of panic to stand by my decision on combination feeding for my daughter's best interest."



Lauren holding her daughter after feeding

“She made a difference to my journey as a first-time mum. The way my baby looks at me while breastfeeding, strokes me and makes little noises of contented bliss while feeding makes our victory so much sweeter with our rough start.”

Collaborating closely with our NHS colleagues, we helped hundreds of parents like Lauren to find infant feeding solutions that are right for them and their baby, ensuring they felt supported and informed during this crucial time.

Appeal helps keep NCT Infant Feeding Line open over festive period

Last year, thousands of parents called NCT's Infant Feeding Line (0300 330 0700). For many, this service was nothing short of a lifeline. Tracey, a new mother, shared, "I was so grateful, particularly in the early days when we were on our own, close to tears."

All calls are answered by experienced NCT Breastfeeding Counsellors who offer relevant information and support - whether on breastfeeding, formula feeding or mixed feeding. "There's so much information online", said Tracey, "But nothing compares to the reassurance of speaking with a caring, knowledgeable person."

Thanks to this service, four out of five parents reported feeling more confident about feeding their babies, and that their mental wellbeing improved.

With health visitor and postnatal services stretched, sometimes parents find themselves days waiting for help. "There is so little instant support, and you need instant support when it comes to feeding your baby," Gia* told us.

"I have used the feeding line multiple times, and I don't know what I would have done without it."

Since 2010, support for families' health and wellbeing and children's social and emotional development, especially in areas of socioeconomic deprivation - have been in rapid decline. The rate of 0-4-year-olds attending A&E has increased by 42% over the same period¹⁰. With half of our callers seeking guidance for babies under two weeks old, it is clear that there is an urgent need for NCT's service and support.

Through generous donations from the public, we were able to keep this free service open every day from 8am to midnight, including on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Thank you for helping us to continue to provide this essential service to families when they need it most.

After calling the NCT Infant Feeding Line

▶ **87%** of callers felt more confident about feeding their baby

▶ **94%** of callers felt less isolated

▶ **88%** of callers reported that their mental well-being improved



¹⁰ Understanding-the-rise-in-0-4-year-old-Emergency-Department-ED-attendances-and-changing-health-visiting-practice-FINAL-VERSION-18.12.23.pdf (ihv.org.uk)

Providing trusted and safe support, content and services

Over the year we've continued work to transform and modernise our charity to respond to the crisis in the UK's maternity system, and to equip parents with comprehensive, accurate, and impartial education, content, and services.

We launched a revised NCT Antenatal course framework, and a new course for the postnatal period, NCT New Baby. Both courses are underpinned by a refreshed approach to facilitation, to ensure that the information and support we provide to parents remains evidence-based, unbiased, and inclusive. We also rolled out a refreshed Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for NCT Practitioners, including training modules on trauma-informed practice and anti-discriminatory practice.

NCT Antenatal

The original and leading antenatal class, NCT Antenatal is based on the knowledge that every parent and every birth is unique. Our courses cover different types of birth, pain management, infant feeding and life with a newborn, to help parents feel confident and prepared with realistic and flexible plans.

Our courses continually evolve in response to the feedback from parent's and also reflect the latest guidance and research. In November 2023 we launched the refreshed NCT Antenatal course framework, underpinned by five new facilitation principles to ensure the courses are engaging, parent-centred, evidence informed and place emphasis on safety and active learning.

Last year nearly **66,500 parents** were supported through NCT courses, run by over **530 practitioners**. Our courses continued to help parents build supportive communities, identify trusted information and create realistic expectations for labour and birth.



Parents take part in interactive exercise

Our post-birth evaluation showed:

▶ **95%** of parents rated their NCT Antenatal course as 'good' or 'excellent'.



▶ **90%** of course attendees felt part of a supportive group of parents and **96%** are still in touch after they have had their baby.

▶ **85%** of parents told us that we helped them identify trusted information, and **84%** said their course helped create realistic expectations for labour and birth.

▶ **89%** of parents reported that they felt less isolated after birth as a result of taking part in an NCT Antenatal course.



“

As a first time mum, I found the information received at the NCT course invaluable. It provided a great jumping off point on a wide range of topics, from labour to safer sleep and feeding. The facilitators were non-judgemental and made everyone in my group feel confident to ask questions and contribute to discussion. My husband and I are really glad that we did this course and I have now booked an NCT baby first aid course as well.”

Lauren, Ystradowen, Wales.

“

NCT was a great introduction to parenthood, learning what to expect with a newborn and how to make sure you are giving them the best start to life you can. It made us feel ready to welcome the new baby and understand how to make sure all their needs are met. The course instructor was extremely knowledgeable – an ex midwife, with plenty of tips. Meeting other parents in the same position is fantastic and watching our new friends grow their families is amazing!”

Rebecca, Warwickshire.

“We felt prepared for the arrival of our baby – and to be the best birthing partners”

After getting over the initial shock of “Wow, we’re going to be parents” we then realised “What on earth do we do now?”, so NCT seemed the best place to start.



Tom and his partner with their baby girl

We didn't quite know what to expect. Being responsible for a baby and keeping them alive is a daunting task and we also didn't know any other same-sex couples who had done an NCT course. We felt apprehensive - how would it feel being in a very female-dominant space? Would other parents understand us being there?

Within a minute of walking through the door, those fears fell away. Our NCT Practitioner was immediately so welcoming and warm. She acknowledged that our setup was different and reassured us that she would support us on our journey regardless of the differences.

It was the little things that mattered. Each week she would point out differences that were more important to us, bring useful resources and

signpost extra helpful things for us to look at. She offered to meet us outside of the session to talk more about how things might be different for us and was always mindful we didn't necessarily fit other advice. Being a same-sex male couple, we clearly knew we wouldn't breastfeed, and our teacher was helpful here too, making sure anyone bottle feeding was totally informed and comfortable.

When you become a parent, it can feel that there is a lot of judging of choices – but not in this space. Any fears about being judged fell away – and we finished the course feeling confident and comfortable. We never felt like the odd ones out.

Doing NCT Antenatal helped us to be the best birthing partners to our surrogate we could be. Before the birth, it meant we felt informed when talking with her about the type of birth she wanted. During the birth, it meant that we knew what was happening and what choices needed to be made. Of course, ultimately it was her body and her choice, but we felt like a team, in it together.

We got home with our amazing daughter from the hospital at 1am. As our parenting instincts kicked in, we found ourselves putting everything we'd learned about baby care at NCT to immediate use. It helped us to get through the first few weeks, especially knowing what's normal for a newborn.

Trauma-informed practice

Trauma can leave lasting emotional and physical scars. With an increasing number of women experiencing traumatic births, we are now rolling out Trauma Informed Practice training and professional development for all our practitioners. We're focused on ensuring that parents with trauma feel safe and that our practitioners can offer them practical and emotional support.



NCT's New Baby Course helps parents in the early weeks



The early days and weeks of having a new baby can be full of wonder, but they can also be challenging and isolating. Parents often tell us that they feel overwhelmed by information, advice and decisions.

Responding to this call for help, we co-produced NCT New Baby with parents and experienced NCT Postnatal Practitioners, to meet the needs of parents or caregivers in the early weeks of their baby's life.

The classes help parents to build a network of support by introducing them to other new parents at a similar stage to them and linking them into local services. "Being a new parent can be quite challenging. It was lovely to meet other parents in the same situation," one parent, Magdalena explained, "we received so much support from our course leader."

With information about how babies grow, develop and learn, the course gives parents skills and strategies to parent and care in ways that are right for them. "It helped me realise how to navigate certain things and emotions – they didn't give me all the answers but helped me to understand where I could find what suits me and baby and my husband", another parent, Sana reflected.

Since its launch hundreds of parents, like Magdalena and Sana, have taken the course.



NCT Practitioners in the community

NCT Practitioners are committed educators who care deeply about safe and equitable outcomes for all women, parents, and their babies. We are proud of our community of over 530 practitioners across the country. In 2023-24, 53 new practitioners completed a qualification to support the parents of the future.

Simone's story

“I left midwifery to offer holistic care to expectant and new parents and their babies”

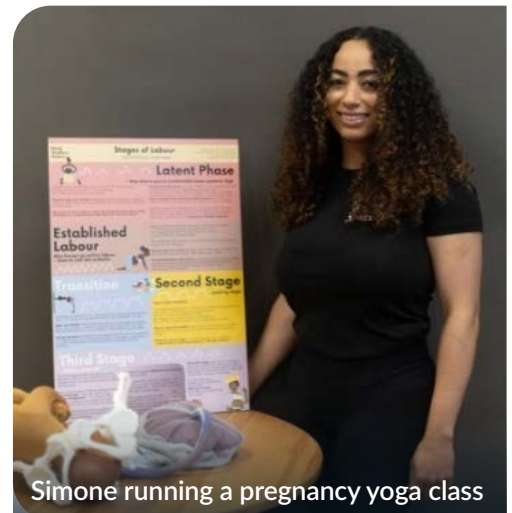
Simone trained as a midwife but left the profession after becoming fed up and exhausted.

“I felt like women and new parents deserved more than what I was able to give in the stretched NHS, so decided to leave and find another way I could give back in a more supportive role,” she reflected. Simone decided to train to become an NCT Antenatal Practitioner. “The PHECert was in some ways a refresher on my midwifery training,” she explained, “but it went deeper into how to balance the evidence, take a women-centred approach and be an advocate for parents.”

The learning environment was flexible and personalised. “Being dyslexic,” she said, “I was supported to access funding to support my learning style. I appreciated resources and presentations being sent in advance and benefited from one-to-one meetings with the tutors.” Simone went on to complete NCT’s Doula Pathway, Postnatal, and Baby Yoga and Massage. And since graduating with NCT, Simone has collaborated with Black Mothers Matter to run a range of services for Black or Mixed Black women and new parents based in Bristol.

“I now describe myself as a birth and beyond consultant - offering holistic care to expectant and new parents and their babies,” Simone explained. “We have created spaces so people from Black communities can feel safe, relaxed, free and affirm each other. Most recently we’ve launched a free antenatal course which women can join at any point in their pregnancy.” Simone remains committed to providing personalised, non-judgmental, evidence-based information to parents. “I believe that birth is not just a single event but a pivotal experience that can shape the parent-child relationship and parenthood journey,” she told us. “It is my mission to bridge the gap in services.”

Simone Sciberras was awarded the NCT Sheila Kitzinger Award in 2023. This award is given to the student who has demonstrated the best understanding of woman-centred care and birth practices, taking into account the wide range of cultures across the UK.



Real lives, real change

There is more work to be done to ensure everyone who becomes a parent feels, and is, safe during their pregnancy, birth, and as they adjust to life with a new baby. The UK maternity system is dangerously underfunded and understaffed; in late 2023 the Care Quality Commission found that people's experiences of maternity care have deteriorated in the last 5 years¹¹.

We believe that the quality of care a pregnant woman or pregnant person receives during or after birth should not be determined by their ethnicity or postcode. Yet Black women are still almost four times as likely, and Asian women almost twice as likely, to die during pregnancy or up to six weeks after birth compared with white women. And women living in the most deprived areas continue to have the highest maternal mortality rate compared to those living in the least deprived areas. We continue to call for urgent action to ensure equitable care is available and accessible for all, regardless of their background, circumstances, or where they live in the UK.

Postnatal care is in crisis. The health visiting profession has witnessed a loss of almost 40% of its workforce since 2015,¹³ and timely access to GP provision is also an issue: public satisfaction with the NHS has slumped to its lowest level ever recorded in the 40-year history¹⁴. Against this backdrop, it is unsurprising that babies under one have the highest rate of A&E attendance compared to any other age group¹⁵.

From campaigning for change at a national policy, to working in local communities and providing support and services tailored to meet parent's needs, we are working to ensure that everyone receives safe, respectful, and equitable maternity care.



¹¹ Maternity survey 2023 - Care Quality Commission (cqc.org.uk)

¹² Reports | MBRRACE-UK | NPEU (ox.ac.uk)

¹³ ihv.org.uk/news-and-views/news/health-visitor-workforce-numbers-in-england-reach-an-all-time-low/

¹⁴ Public Satisfaction With The NHS And Social Care In 2022 | The King's Fund (kingsfund.org.uk)

¹⁵ Understanding the rise in 0-4 year old Emergency Department-ED attendances and changing health-visiting practice-FINAL-VERSION-18.12.23.pdf (ihv.org.uk)

A safe place for new and expectant parents seeking asylum and refuge

For 20 years, NCT has run an antenatal education group in West Yorkshire that supports parents who are refugees or seeking asylum. The group, NCT Leeds Bankside, is a safe place for parents to access essential antenatal education as well as information and support about feeding, sleep, and caring for their baby.

“The project is a lifeline for many asylum seeking and refugee women who often come to us with no family or support network,” said NCT Practitioner Rose McCarthy, who has run the group every week since 2003.

Each year NCT Leeds Bankside supports around 50 parents, many who have poor mental health, speak English as an additional language, or are isolated from family or friends. At NCT Leeds Bankside parents can share their hopes, fears, and experiences, access information and support, and connect with other parents who may have experienced similar struggles.



NCT Practitioner Rose McCarthy
with NCT Volunteer, Wan

Wan, an asylum-seeking parent, attended the classes before the birth of her eighth child and now volunteers with the group. “As a domestic abuse survivor, I feel this group helped me to build confidence in myself” Wan told us. “I had very low self-esteem, but the group is a space to share experiences and feel accepted. After the birth of my son, I started volunteering and helping other mothers struggling with their mental health in pregnancy. I love to see the smiles on their faces after each session.”

The group was launched by Sure Start after surveying local parents about attending antenatal classes, but since 2011 has been funded by and delivered in collaboration with Leeds City Council.





Newham's most vulnerable families supported during pregnancy and early parenthood

NCT's Newham Nurture Perinatal Partnership is led and co-designed by migrant and marginalised women, providing holistic support to Newham's most vulnerable families during pregnancy and early parenthood. Last year we supported over 600 women and babies; many are refugees and asylum seekers or women with no recourse to public funds, living in temporary accommodation. We offer them educational classes and workshops on perinatal/infant health, peer support, drop-in sessions and link work.

Following a successful pilot commissioned by the Department of Health (2020 - 2023), we are grateful to the City Bridge Foundation for choosing to support this work via a three-year-grant. Our thanks as always to Newham Council for their ongoing support, and to the Royal Docks Trust for their new commitment to help deliver additional mental health support to this community. This work would not be possible without the essential support of these agencies.



Co-design session with parents in Newham



Collaborating and campaigning for change

We believe that collaboration within the maternity sector is vital for influencing policy making and effecting positive change. This collective voice brings together diverse expertise and perspectives to advocate for and inform policymakers about the challenges faced by parents, particularly those who are under-served by our society. Our work aims to ensure that policy decisions are informed by real-world experiences and evidence and respond to the needs of parents today.

Here are a few highlights of our campaigns and collaborations from last year:

NHS England's Maternity and Neonatal Stakeholder Council

NCT was reappointed to the NHS England's Maternity and Neonatal Stakeholder Council in March 2024. The Stakeholder Council acts to support NHS England's Maternity and Neonatal Programme in its implementation of the three year delivery plan for maternity and neonatal services.

Black Maternal Health Conference UK

NCT was proud to support the 2nd Black Maternal Health Conference UK, looking at solutions around the racial disparities facing Black women accessing maternity services. Organised by The Motherhood Group, the event helped to bridge the gap between community, service providers and industries to understand and learn how we can all play our part to deliver personalised, respectful, and culturally competent care.



One Voice Alliance

A collaboration between the Royal College of Midwives (RCM), Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, Institute of Health Visiting, NCT, Association of Anaesthetists and Sands, GPs Championing Perinatal Care, Maternity Mental Health Alliance, Tommy's. The purpose of One Voice is to bring together organisations that collectively represent the voice, experience, and expertise of parents and maternity professionals.



Earlier this year the One Voice Alliance, chaired by the RCM and bringing together professional and voluntary sector organisations, met with the then Shadow Minister for Women's Health, Abena Opong-Asare MP, to discuss priorities for the next Government. A joint letter was sent to the Shadow Minister to reinforce the Alliance's list of priorities.

UK Covid-19 Inquiry

NCT's participation in the National Covid Inquiry continued through the year, as a member of a Core Participant grouping of 13 charities from the pregnancy, baby and parenting sector. We are consistently pressing for a greater focus around the pandemic's impact on expectant and new parents, as well as their babies. Through this we aim to shine a light on shortcomings or failures in maternity care during the pandemic and draw lessons to improve future preparedness and response to public health crises.

APPG Birth Trauma Inquiry

Every year we listen to thousands of parents via our post-course surveys to ask them about their experiences of birth. We consistently hear about a maternity system under strain and that is unable to provide the safe, personalised care women and parents need. We shared these insights from parents with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Birth Trauma Inquiry as part of their report, which called for urgent changes to the UK maternity system and met with Theo Clarke MP. We supported the inquiry's recommendations for an integrated maternity strategy led by a new Maternity Commissioner, and the provision of equitable access to antenatal education through NHS Trusts.



Scottish maternity policy

NCT continues to scrutinise the implementation of Scottish maternity policy, The Best Start, by sitting on the Implementation Programme Board. Reflecting joint work across services for parents and babies, we also attend the Scottish Perinatal Network, which encourages collaboration across maternity and neonatal services and supports the best possible outcomes for women and new parents, babies, and families. There has been an increased focus on service user engagement, with NCT input, resulting in recommendations to government in September 2023 with an emphasis on tackling inequalities.

State of Maternity Services in Northern Ireland

NCT's Chief Executive, Angela McConville, represented NCT in Belfast to advocate for a new maternity and neonatal strategy and argued that the recruitment and retention of midwives to deliver high-quality, personalised care must be at its core.

Great people, great results

Our people hold the key to our impact. We're building a diverse and inclusive community of staff, practitioners, students, peer supporters, and volunteers who are empowered in their work to support everyone who becomes a parent to feel confident, connected, and safe.

We have made progress on our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) ambitions over the last 12 months to ensure that all our people and all parents feel that they belong and are included at NCT, irrespective of their background.

This year, we continued this important work by:

- Ensuring that equity and inclusion remains central to our recruitment process. We co-facilitated an inclusive recruitment activity for the Senior Leadership Team, which included the planning of interview panel members, addressing bias, and diversity of thoughts and experiences.
- Launching the NCT Language Guide internally, to support our community to ensure our information and services are as inclusive and accessible as possible.
- Strengthening our governance, culture and leadership by refreshing our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group.
- Embedding anti-discriminatory approach within our education. The Anti-Discriminatory Practice (ADP) Module within our CertHE NCT Perinatal Education and Practice, for academic year 2022/23 was completed and evaluated.
- Continuing to champion inclusion in all our work with parents by:
 - Reviewing content on our website to ensure it is culturally appropriate, safe and evidence based.
 - Co-designing services with parents to ensure inclusion is a key consideration and to expand and reach more parents.
 - Supporting the course booking journey to ensure the accessibility needs of parents are met.

We're committed to using our platform as an anti-racist charity to raise the voices and experiences of marginalised and under-served groups, and ally with others who are also working to create equitable maternity and postnatal care.





“Allyship involves active support for the rights of under-served groups – by people who are not members of these groups. Allyship is crucial for equity and inclusion. Being an ally comes from personal reflection and learning, and requires individual commitment to real, long-term action – it is a role we can all play in building a fairer, more equitable society.”

Louise Oliver, NCT's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Lead

As well as our public campaigns and partnerships, we boosted our EDI events internally, including NCT's Allyship Programme. Over the last 12 months we've run Allyship Support Spaces, and more than a hundred staff, volunteers, students and practitioners have attended so far.

We also launched a series of bitesize Volunteer Allyship videos tailored for our volunteer community.

We held events for our community to mark PRIDE, Black History Month and International Women's Day. These have supported our community to gain a better understanding of the experiences of parents from marginalised communities through the sharing of stories and enhanced by the addition of practical information about how to best support.

“It was lovely to be invited to speak at the @nctcharity Black History Month All Community Event. Sharing my motivations for founding @blackbabylossawareness, my role @tommys_pregnancyhub and the work I do to raise awareness of Black #infant #mortality and the services that exist to support #bereaved #parents is always an honour.”

Alicia Burnett, midwife and founder, Black Baby Loss Awareness

“This was such a fantastic, informative session to learn more about allyship and what that means for us as volunteers. I came away understanding allyship better and how I can support, advocate for and be proactive as a volunteer.” Attendee at Volunteer Allyship 'Learn and Chat'.



Wellbeing pledges

As part of NCT's ongoing commitment to embedding a culture of putting people first, we set eight Wellbeing Pledges to improve staff wellbeing while working remotely, create more breathing space within time at work, and to help staff to balance their work commitments with all other aspects of life. These include Meeting-free Fridays; one 'stock-take' day every 6 months – where no meetings, calls or events are to be held, across the whole organisation; and one hour per month of personal development time.

Strengthening safeguarding at NCT

NCT is committed to providing safe, trusted spaces for parents, staff, volunteers and practitioners. As such, over the last 12 months, we have strengthened our safeguarding work. An external audit was commissioned, focusing on the safeguarding function within our Programme Delivery teams. The audit team also looked at policies and procedures across the charity, staff training and leadership. The auditors cited the 'passion and commitment' NCT's team have towards supporting adults and children, and praised the safeguarding work happening on the ground. Recommendations made in the auditors report have been incorporated into the NC Safeguarding improvement action plan.



Strong foundations, strong future

To support people as they become parents now and into the future, our charity must be progressive, sustainable, and here for the long term. We're committed to making it easier for parents to access our services and for our teams to deliver them.

We continue to strive to put data and technology at the heart of how we operate, completing the migration of our membership platform onto a modern system integrated with courses.

Improvements have been made in our policies and practices around data protection, with records of processing activities revised for every area and training needs analysed. Progress was also made to ensure compliance with the NHS Data Security and Protection Toolkit.

Health and Safety remained a key priority for the year. Particular attention was paid to ensuring everyone's safety in times of extreme weather events, confirming that the venues we use meet core safety standards and improving our guidance on the use of display screen equipment and homeworking.

Our Ethical Funding Framework

Collaborating with our supporters, applying resources, and investing funds for our future are critical activities that help us fulfil our charitable mission of supporting people as they become parents through each unique journey of pregnancy, birth, and early parenthood.

Our policies and practices in this space have evolved over many years as we build upon our respected heritage of working with a wide variety of supporters to support new and expectant parents.

In 2023, following its approval in 2022, we rolled out our latest framework to ensure that our values and legal responsibilities are represented across all our partnership activities, including all types of supporters (e.g. corporate, charity or individual donor) and all types of funding (e.g. from donations to our own investments).

Additions have been made to the new policy that enshrine our commitments to parent and baby safety; equity, diversity, and inclusion; human rights; and the environment. It also renews our commitments to the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative.

Our Commercial and Charitable Activities Policy framework is designed to empower our communities in taking decisions at local level while still adhering to our values and principles. It will help us ensure that our funding and partnering arrangements are in the best interests of our charity's mission, while providing more freedom and flexibility for our volunteers to take decisions on fundraising, commercial and charitable gifts and giving.



NCT Membership

Current and past NCT members provided valuable opinions and feedback on their NCT Membership experience through online surveys sent in November 2023 and January 2024. Alongside positive comments including “Lovely to be a member” and “Keep up the good work”, members shared a range of views about their involvement with NCT as a member.

Some immediate changes have been made to membership in response to this feedback, including adjusting the frequency of the flagship email update, NCT Matters, and reviewing member discounts, with a new member, family & friends discount for selected NCT courses introduced in the spring of 2024.

These important member insights are also helping to shape the future of membership at NCT, as work continues on will help support future membership programme development through 2024-25.



London Marathon 2023

Six runners completed the iconic London Marathon in April 2023 raising £14,510 for NCT. They achieved fantastic times and their dedication to fundraising was amazing.

Runners were:

- Alan Milstein
- Emmanuelle Bentley-Sanders
- Karen Miles
- Becky Peirani
- Emilie VanBrabant
- Kelly Dippenaar

Thank you so much to all of our 2023 London Marathon team #TeamNCT! If you're interested in running the Marathon or fundraising for NCT, please do get in touch via fundraising@nct.org.uk



“What an amazing day.”

Alan Milstein, runner





Thank you to all our partners and supporters this year, including those who wish to remain anonymous. Your support helped to make a difference to parents and babies during the life changes of pregnancy, birth and early parenthood.

Organisations, alliances, and networks that we have worked with during the year

Alternatives Trust East London; Association of Volunteer Managers (AVM); Birthrights; Bourne This Way Black Mothers Matter; brap; Breastfeeding Alliance; Breastfeeding Network; British Pregnancy Advisory Service; Baby Feeding Law Group (BFLG); City of Sanctuary; Compost London; First 1001 Days; Movement; Five X More; Good Innovation; Hello Brave; Institute of Health Visiting; LGBT+ Mummies; The Magpie Project; Maternity Action; Mini First Aid; One Voice Alliance; Pregnancy and Baby Charity Network; Proud 2 B Parents; RELAX Study; Royal College of Midwives; Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists; Together; The Big Help Out; The Motherhood Group; STFWV; Shaping the Future with Volunteering; University of Worcester.

Research partnerships and contributions

Early Lives Equal Start Shared Learning (Oxford); Health and Social Care Scrutiny Report (Inequalities in Maternity); Family Hub Integrated Management groups; London Maternity Consortium; London Maternity Clinical Network; NHS Race & Health Observatory (RHO); NHS England; MAP Alliance; Local Maternity and Neonatal service user forum, Perinatal Mental Health Reference and working Groups, MNVPs; The University of Aberdeen; University of Dundee.

Stakeholder and programme boards that we contributed to

MBRRACE-UK Third Sector Stakeholder Council; Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency; National Maternity and Perinatal Audit Clinical Reference Group; NHS England Maternity and Neonatal Stakeholder Council; Scottish Government 'The Best Start' Implementation Programme Board.

Funders, partners and commissioners

Babycare TENS; Big Give; Bradford District Care Trust; Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West LMNS; Cambridgeshire County Council; Coop Community Fund; Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust; Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust; City Bridge Foundation; Cross Keys Homes; Department of Health and Social Care Starting Well Fund; Durham County Council Area Action Partnership; East Sussex Public Health; Ely Primary Care Network; Evelyn Trust; NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB; Hampshire County Council; NHS North West London ICB; NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB; Leeds City Council; Lidl Great Britain Limited; Medway Community Healthcare; Middlesbrough Council; National Lottery; NHS North East London ICB; NHS Lothian; Norfolk Community Foundation; Northern Ireland Public Health Agency; North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust; Paddington Development Trust; Peabody Housing Association; Peterborough City Council; Royal Docks Trust; Redcar and Cleveland Council; Richard Lawes Foundation; Richmond Council; Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust; Scottish Government; Southwark Council; NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB; Stockton-on-Tees Council; Swindon Borough Council; Twins Trust; Venture Community Association; Wandsworth Council; NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB; Wiltshire Council.

Our community

We are inspired by the efforts and generosity of the NCT community who continue to amaze us every day. To all our members, supporters, volunteers, practitioners, students, staff, and Trustees, you have all made a difference.

- All our members
- All our donors and everyone who generously fundraised in aid of our charity
- All our volunteers and peer supporters
- All our practitioners
- All our staff
- All our students
- NCT Diversity and Affinity Networks
- Practitioner Representative Body
- Our Board of Trustees
- Our Patron, Baroness Julia Cumberlege

In memory

Our thoughts are with the families and friends of Barbara Kott, Lucy Pedder and Hilary English, who sadly passed away over the last year.

Barbara Kott

Barbara made a significant contribution to our work and charitable mission and stood up for parental rights across the world. We are forever grateful for her valuable contribution and commitment to NCT.

Barbara set up her own local NCT branch in Kingston-Upon-Thames back in 1976 following the birth of her first child. Two years later Barbara qualified as an NCT Antenatal Teacher. From teaching she became a Tutor, and by the mid 1980s was chairing the NCT's National Teachers Panel.

She became NCT President in 1995 and was the charity's figurehead until 2000. She retired as an NCT Tutor in September 2011 and as an NCT Antenatal practitioner in 2015.

Hilary English

Hilary qualified as a breastfeeding counsellor with the NCT in 1983, and was a tutor, training both breastfeeding counsellors and health professionals for 20 years. She was Deputy Chair of Lactation Consultants of Great Britain.

Lucy Pedder

Lucy qualified with NCT in 2017 and taught as an Antenatal and Postnatal Practitioner from June 2019 to March 2022 in and around Derby, Nottingham and Staffordshire. She was also part of the co-production team who worked on the NCT One Antenatal project, which led to our new NCT Antenatal course.

She brought her amazing warmth, passion, a great willingness to share and explore and was brilliantly collaborative on the project team – an absolute force for good, challenging us to do more and better, a real ambassador and change maker. Lucy was also an NCT volunteer, for many years running a highly valued postnatal drop-in for NCT's Amber Valley branch, where so many parents benefited from her support.

Financial review

Financial review

Overall summary

Good growth in total organisational income, up 6% from £11.3m to £11.8m, was delivered during the year. This was despite the challenging economic conditions, notably the effect of the cost-of-living crisis on new and expectant parents, which meant that antenatal course bookings remain below pre-pandemic levels. We were particularly pleased with the increase in income from Programme Delivery and with the wider reach that this enabled us to have during the period.

Operating costs grew due to growth in Programme Delivery and Branch activity, as well as inflationary pressures.

The net result for the year was a breakeven operating position (2023: deficit of £0.1m) before investment income of £0.1m (2023: £0.1m), non-operational spend of £0.3m (2023: £0.1m) invested this year in the next stage of the Salesforce system implementation and investment gains of £0.2m (2023: losses of £0.1m). The operating position is a key financial target and was managed very closely in line with the approved Reserves Policy.

The total net income / expenditure for the year was £0.01m (2023: £ -0.55m) after non-operating expenditure, investment income and losses on investment assets. Again, this was in line with the requirements of the Reserves Policy.

NCT Courses

Delivery of antenatal and other courses to parents is one of NCT's key educational activities. Income in this area exceeds expenditure, with surpluses supporting the education and development of current and future NCT Practitioners; the delivery of commissioned services in the health sector; and work in the policy, research, campaigns, content and information areas, including the much-needed delivery of the NCT Infant Feeding Line.

Income from courses of £8.8m represents a £0.4m increase on the prior year (2023: £8.4m). This growth reflects the full-year impact of an increase in the average course price following a pricing review in 2022. The number of Antenatal course bookings by start date was 29,234 (2023: 31,849) while post course parent satisfaction was 95% (2023: 95%). Total costs increased to £6.4m from £6.2m in 2023 due to inflationary pressures.

Education and Practice

Fewer students, partly due to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the affordability of fees, has led to a corresponding decrease in NCT education and practice income from £0.5m to £0.3m. Costs decreased slightly from £1.1m to £1.0m linked to lower student numbers.

Programme Delivery

Programme Delivery provides local and national services to parents that are free at the point of access. They are largely commissioned contracts with the National Health Service, including hospital trusts and health boards, and local authorities as well as central government departments. This work is also supported through funding from Trusts and Foundations. This area also delivers the vital NCT Infant Feeding Line.

Income for Programme Delivery in the year grew by 66% to £1.4m (2023: £0.8m). During the year, 3,700 parents were supported through our perinatal peer support programmes (2023: 3,000) and our breastfeeding peer support programmes supported nearly 10,000 people (2023: 7,000).

Membership, grants and donations

Total donation income has decreased 13% to £0.8m (2023: £1.0m) due to a £0.1m fall in membership income continuing the longer-term trend. Work is underway to consider the future of our NCT membership proposition to ensure it remains attractive, trusted and meaningful for parents and supporters.

Donations and Grants receivable were broadly in line with the prior year.

Other trading activities

Total income from other trading activities declined by 20% to £0.4m (2023: £0.5m). An increase in the number of branch activities was more than offset by a decline in income from corporate partners.

Responsible Fundraising

NCT is supported in its charitable fundraising by so many amazing supporters spanning companies, charities, individual donors and volunteer fundraisers. We would like to thank everyone for their efforts to make a difference to parents across the UK. Our fundraising activities, led by the central charity and volunteer branches, are monitored by appropriate members of the Senior Leadership Team. We do not use mass audience commercial fundraising operations such as telephone call services or face-to-face street fundraisers. During the year, no complaints (2022: none) were received about our fundraising activities.

Our overarching safeguarding commitment to all members of the NCT community encompasses protection of people in vulnerable circumstances including a dedicated point of contact for any concerns in this regard that is open to the entire charity. As a registered member of the Fundraising Regulator Directory, we are proud of our commitment to continuously reflect upon, learn and evolve our fundraising practices.

Investment income and asset movements

Income received from cash balances and the investment portfolio was £0.1m (2023: £0.1m). A gain of £0.2m was recorded on the investment portfolio (2023: a loss of £0.1m) reflecting market movements.

Going concern

Due consideration has been given by the Board to the appropriateness of the going concern basis for accounting. Total funds at the end of the year were in line with the targeted Reserves Policy. The plan and budget for the coming year was set to operate within acceptable risk levels and within the risk reserve level. Management accounts regularly re-forecast the yearly outcome, which allows quick and appropriate responses to changes in our operating model and demand for our services. On this basis, the amounts held as investments and in light of the strong reserves position, the Board is satisfied that the charity is well positioned to respond to a reasonable worst-case scenario.

Investment Policy

The Investment Policy is reviewed by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee regularly and the latest version was approved by the Board in October 2024. NCT seeks to achieve the best financial return within an acceptable level of risk, which has been defined as medium on a scale of low, medium and high. The desired risk level is achieved through a mixed portfolio of low-risk cash deposits and medium risk managed investment funds held for the long term. All investments are made within the terms of the NCT Commercial and Charitable Activities Policy that takes social, environmental and ethical considerations into account.

The investment objective for long-term investments is to generate a return in excess of inflation in order to preserve the real terms value of NCT's reserves and support growth of the reserves to, and thereafter within, the range determined by the reserves policy. The charity monitors performance closely and continues to take regular advice from its investment managers. The performance of the funds over the time held meets the investment objectives. During the 12 months to March 2024, the value of the Investment Portfolio grew by 7.8% (2023: a fall of 2.2%) which exceeded UK CPI of 3.2% in the same period (2023: 10.1%).

The investment objective for the short-term investments is to seek the highest rate of interest available for cash deposits with a UK FSCA regulated financial institution, with deposits made with different institutions where practicable.

Under the Investment Policy, NCT considers that it holds a mixed motive investment in NCT Trading Limited. This is because the investment had two aims: firstly, to provide funding which will generate a financial return for NCT; and secondly to contribute to NCT's charitable purpose by promoting goods and services that are beneficial to prospective and new parents. This has assisted the charity in achieving its strategic objective of providing new parent support. The scale of the activities delivered through NCT Trading Limited have fallen in recent years and consideration is being given to making the company dormant.

The investment in NCT Trading Limited has been made through holding 100% of its issued share capital at a cost of £100.

Total Funds

The group balance sheet at 31 March 2024 showed total funds of £4.6m (2023: £4.6m) of which £0.3m (2023: £0.2m) were restricted. Restricted funds, analysed in Note 15, comprise donations and grants subject to donor-imposed conditions. Unrestricted funds were £4.3m (2023: £4.4m), of which £1.2m were represented as fixed assets (2023: £1.3m). The balance of the Group general funds, representing the 'free reserves', were £3.1m at 31 March 2024 (2023: £3.1m).

Since the Balance Sheet date, the Group's principal tangible asset, the leasehold building held in Bristol, has been sold. The value from the sale has been placed on deposit and the gain will be recorded in the Group Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Reserves Policy

The Reserves Policy provides a dynamic framework for determining available reserves by identifying three components of NCT's risk management reserve:

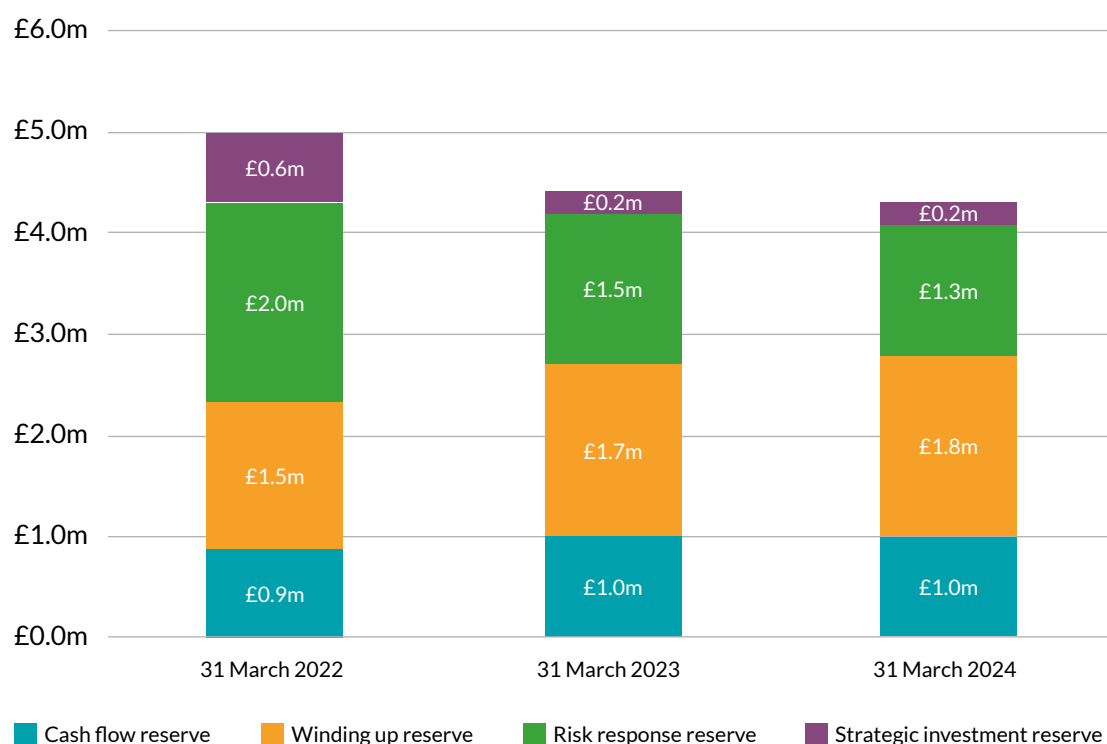
- cash flow reserve to cover cash flow requirements;
- winding up reserve to cover the costs of winding up the charity; and
- risk response reserve to respond to uncertainty identified in the risk management process.

Any surplus funds beyond these considerations represent the strategic development reserve.

The Board determined a target risk management reserve level of £4.1m in March 2024. This comprises £1.0m for cash flow requirements, £1.8m for the costs of winding up and £1.3m to respond to uncertainty identified in the risk management process. Compared with the previously agreed levels, the amounts in the cash flow reserve and winding up reserve have grown to reflect the current size of the group. The level of the risk response reserve has been reduced from the level of £2.0m as originally set in 2017 when the group had a much larger trading operation and higher risks relating to legacy IT solutions.

The Board plans to reduce the target level of the risk response reserve further by continuing to address key risks. By planning for a breakeven operating position over multiple periods, any investment income and gains can be used to increase the strategic development reserve.

The amounts held in these reserves at the last three year ends are shown below.



At 31 March 2024, total unrestricted funds were £4.3m, exceeding the required risk management reserve level of £4.1m meeting the requirements of the policy. This means that the charity holds sufficient funds to perform an orderly wind up if needed and manage risks as they arise. The remaining group funds as at 31 March 2024 were held in the strategic development reserve of £0.2m (2023: £0.2m). Any funds held in the strategic development reserve at the end of each year are used to invest in future growth opportunities to meet one-off items of expenditure during the following year.

Risk management

Effective risk management is critical for achieving the For Every Parent strategy and the risk management process identifies the uncertainties and events that could affect the achievement of the strategic objectives. Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring effective risk management systems and procedures. The Board works closely with the Directors Group to identify the most significant risks, mitigate any potential impact of downside risks and exploit the opportunities of upside risks. The Board reviews the full Risk Register every year and receives regular updates on significant changes to the profile of individual risks throughout the year.

The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee has delegated authority from the Board to:

- review risk management systems and procedures;
- drive continued improvement in the sophistication and impact of our risk management processes;
- advise the Board on the principal risks faced and any changes to the Risk Register;
- scrutinise the analysis and management of risks by the Directors Group through a review of the Risk Register every quarter; and
- receive periodic deep dive reviews of significant risks, usually twice a year.

Managing each risk is the responsibility of the senior managers within each Directorate.

The Risk Management Policy is reviewed every two years. Through this Policy, the level of gross risk to the achievement of strategic objectives is assessed and the likelihood of this occurring given existing activities to manage the risk appraised. The net risk is compared to the agreed risk appetite for each broad category to identify areas where increased focus is required to manage individual risks.

Principle risks and uncertainties

There are 30 risks on the Group Risk Register. After assessing existing activities to manage the risk, the risks that the Board has a particular focus on are summarised below.

Risk	Response and <i>Example Activity</i>
Antenatal Course Surpluses and Fulfilment We may not be able to meet the expectations of parents as their needs change and how we engage with them through practitioners is likely to be different in the coming years.	We are aware of the need to remain the most relevant provider of antenatal courses and review trends to adapt our offer to stay ahead of competitors. <i>Baby safety and health video guides were developed and have been made available to parents.</i>
Health & Safety and Safeguarding Inadequate or ineffective policies and practices could result in, or contribute to, serious harm to those we come into contact with.	We have dedicated H&S and Safeguarding Lead roles with a Safeguarding Lead Trustee, with annual Policy Reviews, quarterly reporting of Incidents and a dedicated Safety, Operations and Compliance Group. <i>An external audit of Safeguarding activities across Programme Delivery was completed.</i>
Information Governance including Cyber Risks Cyber security risks could disrupt our delivery and all personal data must be handled and stored safely.	We continuously monitor cyber security with the Board's Cyber Task & Finish Group and invest in our systems, processes and people to reduce the level of risks faced. <i>A Cyber and Data Business Continuity Plan has been developed.</i>
Information Provision Information provided to parents must meet their needs, be up to date, accurate and easily accessible.	We review our frameworks and content on a periodic basis, factoring in parent feedback and the latest externally available evidence. <i>A Parent Content project has been initiated.</i>
Investment Returns Gains and losses from the Investment Portfolio have a direct impact on funds available for investing in strategic activities for the future.	We discuss investment returns every quarter at the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee and review performance with our Investment Manager every year. <i>A full tender process for Investment Management services was concluded in May 2024.</i>

Public Benefit Statement

The Board has referred to the relevant guidance (as published by the Charity Commission in its guidance documents PB1 “Public benefit, the public benefit requirement”, PB2 “Public benefit: running a charity and PB3 “Public benefit: reporting”) and concluded that NCT complies with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit because the charitable services delivered provide value to the public in general and new parents in particular.

Structure and governance

NCT (The National Childbirth Trust) is a registered charity. It is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association as adopted on 26th September 2015 and amended on 18 October 2018.

The Board of Trustees

NCT is governed by a Board of Trustees who are the directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act. The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for the governance of the Charity to ensure that it acts in the best interests of all parents, who are the Charity's beneficiaries. The Board of Trustees sets the strategy, policy and financial framework for the Charity and has the responsibility for its overall direction and control. Additionally, the Board has responsibility for ensuring that the Charity complies with the law and the safeguarding of the Charity's assets, including its money, property and reputation.

The names of trustees at the date at which the accounts were approved, or who served during the period, are given below. The Board is very grateful for the work and commitment of Peter Brown and Susy Broekhuizen who agreed to act as Elected Trustees until the 2023 AGM. The Board were sorry that, after an extended period of being unable to attend Board meetings, Zoe Stewart-Fields left the Board during the year with thanks and best wishes.

Name	Start date of most recent term	Date of resignation
Charles Richardson (Honorary Treasurer)	Appointed 15 July 2022	—
Chi Evi-Parker	Elected 11 December 2020	—
David Shanks	Appointed 7 August 2021 ¹	—
Elaine Lambe	Elected 4 November 2021 ²	—
Ema Ojiako (Honorary Secretary)	Appointed 8 March 2021	—
Franciane Husbands-Chevot	Elected 11 December 2020	—
Julien Haye	Elected 8 November 2023	—
Mikayla Pencross	Elected 8 November 2023	—
Peter Brown	Appointed to act as Elected 8 December 2022	Resigned 8 November 2023
Sarah Brown (Vice Chair)	Elected 4 November 2021 ²	—
Sherry Bevan (President)	Elected 16 November 2019	—
Stephanie Maurel (Chair)	Appointed 7 August 2021 ¹	—
Susy Broekhuizen	Appointed to act as Elected 8 December 2022	Resigned 8 November 2023
Vikram Sundarraj	Appointed to act as Elected 21 March 2024	—
Zoe Stewart-Fields	Elected 26 November 2021	Vacated 21 March 2024

¹ Second term, initial term commenced on 7 August 2017

² Second term, initial term commenced on 4 November 2017

The charity is a membership charity. Members are organised locally into branches. Many members and volunteers carry out the work of the charity at a local level.

Each year, the Board reviews past performance and sets plans within a forward-looking planning horizon. As part of that review and planning process, the trustees consider how future plans and performance relate to the aims and vision of the Charity and thus to the charitable purpose.

The trustees are committed to ensuring NCT's governance and constitutional framework reflect current thinking on best practice. The Board of Trustees is committed to the principles of the Charity Governance Code.

Authority for the day-to-day management of the charity within that framework is delegated to the Chief Executive, supported by colleagues on the Directors Group. Together, they formulate strategy, policy and financial plans for the Board's approval, ensure delivery of required performance and oversee the Charity's day-to-day operations.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The Board of Trustees must have a minimum of nine trustees and a maximum of twelve. Of the maximum, there may be up to eight member elected trustees and four appointed trustees. Any member may stand for election as a trustee subject to the restrictions laid down in the Governance handbook.

Member-elected trustees are elected to coincide with the Annual General Meeting, whilst appointed trustees may be appointed during the course of the year. Any trustee vacancies arising during the year may also be filled by the Board until the date of the next Annual General Meeting.

The process of appointing new trustees is led by the Nominations and Remuneration Committee based on an assessment of the key skills required by the Board. An executive search firm may be used to attract a diverse range of candidates from different backgrounds. Extensive screening will take place followed by rigorous interviews. All appointments are subject to satisfactory references.

Elected and Appointed Trustees have a term of four years and the President has a term of five years. An individual may serve a maximum of two terms as an Elected Trustee, two terms as an Appointed Trustee and two terms as President.

Further details on the recruitment and appointment of trustees can be found in the Governance Handbook at

https://www.nct.org.uk/sites/default/files/related_documents/NCT%20Governance%20Handbook%20-%20May%202024.pdf

We are keen to talk to anyone interested in standing as a trustee or serving as an Independent Committee member, especially people who will bring unique skills and experiences. To discuss becoming involved, please contact us at board.secretary@nct.org.uk.

Induction and training of trustees

A comprehensive and structured induction programme is put in place for new trustees. This includes:

- a written briefing about trustees' responsibilities and copies of relevant Policies;
- detailed presentations covering Strategy; Governance; Courses & Income; Practitioners and Education; Impact and Engagement; People & Inclusion; Volunteering; Finance; and Data and Technology; and
- meetings with the Chair, Chief Executive and other members of the Directors Group.

In addition, access is provided to specific training that is tailored to the incoming trustee.

Training is also provided during the year for trustees, for example at the Board Away Day session, on topics relevant to the Board's current work and strategy or through access to external courses as required.

Board committees

The Board of Trustees is supported in its work by committees. There are two Board committees..

- Audit, Risk and Scrutiny [ARSC] - covering the adequacy of financial control, external reporting, budgeting, performance and risk management.
- Nominations and Remuneration [NRC] – covering people issues, equity, diversity and inclusion, trustee recruitment and the remuneration policy for senior management and other key groups.

In addition, advisory and task & finish groups enable internal and external experts to be involved in decision-making and governance. During the year, there were groups for Cybersecurity; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and an IT project. There is also a ‘Lead Trustee’ for safeguarding to provide additional support, scrutiny and oversight in this area. The full Board maintains collective responsibility for all these areas and receives update reports at Board meetings.

Independent committee members are individuals who bring additional skills, experience and perspectives to the work of our sub-committees. They are not trustees.

Committee membership and lead trustee roles as at 31 March 2024 are detailed in the table below.

Name	Role	Committee membership
Charles Richardson	Trustee / Honorary Treasurer	ARSC (Chair)
Chi Evi-Parker	Trustee	—
David Shanks	Trustee	—
Elaine Lambe	Trustee	NRC
Ema Ojiako	Trustee / Honorary Secretary	NRC (Chair)
Faran Johnson	Independent Committee Member	ARSC
Franciane Husbands-Chevot	Trustee	—
Julien Haye	Trustee	ARSC
Mikayla Pencross	Trustee	NRC
Naomi Horsfall	Independent Committee Member	ARSC
Salima Shariff	Independent Committee Member	NRC
Sarah Brown	Trustee / Vice Chair / Safeguarding Lead Trustee	ARSC
Sherry Bevan	Trustee / President	—
Stephanie Maurel	Trustee / Chair	NRC
Vikram Sundarraj	Trustee	ARSC

Key relationships

NCT wholly owns one active commercial company, NCT Trading Ltd, which gift aids its profits to the charity. The Board of NCT Trading Ltd is responsible for its activities, which during 2023-24 mainly consisted of commercial partnerships.

Charity Commission guidance makes it clear that the Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing the overarching principles within which its subsidiary's trading activities must take place. Trustees have established a comprehensive Commercial and Charitable Activities Policy within which the Trading Board is required to operate.

Trustee benefits

Under the terms of its Articles, the Charity is able to pay trustees for the provision of services to achieve its objectives, subject to certain safeguards. This includes the requirement that a majority of the trustees must have received no payments from NCT either as employees or for goods and services supplied to NCT. This year, no member of the Board of Trustees received any remuneration in respect of their services as trustees (2023: None). Expenses and other payments to trustees are detailed in Note 9.

Statement of the Board's responsibilities as trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of NCT for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Members of the Directors Group are not Directors as defined on Company Law.

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards, including FRS102, have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company 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 charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006, as amended by the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations 2014. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group, and hence for taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect of fraud and other irregularities.

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 financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which NCT's auditor is unaware; and
- they 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.

Remuneration Policy

NCT recognises that pay is part of a wider employment offer for employees, which also includes the satisfaction of working for a charity, personal development opportunities, family-friendly policies and practices, annual leave and absence policies and a range of other benefits including access to the pension scheme.

NCT operates a benchmarked market rate system, using reputable and appropriate data. NCT aims to pay employees between plus/minus 10% margin of the market median salary for most roles. Employees will not normally be paid less than the lower decile or higher than the higher decile for any role. When benchmarking pay and benefits, NCT will compare against charities of similar size, employee numbers and income, workplace location and competitors. Additionally, a specialist consultancy will be commissioned to independently review the market rate for the salaries of the Directors Group every three years.

Each year, NCT will consider whether to uplift all employee salaries by the cost of living. This will take into account the Consumer Price Index, Retail Price Index and the national average increase in earnings. Any decisions will be based on affordability and are at the Board's discretion.

Appointment of Auditors

Haysmacintyre LLP have been appointed in accordance with section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The strategic report, which forms part of the Trustees' Annual Report, is approved by the trustees in their capacity as directors of the company. The Trustees' Report is approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

Stephanie Maurel
Chair
12 September 2024

Independent auditor's report to the members and trustees of NCT

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Childbirth Trust for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Charity Statement of Financial Activities, Consolidated and Charity Balance Sheets, Consolidated Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the group's and parent charitable company's net movement in funds, including the 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 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the 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 group'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 Trustees' 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.

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' Annual Report (which includes the strategic report and the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' Annual Report have 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 group and the parent charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report (which incorporates the strategic report and the directors' report).

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charity Accounts (Scotland) Regulations (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent 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 for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 74, 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 group's and the parent 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 group or the parent 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:

Based on our understanding of the group and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to company law and charity law, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011, income tax, payroll tax and sales tax.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to income recognition. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations, postings by unusual users or with unusual descriptions; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their accounting estimates.

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

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

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, section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 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.

Kathryn Burton
(Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Haysmacintyre LLP, Statutory Auditors
18 September 2024

10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG

NCT consolidated group statement of financial activities

Including Income & Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Income from							
Donations							
Membership		228	-	228	345	2	347
Donations		19	1	20	13	-	13
Grants receivable	3	17	574	591	19	579	598
		264	575	839	377	581	958
Charitable activities							
NCT Courses		8,770	-	8,770	8,376	-	8,376
Education and Practice		293	-	293	452	-	452
Programme Delivery	4	1,414	-	1,414	820	-	820
		10,477	-	10,477	9,648	-	9,648
Other trading activities							
Community fundraising		334	-	334	334	42	376
Commercial fundraising		71	-	71	135	-	135
Trading		3	-	3	4	-	4
		408	-	408	473	42	515
Investments							
Investment portfolio income		97	-	97	93	-	93
		97	-	97	93	-	93
Other income							
Other income receivable		27	-	27	37	-	37
Total income		11,273	575	11,848	10,628	623	11,251
Expenditure on							
Raising funds							
Membership		135	-	135	239	-	239
Charitable activities							
NCT Courses	5	6,279	166	6,445	6,098	117	6,215
Education and Practice		973	-	973	1,114	-	1,114
Programme Delivery		2,235	317	2,552	1,713	461	2,174
Policy, research and information		1,180	-	1,180	1,196	-	1,196
		10,667	483	11,10	10,121	578	10,699
Other trading activities							
Community fundraising	6	580	20	600	553	8	561
Commercial fundraising		36	-	36	56	-	56
Trading		144	-	144	101	-	101
		760	20	780	710	8	718
Total Expenditure	7	11,562	503	12,065	11,070	586	11,656
Net operating (expenditure)/income		(289)	72	(217)	(442)	37	(405)
Gain/(loss) on investment assets	12	230	-	230	(148)	-	(148)
Net (expenditure)/income and net movement in funds	8	(59)	72	13	(590)	37	(553)
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward		4,392	196	4,588	4,982	159	5,141
Total funds carried forward	15,16	4,333	268	4,601	4,392	196	4,588

All of the group's activities are derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods. The group has no recognised gains or losses other than those shown above. The movement in reserves is shown above.

The notes on pages 84 to 99 form part of these financial statements.

NCT charity statement of financial activities

Including Income & Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Income from							
Donations and legacies							
Membership		228	-	228	345	2	347
Donations		26	1	27	64	-	64
Grants receivable	3	17	574	591	19	579	598
		271	575	846	428	581	1,009
Charitable Activities							
NCT Courses		8,770	-	8,770	8,376	-	8,376
Education and Practice		293	-	293	452	-	452
Programme Delivery	4	1,414	-	1,414	820	-	820
		10,477	-	10,477	9,648	-	9,648
Other trading activities							
Community fundraising		334	-	334	334	42	376
Trading		3	-	3	4	-	4
		337	-	337	338	42	380
Investments							
Investment portfolio income		97	-	97	93	-	93
		97	-	97	93	-	93
Other income							
		55	-	55	65	-	65
Total income		11,237	575	11,812	10,572	623	11,195
Expenditure on							
Raising funds							
Membership		135	-	135	239	-	239
Charitable activities							
NCT Courses	5	6,279	166	6,445	6,098	117	6,215
Education and Practice		973	-	973	1,114	-	1,114
Programme Delivery		2,235	317	2,552	1,713	461	2,174
Policy, research and information		1,180	-	1,180	1,196	-	1,196
		10,667	483	11,150	10,121	578	10,699
Other trading activities							
Community fundraising	6	580	20	600	553	8	561
Trading		144	-	144	101	-	101
		724	20	744	654	8	662
Total resources expended	7	11,526	503	12,029	11,014	586	11,600
Net operating (expenditure)/income		(289)	72	(217)	(442)	37	(405)
Gain/(loss) on investment assets	12	230	-	230	(148)	-	(148)
Net (expenditure)/income and net movement in funds	8	(59)	72	13	(590)	37	(553)
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward		4,392	196	4,588	4,982	159	5,141
Total funds carried forward	15,16	4,333	268	4,601	4,392	196	4,588

All of the NCT's activities are derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods. The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than those shown above. The movement in reserves is shown above.

The notes on pages 84 to 99 form part of these financial statements.

NCT consolidated and charity balance sheets

as at 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 Group £'000	2024 Charity £'000	2023 Group £'000	2023 Charity £'000
Fixed Assets					
Intangible Assets	10	-	-	-	-
Tangible Assets	11	1,241	1,241	1,270	1,270
Investments	12	3,997	3,997	3,707	3,707
Total Fixed Assets		5,238	5,238	4,977	4,977
Current Assets					
Debtors	13	772	790	948	979
Short term deposits		501	501	76	76
Cash at bank and in hand		1,149	1,122	2,297	2,236
		2,422	2,413	3,321	3,291
Liabilities					
Creditors:					
Amounts falling due within one year	14	(3,059)	(3,050)	(3,710)	(3,680)
Net current assets / (liabilities)		(637)	(637)	(389)	(389)
Total net assets		4,601	4,601	4,588	4,588
Fund balances					
Charitable funds					
Restricted funds	15	268	268	196	196
Unrestricted funds	16				
General funds		3,092	3,092	3,122	3,122
Fixed asset fund		1,241	1,241	1,270	1,270
		4,333	4,333	4,392	4,392
Total funds	17	4,601	4,601	4,588	4,588

Approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

Stephanie Maurel
Chair
12 September 2024

The National Childbirth Trust
Company Number: 2370573 (England & Wales)

The notes on pages 84 to 99 form part of these financial statements.

NCT consolidated cash flow statement

for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Cash flows from Operating Activities		
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period	13	(553)
(Gains) / Losses on investments	(230)	148
Depreciation and amortisation charges	32	32
Investment income	(86)	(93)
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	176	106
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(653)	46
Net cash provided by operating activities	(748)	(314)
Cash flows from Investing Activities		
Purchase of Investments	(2,086)	(940)
Proceeds from the sale of Investments	2,016	936
Dividends received	85	93
Net cash from investing activities	15	89
Cash flows from Financing Activities		
Net cash from financing activities	-	-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	(733)	(225)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	2,522	2,747
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the reporting period	1,789	2,522

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash at bank and in hand	1,149	2,297
Short term deposits	501	76
Cash held by investment managers	139	149
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,789	2,522

A reconciliation of net debt has not been presented as the group does not have any borrowings.

The notes on pages 84 to 99 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the financial statements

1 Principal Accounting Policies

a) General information

National Childbirth Trust is a charitable company, limited by guarantee. The registered office is 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3AX. Its company registration number is 2370573 (England and Wales), its charity registration numbers are 801395 (England and Wales) and SC041592 (Scotland).

b) Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies below and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland, the Charities Trust Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 as amended in 2014. The charity is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102 and a registered charity. The charity has therefore also prepared its individual and consolidated financial statements in accordance with FRS 102 (The Charities SORP (FRS 102)).

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis and on the historical cost basis, except for the measurement of investments and certain financial assets and liabilities at fair value with movements in value reported within the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA). The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below and have been applied consistently throughout the year.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Amounts included in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest thousand pounds.

c) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees have adopted the going concern basis in preparing these accounts after assessing the principal risks and having considered the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and inflationary factors. The trustees consider that the charity is resilient to the impact of these scenarios.

The trustees considered the impact of the expected future environment on the business for the 12 months following signature of the financial statements, the viability period and the longer term considering the impacts on income, expenditure and cash flow and consider the charity can absorb and adapt to the environment.

On this basis the trustees have concluded that there are no material uncertainties that impact the use of the going concern basis and that the charity will be able to settle its debts as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, the going concern basis has continued to be adopted in the preparation of the financial statements.

d) Basis of consolidation

The statement of financial activities and balance sheet consolidate on a line-by-line basis the financial statements of the charity and all its subsidiary undertakings made up to the balance sheet date. Immaterial subsidiaries are not consolidated. The decision on consolidation is based on the power NCT has to control each undertaking.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

e) Income

Incoming resources are recognised in the period in which the charity is entitled to receipt, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions outside of its control before becoming entitled to it or when the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period. Legacies are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is advised by the personal representative of an estate that payment will be made or property transferred and the amount involved can be measured reliably. Grants, including government grants, have been included as income from charitable activities where these amount to a contract for services or a grant for specific costs. Fees from NCT affiliates are included in full within incoming resources.

f) Expenditure

Expenditure is included in the statement of financial activities when incurred and includes any attributable VAT, which cannot be recovered. Resources expended comprise the following:

- *Charitable activities*, which comprises expenditure on the charity's primary purposes and are categorised as NCT Courses, Education and Practice, Programme Delivery and Policy, Research and Information.
 - » *NCT Courses* comprises the costs of providing courses, for parents and expectant parents where a participant generally books the course.
 - » *Education and Practice* comprises the costs of providing training and support for students and NCT Practitioners who deliver NCT courses.
 - » *Programme Delivery* comprises the costs of delivering services procured under a contract for services or a grant and providing specialist helplines.
 - » *Policy, research and information* comprises the cost of the research and service development teams, as well as communications and marketing.
- *Expenditure on raising funds* is categorised into membership only. *Membership* expenditure comprises the costs of the department that services members and prospective members and the team that provides support to members and Branches.
- *Other trading activities* is categorised into community fundraising, commercial fundraising and trading.
 - » *Community fundraising*, which comprises the community fundraising support team, the costs of Branch fundraising activities and costs associated with the administration of Branches. Many of the fundraising events held by the branches have two objectives, to raise funds for the charity as well as meeting the aims of the charity in terms of providing postnatal support for families. There is no meaningful way of apportioning the costs of Branch fundraising events between fundraising costs and charitable activities.
 - » *Commercial fundraising* is the cost of obtaining and managing the sponsorship of activities and events and undertakes other business activity on behalf of NCT by NCT Trading Limited.
 - » *Trading* comprises the costs of supporting other trading activities.

g) Basis of apportioning support costs

Support costs, which includes governance costs, represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of NCT, it is necessary to provide support in the form of the people and inclusion team, financial operations and management, information technology, general management and administration and office services. These costs are apportioned to the other activities within the charity based on the average number of full-time equivalent employees utilised by the activity.

h) Gifts in kind

Facilities and services donated to the charity for its own use are included in incoming resources and expenditure at their value to the charity as at the time of the gift.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

i) Tangible and intangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised. Leasehold properties used for the work of the charity are included in these accounts at the cost of acquisition. Software development is capitalised when there is future economic benefit to the charity and ongoing lease costs are not required to use the developed software. Fixed assets are capitalised and depreciated at the following rates per annum, based on cost, in order to write them off over their estimated useful lives at the rates shown below.

Category	Asset Group	Rate per annum
Property	Leasehold	2%
	Leasehold improvements	Lease length or on a component basis, minimum 2%
Equipment	End user computer equipment and software	33%
	Computer and telecoms network infrastructure and software	20%
	Furniture	20%
	Other equipment	33%

At the end of each reporting period, residual values and useful lives are reviewed and adjusted as necessary. Assets are also reviewed annually for impairment.

j) Fixed asset investments

Listed equities are included in the financial statements at fair value as at the balance sheet date. Investments in subsidiary undertakings are held at cost less impairment. Realised and unrealised gains (or losses) are credited (or debited) to the statement of financial activities in the year in which they arise.

k) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are monies raised for, or their use restricted to, a specific purpose, or contributions subject to donor imposed conditions.

The fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the tangible and intangible fixed assets used in the day-to-day operations of NCT. The value of this fund is not available for working capital.

General funds represent those monies, which are freely available for application towards achieving any charitable purpose that falls within the charity's charitable objects.

l) Leased assets

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Rental applicable to finance leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to the lessee are recognized as assets at the lower of the assets fair value at the date of inception and the present value of minimum lease payments. The related liability is included in the balance sheet as a finance lease obligation. Lease payments are treated as consisting of capital and interest elements. The interest is charged to the Statement of Financial Activity so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest in the remaining balance of the liability.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

m) Branches

Branch transactions are considered transactions of the charity.

n) Employee benefits

The costs of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense, unless those costs are required to be recognised as part of the cost of fixed assets. The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received. Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the company is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

o) Debtors

Debtors are stated at their net realisable value after allowing for bad and doubtful debts.

p) Creditors

Creditors are amounts owed by the charity. They are measured at the amount that the charity expects to have to pay to settle the debt.

q) Pension costs

The charity as an employer contributes to personal pension plans of its employees. The contributions are set at up to 5% of gross salary and are available to all employees whose contracts are permanent and who have completed three months' service with the charity.

r) Redundancy costs

Redundancy costs are recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation.

s) Financial Instruments

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

t) Cash and cash equivalents

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

u) Irrecoverable VAT

All expenditure is charged to the SOFA on an accruals basis including the charge for VAT which is not recoverable.

v) Accounting judgements and estimation uncertainty

In preparing financial statements it is necessary to make certain judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts recognised in the financial statements. The following judgements and estimates are considered by the Board to have the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Tangible fixed assets are depreciated to their estimated residual value over their estimated useful economic life as detailed above.

Accrued course expenditure is estimated at the year end date using algorithmic modelling based on contracted hours and pre-agreed rates and anticipated venue costs.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

2 Commercial trading operations

The National Childbirth Trust owns the entire called up ordinary share capital of four companies incorporated in the United Kingdom:

- NCT Trading Limited, which has two principal activities; the promotion of the work of NCT and profit generation;
- NCT (Maternity Sales) Limited which did not trade during the period of these accounts;
- NCT Publishing Limited which did not trade during the period of these accounts; and
- First 1,000 Days Foundation which did not trade during the period of these accounts.

NCT Trading Limited has a deed of covenant to distribute its taxable profit to NCT. A summary of the results of the trading subsidiary for the period are given below.

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Profit and loss account – NCT Trading Ltd		
Turnover	71	135
Cost of sales	-	-
Gross profit	71	135
Administrative expenses	(64)	(84)
Operating profit before interest	7	51
Interest payable	-	-
Comprehensive income for the period	7	51
	31 March 2024 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Balance Sheet – NCT Trading Ltd		
Current Assets	29	83
Amounts falling due within one year	(29)	(83)
Net Assets	-	-

The above figures exclude any consolidation adjustments for inter-group profits/losses, which have been reflected in the consolidated statement of financial activities. The accounts figures have been consolidated on a line-by-line basis.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

3 Income: grants receivable

Group and Charity	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Parents in Mind	-	3	3	-	-	-
Grants to branches	17	253	270	19	166	185
BBCS	-	31	31	-	17	17
Scottish Health	-	185	185	-	184	184
Newham Nurture	-	96	96	-	212	212
Antenatal	-	6	6	-	-	-
	17	574	591	19	579	598

Grants receivable includes government grants for Scottish Health and Newham Nurture and totalled £281k (2023: £396k).

4 Income: programme delivery

Group and Charity	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000
National Health Service	607	-	607	475	-	475
Local Authorities	775	-	775	250	-	250
Other	32	-	32	95	-	95
	1,414	-	1,414	820	-	820

5 Expenditure: NCT courses

Group and Charity	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Antenatal	4,318	-	4,318	3,966	-	3,966
Postnatal	37	-	37	38	-	38
General Parental Support	901	166	1,067	865	117	982
Apportioned support costs	1,023	-	1,023	1,229	-	1,229
	6,279	166	6,445	6,098	117	6,215

6 Expenditure: community fundraising

Group and Charity	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Branch fundraising	378	20	398	372
Central fundraising	202	-	202	189
	580	20	600	561

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

7 Support cost allocations

Support costs are allocated to the expenditure headings in the Statement of Financial Activities, on the basis stated in the Accounting Policies (note 1), as stated in the tables below.

Group 2024	Membership £'000	NCT Courses £'000	Education and Practice £'000	Programme Delivery £'000	Policy, Research & Information £'000	Community Fundraising £'000	Commercial Fundraising £'000	Trading £'000	Total 2024 £'000
Staff costs	22	506	136	472	128	48	-	19	1,331
Depreciation	1	12	3	11	3	1	-	1	32
Premises and equipment	3	59	16	55	15	6	-	2	156
Office supplies	4	88	24	82	22	8	-	3	231
Insurance	1	34	9	32	9	3	-	1	89
Irrecoverable VAT	3	68	18	64	17	6	-	3	179
Governance	-	10	3	9	3	1	-	-	26
Other	11	246	66	229	61	24	-	9	646
Support Costs	45	1,023	275	954	258	97	-	38	2,690
Direct Costs	90	5,422	698	1,598	922	503	36	106	9,375
Total Costs	135	6,445	973	2,552	1,180	600	36	144	12,065

Group 2023	Membership £'000	NCT Courses £'000	Education and Practice £'000	Programme Delivery £'000	Policy, Research & Information £'000	Community Fundraising £'000	Commercial Fundraising £'000	Trading £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Staff costs	36	481	153	302	142	45	-	16	1,175
Depreciation	1	14	4	8	4	1	-	-	32
Premises and equipment	5	61	19	39	18	6	-	2	150
Office supplies	10	133	42	84	39	13	-	4	325
Insurance	2	31	10	19	9	3	-	1	75
Irrecoverable VAT	8	104	33	65	31	10	-	3	254
Governance	-	4	1	3	2	-	-	-	10
Other	31	401	128	252	118	38	-	13	981
Support Costs	93	1,229	390	772	363	116	-	39	3,002
Direct Costs	146	4,986	724	1,402	833	445	56	62	8,654
Total Costs	239	6,215	1,114	2,174	1,196	561	56	101	11,656

Charity 2024	Membership £'000	NCT Courses £'000	Education and Practice £'000	Programme Delivery £'000	Policy, Research & Information £'000	Community Fundraising £'000	Trading £'000	Total 2024 £'000
Staff costs	22	506	136	472	128	48	19	1,331
Depreciation	1	12	3	11	3	1	1	32
Premises and equipment	3	59	16	55	15	6	2	156
Office supplies	4	88	24	82	22	8	3	231
Insurance	1	34	9	32	9	3	1	89
Irrecoverable VAT	3	68	18	64	17	6	3	179
Governance	-	10	3	9	3	1	-	26
Other	11	246	66	229	61	24	9	646
Support Costs	45	1,023	275	954	258	97	38	2,690
Direct Costs	90	5,422	698	1,598	922	503	106	9,339
Total Costs	135	6,445	973	2,552	1,180	600	144	12,029

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Charity 2023	Membership £'000	NCT Courses £'000	Education and Practice £'000	Programme Delivery £'000	Policy, Research & Information £'000	Community Fundraising £'000	Trading £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Staff costs	36	481	153	302	142	45	16	1,175
Depreciation	1	14	4	8	4	1	-	32
Premises and equipment	5	61	19	39	18	6	2	150
Office supplies	10	133	42	84	39	13	4	325
Insurance	2	31	10	19	9	3	1	75
Irrecoverable VAT	8	104	33	65	31	10	3	254
Governance	-	4	1	3	2	-	-	10
Other	31	401	128	252	118	38	13	981
Support Costs	93	1,229	390	772	363	116	39	3,002
Direct Costs	146	4,986	724	1,402	833	445	62	8,598
Total Costs	239	6,215	1,114	2,174	1,196	561	101	11,600

8 Net movement in funds

	Group		Charity	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Net movement in funds is stated after charging:				
Depreciation/amortisation of fixed assets	32	32	31	32
Staff costs (excluding agency staff)	4,766	4,341	4,741	4,310
Operating lease rentals	11	11	11	11
Auditors' remuneration: audit services	52	46	47	38
Auditors' remuneration: non-audit services	2	1	-	-
Investment management fees	27	26	27	26
Gifts in kind from corporate partners	15	5	15	5

9 Staff costs and remuneration

Staff costs during the period were as follows:

	Group		Charity	
	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Wages and salaries	4,176	3,859	4,153	3,833
Redundancy costs	66	1	66	1
Social security costs	326	310	324	307
Other pension costs	200	171	198	169
	4,766	4,341	4,741	4,310
Payments to agency staff	-	44	-	44
	4,766	4,385	4,741	4,354

There were no outstanding redundancy costs at the balance sheet date.

Staff costs by function were as follows:

	Group		Charity	
	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2024 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Raising funds	95	162	95	162
Other trading activities	325	273	300	242
Charitable activities	4,346	3,950	4,346	3,950
	4,766	4,385	4,741	4,354

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Higher paid employees:

	Group		Charity	
	Total 2024	Total 2023	Total 2024	Total 2023
£60,000 – 69,999	1	3	1	3
£70,000 – 79,999	3	1	3	1
£80,000 – 89,999	1	-	1	-
£90,000 – 99,999	-	-	-	-
£100,000 – 109,999	-	-	-	-
£110,000 – 119,999	1	1	1	1
	6	5	6	5

The pension cost for these employees, was £20,737 (2023: £13,102), which included the Chief Executive who received a total salary of £118,965 (2023: £115,600) and pension contributions of £5,948 (2023: £4,626).

The average headcount including part-time staff, analysed by function was:

	Group		Charity	
	Number 2024	Number 2023	Number 2024	Number 2023
Raising funds	2	4	2	4
Other trading activities	7	7	6	6
Charitable activities	154	140	154	140
Support	24	21	24	21
	187	172	186	171

The average number of full time equivalents, analysed by function was:

	Group		Charity	
	FTEs 2024	FTEs 2023	FTEs 2024	FTEs 2023
Raising funds	1.9	3.2	1.9	3.2
Other trading activities	5.6	5.4	4.6	4.4
Charitable activities	106.0	95.0	106.0	95.0
Support	21.3	18.2	21.3	18.2
	134.8	121.8	133.8	120.8

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Directors Group. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £499,825 (2023: £425,765).

Expenses were reimbursed to 5 (2023: 5) members of the Board of Trustees during the year. Their expenses amounted to £131 (2023: £1,112) in respect of expenses incurred as a trustee in attending board and related meetings, and £19,157 (2023: £16,104) in respect of expenses incurred for branch support and fees as practitioners or breastfeeding counsellors. No trustees were remunerated in the current or prior year.

We are very grateful to our excellent volunteers. Given the absence of a reliable measurement basis, donated services from our volunteers are not included within the financial statements. Our network of volunteers offered welcoming and inclusive activities, supported over 96,000 parents at over 7,000 community events and provided over 75,000 hours of outstanding community service. More details of the crucial role volunteers contribute is provided in the Trustees' Report.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

10 Intangible fixed assets

Group and charity	Software £'000	Total 31 March £'000
Cost or valuation		
At 1 April 2023	128	128
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2024	128	128
Amortisation		
At 1 April 2023	128	128
Charge for period	-	-
On disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2024	128	128
Net book values		
At 31 March 2024	-	-
At 31 March 2023	-	-

11 Tangible fixed assets

Group and charity	Property £'000	Equipment £'000	Total 31 March £'000
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2023	1,504	259	1,763
Additions	-	3	3
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	1,504	262	1,766
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	236	257	493
Charge for period	31	1	32
On disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	267	258	525
Net book values			
At 31 March 2024	1,237	4	1,241
At 31 March 2023	1,268	2	1,270

Property relates to a leasehold building. This property was sold after the Balance Sheet date.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

12 Fixed asset investments

	Group		Charity	
	2024 31 March	2023 31 March	2024 31 March	2023 31 March
	£	£	£	£
Investment in group undertakings:				
NCT (Maternity Sales) Limited	-	-	6	6
NCT Trading Limited	-	-	100	100
NCT Publishing Limited	-	-	2	2
First 1,000 Days Foundation	-	-	-	-
Other investments:				
Managed investment funds	3,996,678	3,707,453	3,996,678	3,707,453
	3,996,678	3,707,453	3,996,786	3,707,561

On 7 August 2013, the 'First 1,000 Days Foundation' was formed as a company limited by guarantee (registered in England and Wales 864816) with the sole member as The National Childbirth Trust. The Company has been dormant since incorporation. Investments in NCT (Maternity Sales) Limited, NCT Trading Limited and NCT Publishing Limited represent the entire called up share capital of the companies, all of which are incorporated in England.

	Registered Company Number	Reserves at 31 March 2024 £	Reserves at 31 March 2023 £
Investment in Group undertakings:			
NCT (Maternity Sales) Limited	01291517	6	6
NCT Trading Limited	02488491	-	-
NCT Publishing Limited	03017833	2	2
First 1,000 Days Foundation	08641816	-	-

The registered office for all of the above companies is: 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3AX.

Managed investment funds

Group and Charity	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000
Market value at 1 April 2023	3,558	3,702
Acquisitions	2,086	940
Disposals	(2,016)	(936)
Net investment gains/ (losses)	230	(148)
Market value at 31 March 2024	3,858	3,558
The Market value is represented by:		
Equities	3,199	2,883
Bonds	659	675
	3,858	3,558
Cash held by investment managers	139	149
Total Investment fund	3,997	3,707

The charity's actively managed investment fund is revalued annually at the balance sheet date. The increase or decrease in value as a result of this valuation is recognised as an unrealised investment gain or loss.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

13 Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000
Amounts due from subsidiary undertakings	-	-	21	54
Prepayments and accrued income	400	401	400	400
Trade and branch debtors	367	541	364	519
Tax recoverable	2	4	2	4
Other debtors	3	2	3	2
	772	948	790	979

'Trade and branch debtors' includes £nil (2023: £25,000) due in more than one year.

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000
Expense creditors	341	431	341	431
Social security and other taxes	104	95	104	95
Deferred income	1,971	2,663	1,969	2,643
Accruals	643	521	636	511
	3,059	3,710	3,050	3,680

Movement in Deferred Income

Group and Charity	At 1 April 2023 £'000	Deferred £'000	Released £'000	At 31 March 2024 £'000
NCT Courses	2,165	1,724	(2,165)	1,724
Programme Delivery	478	245	(478)	245
Total for the Charity	2,643	1,969	(2,643)	1,969
Commercial Fundraising	20	2	(20)	2
Total for the Group	2,663	1,971	(2,663)	1,971

Deferred income relates to courses and contracts for services which have not been delivered at the balance sheet date.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

15 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity and the group include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trusts to be applied for specific purposes:

Group and Charity	At 1 April 2023 £'000	Movements in Funds			At 31 March 2024 £'000
		Incoming Resources £'000	Outgoing Resources £'000	Fund Transfer £'000	
Grants and donations received by branches	166	253	(166)	-	253
Glasgow Service Delivery	-	185	(178)	-	7
Birth and Beyond Community Support	-	31	(31)	-	-
Newham Nurture	-	96	(96)	-	-
Big Give	2	1	(3)	-	-
LIDL	28	-	(28)	-	-
Parents in Mind	-	3	-	-	3
Antenatal	-	6	(1)	-	5
	196	575	(503)	-	268

Group and Charity	At 1 April 2022 £'000	Movements in Funds			At 31 March 2023 £'000
		Incoming Resources £'000	Outgoing Resources £'000	Fund Transfer £'000	
Grants and donations received by branches	117	166	(117)	-	166
Glasgow Service Delivery	-	184	(184)	-	-
Birth and Beyond Community Support	-	17	(17)	-	-
Newham Nurture	19	212	(231)	-	-
Big Give	23	6	(27)	-	2
LIDL	-	38	(10)	-	28
	159	623	(586)	-	196

Glasgow Service Delivery – Funding to enable us to provide a range of community and hospital breastfeeding peer support services across East Lothian and Glasgow

BBCS – Funding to enable us to continue to provide Birth and Beyond Community Support to mothers who are at risk of isolation and not accessing services across Peterborough and Lincolnshire and extended into Wisbech and Fenland.

Newham Nurture – Funding to enable us to coproduce a programme of support to pregnant women and new parents from low income, migrant and marginalised backgrounds experiencing financial hardship and disadvantage.

Big Give – Funding to enable us to give extra resource to our Infant Feeding Line so that more parents can be supported during peak times.

LIDL – Funding to enable us to support parents through the cost-of-living crisis by providing free-to-access services.

Parents in Mind – Funding to enable us to continue to provide Parents in Mind our perinatal mental health peer support programme to families in need

Antenatal – Funding to enable us to work with NHS hospitals to get their antenatal education up and running with in their trusts, ensuring families have free access to antenatal education.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

16 Unrestricted funds

Group	At 1 April 2023 £'000	Incoming Resources £'000	Outgoing Resources £'000	Unrealised Investment Gains/ (Losses) £'000	Transfer Between Funds £'000	At 31 March 2024 £'000
General Funds	3,122	11,273	11,562	230	29	3,092
Fixed Assets Fund	1,270	-	-	-	(29)	1,241
	4,392	11,273	11,562	230	-	4,333

Charity	At 1 April 2023 £'000	Incoming Resources £'000	Outgoing Resources £'000	Unrealised Investment Gains/ (Losses) £'000	Transfer Between Funds £'000	At 31 March 2024 £'000
General Funds	3,122	11,237	11,526	230	29	3,092
Fixed Assets Fund	1,270	-	-	-	(29)	1,241
	4,392	11,237	11,526	230	-	4,333

Group	At 1 April 2022 £'000	Incoming Resources £'000	Outgoing Resources £'000	Unrealised Investment Gains/ (Losses) £'000	Transfer Between Funds £'000	At 31 March 2023 £'000
General Funds	3,680	10,628	(11,070)	(148)	32	3,122
Fixed Assets Fund	1,302	-	-	-	(32)	1,270
	4,982	10,628	(11,070)	(148)	-	4,392

Charity	At 1 April 2022 £'000	Incoming Resources £'000	Outgoing Resources £'000	Unrealised Investment Gains/ (Losses) £'000	Transfer Between Funds £'000	At 31 March 2023 £'000
General Funds	3,680	10,572	(11,014)	(148)	32	3,122
Fixed Assets Fund	1,302	-	-	-	(32)	1,270
	4,982	10,572	(11,014)	(148)	-	4,392

The transfer between funds represents the movement in the fixed asset balance during the year.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:

Group	Unrestricted Funds			2024 Total £'000
	General Funds £'000	Fixed Asset Fund £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	
Fixed assets	-	1,241	-	1,241
Investment assets	3,997	-	-	3,997
Net current assets / (liabilities)	(905)	-	268	(637)
Total net assets	<u>3,092</u>	<u>1,241</u>	<u>268</u>	<u>4,601</u>

Charity	Unrestricted Funds			2024 Total £'000
	General Funds £'000	Fixed Asset Fund £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	
Fixed assets	-	1,241	-	1,241
Investment assets	3,997	-	-	3,997
Net current assets / (liabilities)	(905)	-	268	(637)
Total net assets	<u>3,092</u>	<u>1,241</u>	<u>268</u>	<u>4,601</u>

Group	Unrestricted Funds			2023 Total £'000
	General Funds £'000	Fixed Asset Fund £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	
Fixed assets	-	1,270	-	1,270
Investment assets	3,707	-	-	3,707
Net current assets / (liabilities)	(585)	-	196	(389)
Total net assets	<u>3,122</u>	<u>1,270</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>4,588</u>

Charity	Unrestricted Funds			2023 Total £'000
	General Funds £'000	Fixed Asset Fund £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	
Fixed assets	-	1,270	-	1,270
Investment assets	3,707	-	-	3,707
Net current assets / (liabilities)	(585)	-	196	(389)
Total net assets	<u>3,122</u>	<u>1,270</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>4,588</u>

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

18 Taxation

The National Childbirth Trust is a registered charity and therefore is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities. Each year subsidiary companies, which do not have charitable status, may Gift Aid any taxable profits to The National Childbirth Trust. The charity and group is not able to reclaim all VAT suffered on expenditure due to the partial exemption regulations.

19 Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2024 the group's future minimum operating lease payments were as follows:

	Group		Charity	
	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000
Expire				
Within one year	11	6	11	6
Between one and five years	18	-	18	-
	29	6	29	6

20 Financial Instruments

The financial statements include the following in respect of items held at fair value at the balance sheet date

	Group		Charity	
	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000	2024 31 March £'000	2023 31 March £'000
Financial assets measured at fair value through profit and loss	3,858	3,558	3,858	3,558

21 Related party transactions

NCT Trading Limited is a subsidiary of The National Childbirth Trust and its shares are 100% controlled within the group.

During the year the National Childbirth Trust purchased services from NCT Trading of £nil (2023: £7k) on normal commercial terms. The National Childbirth Trust supplied services to NCT Trading of £29k (2023: £34k).

At the 31 March 2023 NCT Trading Limited owed The National Childbirth Trust £23k (2023: £54k).

No members of the Board of Trustees (2023: Nil) had a beneficial interest in contracts with the charity. No member of the board (2023: Nil) had a beneficial interest in a contract with a wholly owned subsidiary of The National Childbirth Trust during the period. At the date of signing the accounts, one (2023: three) trustees was also a Director of NCT Trading Limited.

There are no other related party transactions to disclose other than set out elsewhere in these accounts, including in Note 9 (2023: none).

Reference and administrative information

Charity Registrations:

The National Childbirth Trust ('NCT')
 Company Registration: 2370573 (England & Wales)
 Registered Charity: 801395
 Charity Registered in Scotland: SC041592
 VAT: GB 115 0789 24

Registered Office:

27 Old Gloucester Street,
 London,
 WC1N 3AX

Board of Trustees who are also directors under Company Law at the date of this report are:

Charles Richardson (Honorary Treasurer)
 Chi Evi-Parker
 David Shanks
 Elaine Lambe
 Ema Ojiako (Honorary Secretary)
 Franciane Husbands-Chevot
 Julien Haye
 Mikayla Pencross
 Sarah Brown (Vice Chair)
 Sherry Bevan (President)
 Stephanie Maurel (Chair)
 Vikram Sundarraj

Directors Group who are not directors for the purposes of Company Law at the date of this report are:

Angela McConville, Chief Executive
 Michael Barnett, Director of Finance and Planning
 Natasha Simpson, Director of People, Education and Inclusion
 Tope Medupin, Director of Operations

Company Secretary

Michael Barnett

Auditor:

Haysmacintyre LLP
 10 Queen Street Place
 London
 EC4R 1AG

Bankers:

Lloyds Bank plc.
 39 Threadneedle Street
 London
 EC2R 8AU

Investment Advisors:

Rathbone Brothers PLC
 8 Finsbury Circus
 London
 EC2M 7AZ

Solicitors:

Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP
 10 Queen Street Place
 London
 EC4R 1BE

Kemp Little
 Cheapside House
 138 Cheapside
 London
 EC2V 6BJ

Subsidiaries:

First 1,000 Days Foundation (limited by guarantee, dormant)
 NCT (Maternity Sales) Limited (dormant)
 NCT Publishing Limited (dormant)
 NCT Trading Limited



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Registered address: 27 Old Gloucester Street, London WC1N 3AX.
Registered charity in England and Wales: 801395 and Scotland: SC041592.