The Cedar Foundation

Northern Ireland · Charity number 101121

Details

Status	Received
Company number	2132
Registered	2014-12-04
Register	View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register

Contact

Address	1 Ravenhill Reach Close Ormeau Embankment Belfast Bt6 8rb BT6 8RB
Phone	028 90461834
Website	www.cedar-foundation.org

Activities

Purposes: Objects 1: To undertake and to join with others in undertaking the provision of services for disabled adults and children in Northern Ireland and to work in partnership with disabled adults and children and to develop services that promote choice, opportunity, independence and equality. 2: To provide or cause to be provided for persons with disabilities one or more of the following: a) residential and community care; and b) rehabilitation and training services. 3: To train or to provide and develop training services in some suitable trade or occupation for persons with disabilities so as to assist the integration of those persons in the community and assist in the finding of suitable employment for such persons 4: To develop a range of pre-vocational/vocational training and enterprise initiatives that enhance skills and promote opportunity in further and higher education, vocational or other training and employment. 5: To provide for or make arrangements for the provision of the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and to that end cooperate with and Government department, local authority, institution or firm engaged in this work. 6: To provide for the education of persons with disabilities and to the end to provide either alone or in co-operation with any department of the Government of Northern Ireland or local authority in Northern Ireland such schools and teachers as may be necessary or expedient. 7: To develop community based support services which will enable persons with disabilities and their carers to meet the challenges of community living and to provide a range of independent living options in conjunction with relevant Government agencies and local authorities. 8: to advise and to assist or procure assistance for individuals persons with disabilities. 9: To advise and to assist or procure assistance for young persons with disabilities to acquire the necessary skills required for adult lift and to provide information and support to them and their parents. 10: To establish and support or to aid in the establishment and support of any charitable associations formed for all or any of the objects of the Charity; provided that the Charity shall not support with its fund any object, or endeavour to impose on or procure to be observed by its members or others, any regulation, restriction or condition which, if an object of the Charity would make it a Trade Union.

What the charity does: The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage

How the charity works: Accommodation/housing,Advice/advocacy/information,Disability,Education/training,Volunteer development

Who the charity helps: Adult training,Learning disabilities,Men,Physical disabilities,Women,Youth (14-25 year olds)

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£23,238,668	£22,655,932	£-1,507,783	553

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Denise Currie		
Dr Jackie Casey		
Dr Jean Daly-Lynn		
Dr Robert Rauch		
Mr David Duly		
Mr Gareth Mcwilliams		
Mr Mark Allen		
Mr Michael Williamson		
Mrs Myrna Evans		
Ms Maura Lavery		

Accounts

Statement of financial activities
(incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Restricted	Unrestricted	2025	2024
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	-	156,989	**156,989**	10,330
Charitable activities	3	2,709,674	20,030,746	**22,740,420**	19,679,335
Investments	4	-	341,259	**341,259**	204,439
Total income		2,709,674	20,528,994	**23,238,668**	19,894,104
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	3,397,421	19,258,510	**22,655,931**	19,708,220
Total expenditure		3,397,421	19,258,510	**22,655,931**	19,708,220
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		(687,747)	1,270,484	**582,737**	185,884
Other recognised gains/(losses):					
Gains/(losses) on assets and investments	15	-	(76,566)	**(76,566)**	200,582
Revaluation of Assets held for sale		-	-	**-**	-
Revaluation of Assets					
Transfers between funds	15	687,747	(687,747)	**-**	-
Net movement in funds		-	506,171	**506,171**	386,466
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		-	12,660,493	**12,660,493**	12,274,027
Net movement in funds		-	506,171	**506,171**	386,466
Total funds carried forward		-	13,166,664	**13,166,664**	12,660,493

All amounts above relate to continuing operations of the company.

The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

	Notes	2025	2024
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	10	**1,794,922**	1,864,744
Investments	11	**7,419,474**	3,126,819
		9,214,396	4,991,563
Current assets			
Debtors	12	**2,321,844**	2,337,102
Investments - short term deposits		**2,317,513**	3,777,269
Cash at bank and in hand		**820,694**	2,734,127
		5,460,051	8,848,498
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	**(1,507,783)**	(1,179,568)
Net current assets		**3,952,268**	7,668,930
Total Net assets		**13,166,664**	12,660,493
Charity funds			
Unrestricted funds	15	**13,166,664**	12,660,493
Restricted funds	15	**-**	-
Total funds		**13,166,664**	12,660,493

The accounts on pages 18 to 32 were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 16 September 2025.

Myrna Evans

Mrs Myrna Evans (Chairperson)

E Armstrong

Ms Elaine Armstrong (CEO)

Co. Registration No. NI 002132

The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Cash Flows

	2025	2024
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net cash provided by operating activities (see below)	**735,049**	473,203
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	**341,259**	204,439
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	**-**	488,622
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	**(149,498)**	(73,910)
Sale/(purchase) of investments	**(4,300,000)**	-
Net cash (used in) investment activities	**(4,108,239)**	619,151
Change in cash in the reporting period	**(3,373,190)**	1,092,354
Cash at the beginning of the reporting period	**6,511,396**	5,419,042
Cash at the end of the reporting period	**3,138,206**	6,511,396

Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of financial activities)	**582,737**	185,884
Adjusted for:		
Depreciation charges	**218,770**	236,997
Interest and dividends received	**(341,259)**	(204,439)
Gain on Evelyn investment	**(69,221)**	-
(Profit) / Loss on sale of fixed assets	**550**	333
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**328,215**	(108,915)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**15,259**	363,343
Net cash provided by operating activities	**735,049**	473,203

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	31 March 2024	**Cash Flow**	**31 March 2025**
	£	**£**	**£**
Cash at bank and in hand	2,734,127	(1,913,434)	**820,693**
Investments – short term deposits	3,777,269	(1,459,756)	**2,317,513**
Total cash and cash equivalents	6,511,396	(3,373,190)	**3,138,206**

The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the accounts

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and modified to include the revaluation of investments and in accordance with applicable accounting standards, the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice ("SORP") 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (FRS 102) and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102. A summary of the more important accounting policies, which have been applied consistently, is set out below.

Company status

The Foundation is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 2. In the event of the Foundation being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is £1 per member of the Foundation.

Income

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

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Charitable activities and Governance costs are costs incurred on the company's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Going Concern

No material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt about the ability of the charitable company to continue as a going concern have been identified by the Trustees.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Pension scheme

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Employer's contributions vary as a percentage of pensionable earnings depending on the staff member's agreed terms and conditions. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in independently administered funds, and contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Operating leases

Costs in respect of operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Tangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at their purchase cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets (excluding land), less their estimated residual values, on a straight-line basis over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned. The principal annual rates used for this purpose are as follows:

	%
Buildings	4
Motor vehicles	20
Fixtures and fittings	20
Computer equipment	33.33
Specialist IT software	20

Debtors

Debtors are measured at their recoverable amounts.

Creditors and provisions for liabilities and charges

Creditors and provisions for liabilities and charges are measured at their settlement amount.

Judgements and estimates

In the process of applying the charitable company's accounting policies, management has not made any significant judgements. There are no key assumptions concerning the future or other key sources of estimation, that have a significant risk of raising a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Investments

In accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, investments, are shown in the balance sheet at market value.

Interest receivable

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

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the company is demonstrably committed to either terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.
Notes to the accounts (continued)

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

2. Donations and legacies

	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2025**	2024
	£	£	**£**	£
Fundraising and donations	-	156,989	**156,989**	10,330
Legacies	-	-	**-**	-
	-	156,989	**156,989**	10,330

3. Incoming resources from charitable activities

	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2025**	2024
	£	£	**£**	£
Living Options	-	15,479,108	**15,479,108**	13,193,150
Living options – Supporting People	2,709,674	-	**2,709,674**	2,608,044
Employability & Community Inclusion	-	4,551,638	**4,551,638**	3,878,141
	2,709,674	20,030,746	**22,740,420**	19,679,335

4. Investment income

	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2025**	2024
	£	£	**£**	£
Income from investments	-	341,259	**341,259**	204,439
	-	341,259	**341,259**	204,439

5. Expenditure on charitable activities

The company allocates its costs between Restricted and Unrestricted expenditure as follows:

	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2025**	2024
	£	£	**£**	£
Living Options	-	13,752,878	**13,752,878**	11,721,018
Living Options – Supporting People	3,397,421	-	**3,397,421**	3,396,446
Employability & Community Inclusion	-	5,505,632	**5,505,632**	4,590,756
	3,397,421	19,258,510	**22,655,932**	19,708,220

Notes to the accounts (continued)

6. Employee information

The average weekly number of persons, including part time and relief staff employed by the company during the year was:

Company	**2025**	2024
	Number	Number
By activity:		
Admin & PR	**153**	138
Unit Managers & Deputies	**27**	25
Ancillary	**373**	312
	553	475

Company	**2025**	2024
	£	£
Staff costs		
Wages and salaries	**13,740,018**	12,424,647
Social security costs	**1,189,882**	1,004,015
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	**450,923**	415,409
Agency staff	**3,338,523**	2,633,040
Apprenticeship Levy	**51,198**	44,853
	18,770,544	16,521,964

Employee information (continued)

The number of employees in the Company whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	-	1
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	2	2
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	2	-
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	-	1
In the band £100,001 - £110,000	-	1
In the band £120,001 - £130,000	1	-
In the band £150,001 - £160,000	1	-

The total amount of employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) received by key management personnel during the period was £604,743 (2024: £404,804).

During the year no Trustee received any remuneration, benefits in kind or reimbursement of expenses (2024: £nil).

7. Net incoming resources

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation on tangible owned fixed assets	**218,770**	236,997
(Profit)/Loss on revaluation of investments	**76,566**	(202,172)
Interest and dividends receivable	**(341,259)**	(204,439)
Auditors' remuneration - audit	**21,600**	18,000
(Profit)/Loss on disposal of tangible assets	**550**	333

8. Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from taxation due to its charitable status as approved by HMRC. No tax is therefore payable on the surplus for the year (2024: nil).

9. Auditors' remuneration

	2025	2024
	£	£
Fees payable to the company's auditor for the audit of the annual accounts	**21,600**	18,000

Notes to the accounts (continued)

10. Tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings £	Fixtures & fittings & computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost				
At 31 March 2024	**3,455,771**	**898,257**	**142,869**	**4,496,897**
Additions	-	149,498	-	149,498
Disposals	(550)	-	-	(550)
At 31 March 2025	**3,455,221**	**1,047,755**	**142,869**	**4,645,844**
Depreciation				
At 31 March 2024	**1,789,648**	**700,148**	**142,357**	**2,632,153**
Charge for the year	110,083	108,447	240	218,770
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2025	**1,899,731**	**808,595**	**142,597**	**2,850,923**
Net book values				
At 31 March 2024	1,666,123	198,109	512	1,864,744
At 1 April 2025	**1,555,489**	**239,160**	**272**	**1,794,922**

11. Investments

	2025 £
Investments at market value at 1 April 2024	3,126,819
Investment income reinvested	-
Purchase of investments	4,300,000
Disposal of investments	-
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation and realisation	(7,345)
Investments at market value at 31 March 2025	**7,419,474**

At 31 March 2025 The Cedar Foundation held 199,913 shares (2024: 199,913 shared) valued at 1,525.79 pence per share (2024: 1,564.09 pence per share) in the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities. This revaluation resulted in a £76,566 decrease in market value. The historic cost of the total investments held at the year end was £2,500,000 (2024: £2,500,000).

During the year The Cedar Foundation invested £4,300,000 into an investment portfolio managed by Evelyn Partners Investment Management LLP. This is a low risk investment strategy expected to be over a two to three year period. During the year this investment realised a gain of £69,221.

12. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	**1,781,094**	1,803,973
Other debtors	**127,069**	207,496
Prepayments and accrued income	**329,599**	317,881
Grants receivable	**84,081**	7,752
	2,321,844	2,337,102

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	**240,704**	147,444
Other taxation and social security	**283,973**	259,657
Other creditors	**168,185**	140,756
Accruals and deferred income	**814,921**	631,711
	1,507,783	1,179,568

14. Deferred income

	2025	2024
	£	£
Opening balance	**198,643**	190,684
Amount released to income	**(549,992)**	(111,297)
Amount deferred in year	**518,747**	119,256
	167,398	198,643

Notes to the accounts (continued)

15. Analysis of funds

Analysis of funds by type

	At 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains/ (Losses)	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£		£
Unrestricted funds						
Reserve funds						
Fixed Asset Reserve	1,864,744	-	-	(69,821)	-	1,794,922
Fair value reserve	156,705	-	-	76,566	(76,566)	156,705
Risk – employability services	873,742	-	-	121,815	-	995,557
Risk – Living Options	5,475,939	-	-	1,198,455	-	6,674,394
Risk – Community Services	802,826	-	-	56,647	-	859,473
Risk – Corporate Services	744,189	-	-	74,303	-	818,492
Risk – Premises	66,710	-	-	9,259	-	75,969
Designated funds						
Organisation Efficiency & ESG Development	100,000	-	-	98,095	-	198,095
Development Capital Projects	50,000	-	-	(50,000)	-	-
Income Diversification Development	90,000	-	-	(90,000)	-	-
Croft Day Centre Development	471,193	-	-	-	-	471,193
ECI Development	160,000	-	-	(56,797)	-	103,203
LO Development	180,000	-	-	(40,000)	-	140,000
Service Development	-	-	-	-	-	-
Community Inc Development	-	-	-	79,690	-	79,690
General funds						
General Funds	-	20,528,994	(19,258,510)	(1,232,290)	-	38,193
Sustainability	-	-	-	-	-	-
User Forum & Volunteer Programme	82,365	-	-	(815)	-	81,550
Service sustainability – 3 year plan	1,542,080	-	-	(862,852)	-	679,228
Total unrestricted funds	12,660,493	20,528,994	(18,955,438)	(687,747)	(76,566)	13,166,664
Restricted funds						
Supporting People	-	2,709,674	(3,397,421)	687,747	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	2,709,674	3,397,421	687,747	-	-
Total funds	12,660,493	23,238,668	(22,655,932)	-	(76,566)	13,166,664

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Unrestricted funds

General funds

User Forum

Cedar is a user-led organisation and effective user engagement is central to achieving our vision. Co-production is a core innovation theme in our Strategic Plan and having an active User Forum is a key mechanism for ensuring user engagement. The use of reserves to fund core costs of the Forum including staffing costs for Facilitators, service user costs for travel, training and infrastructure, will enable members of the Forum to fully undertake their role, delivering on advocacy, consultation, recruitment and selection.

Volunteer programme

Cedar is committed to having a volunteer programme to support our beneficiaries. Volunteers bring diversity, which enriches the organisation as well as a range of qualities, skills and expertise that adds value to our services and enhances the experiences of our service users. Volunteers dedicate time to supporting our service users to achieve their planned outcomes, which enhances the support offered by our employees. The use of reserves, supports employing a Volunteer Coordinator and enables us to reimburse volunteers appropriately for expenses such as travel and training. Effectively resourcing our volunteer programme ensures we can continue to maintain our Investing in Volunteers quality standard evidencing good practice in volunteer management.

Service sustainability reserve

Cedar Foundation has determined an approach to underwrite services for a period of time that are high performing and meeting need and demand for our beneficiaries, but not reaching full-cost recovery, allowing time to source alternative funding options or to make informed decisions on long-term viability. This allows the organisation to maintain key services that reflect the charity's purpose and strategic direction.

Since 2021, a combination of factors, including economic change and political uncertainties, has led Cedar to exercise prudence and minimise pay increases to keep costs within the constraints of funder uplifts or loss of key funding streams due to Brexit. This has resulted in Cedar no longer paying above minimum wage for care and support staff and not maintaining alignment with NJC benchmark for salaried staff posts, at variance with our previous position.

There have been improvements in the last year in the labour market which has meant a more positive outcome for recruitment exercises and a decrease in the use of agency staff. This has meant for 24/25 financial year the Trustees have supported the decision to take a different approach to build upon recent successes and ensure competitive pay through a temporary draw on sustainability reserves. Cedar have re-aligned to NJC benchmark and increased the support worker hourly rate above NMW/NLW.

While Department of Health and other government income uplifts are still likely to be modest on existing contracts, it is imperative that Cedar attract and retain the best staff to meet its objectives. It is anticipated that this move will encourage increasing positive recruitment outcomes and stabilise the workforce and retain highly experienced staff. The stabilisation of the workforce will allow the management teams to focus on increasing income through existing streams, diversifying income and cost efficiency measures.

Each of the directorates have defined targets within the Balanced Scorecard and a Financial Improvement Plan to drive efforts to reduce the call upon reserves over the next 3 years on a journey to maximising full cost recovery for the majority of services in the longer term.

Reserve fund

Fixed Asset Reserve

This fund represents the net book value of all the Charity's fixed assets. The Fund is then utilised to offset the impact on the general fund of the depreciation charged on the relevant assets.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Fair Value Reserve

At the end of each accounting year Cedar post a fair value adjustment to the Fair Value Reserve to account for the movement in the share price of investments held. The total value held in this reserve is periodically reviewed to only hold a prudent amount to allow for reasonable fluctuations in the market, any surplus funds held are then released to the General Funds.

Risk Reserve

The Trustees of Cedar Foundation have a liquidity-based approach to reserves which results in the charity holding reserves mainly in cash and easily realisable investments. As a risk averse organisation, the reserves strategy is closely aligned to the organisation's risk register and as such, a significant percentage of the reserves are held in the Risk Reserve Fund to ensure continuing operations, particularly in relation to fluctuations in cash flow.

Each service area has been assessed for risk, particularly in relation to how payments by funders affect the cash flow. The risk reserve fund aims to retain the equivalent value of 6 months of salary costs for each service area. At each year end calculations are undertaken to monitor the percentage of sustainable reserves against actual salary costs. Appropriations and/or adjustments are made from year end surplus to those areas within the fund which require additional provision due to increases or decreases in requirements against the 6-month benchmark. The risk reserve has priority over other designated reserves in the event of limited year end surplus and appropriations.

The Trustees recognise that the long-term strategic goal of Cedar is to ensure that there is the equivalent value of 6 months' salary costs held in reserves, however, in this current period due to the need to allocate increased levels of Service Sustainability reserves and invest in other areas of the organisation for development and improvement, the organisation's Risk Reserve sits at 5.5 months. Strategically this will allow measures to be taken forward to future-proof Cedar and ensure continuity of service.

Designated Funds

Organisational Efficiency & SG/Net Zero Reserve

Cedar Foundation is committed to work towards achieving the UN's ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) Sustainable Development Goals. To achieve this Cedar Foundation is dedicated to reviewing its overall efficiency, infrastructure and capital investment to make them more sustainable and has committed part of their reserves to this development.

Specific targets are captured in the Organisational Balanced Scorecard for the 2024/25 operational year, including:

- Income diversification (e.g. Corporate Partnerships)
- Efficiency savings in supplier management
- Premises review for usage and energy efficiency
- Digitalisation Strategy to improve efficiencies through technology

Service Development Reserve

The Trustees recognise that a proportion of its reserves should be utilised for development opportunities in order to remain competitive in an increasingly challenging environment, particularly with the need for competitive tendering for our services and building new partnerships to attract emerging funding opportunities.

Restricted Reserves

These can only be used for a specific purpose. There are no restricted reserves held by Cedar currently.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Analysis of funds by net asset type - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	1,794,922	-	1,794,922
Fixed asset investments	7,419,474	-	7,419,474
Current assets	5,460,051	-	5,460,050
Creditors due within one year	(1,507,783)	-	(1,507,783)
Total	13,166,664	-	13,166,662

Analysis of funds by net asset type - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	1,864,744	-	1,864,744
Fixed asset investments	3,126,819	-	3,126,819
Current assets	8,848,498	-	8,848,498
Creditors due within one year	(1,179,568)	-	(1,179,568)
Total	12,660,493	-	12,660,493

16. Contingent liabilities

A contingent liability exists to repay grants received, where certain conditions have not been fulfilled by the company. In the opinion of the Trustees, the terms of the letters of offer have been complied with and no liability is expected.

17. Guarantors

The company is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of guarantors is limited to £1 in the event of the company being wound up.

18. Related Party transactions

The Board of Trustees are considered to be the Charity's ultimate controlling party.

During the year ended 31 March 2025 the Cedar Foundation paid IT software subscription and support services costs totalling £109,952 (2024: £102,469) to Aspirico UK Limited (iplanit), an IT software company for which trustee Mr Clive Evans is an employee.

During the year the Cedar Foundation paid a £560 (2024: £500) corporate membership fee to Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment for which the Head of Service for Employability within the charity is a board member. The same individual is also a Board member of Volunteer Now Enterprise Ltd for which the Cedar Foundation paid £810 (2024: £1,752) for the delivery of recruitment, adult safeguarding and child safeguarding training.

The Director of People and Organisational Development within the Cedar Foundation is also a member on the board of the Confederation of Community Groups as a Cedar representative. During the year the Cedar Foundation paid £9,743 (2024: £17,910) and £9,370 (2024: £1,136) to the Confederation of Community Groups and the Confederation of Community Groups Newry & District in respective of rent and rates for the use of a meeting room and a suite.

During the year the Cedar Foundation paid £38,202 to Abbeyfield and Wesley Housing Association for rent payments to 30 Bloomfield Road for which a Cedar Board member is a volunteer.

Accounts

The Cedar Foundation

Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Registered No: NI 002132
Charity number: NIC 101121

Annual report

Trustees and advisers

Trustees

Company registered number
NI 002132

Charity registered number
NIC 101121

Auditors

Sumer Auditco NI Limited
Statutory Auditors
Glendinning House, 6 Murray Street
Belfast
BT1 6DN

Chief Executive Officer

Mrs Elaine Armstrong

Solicitors

Tughans
30 Victoria Street
Belfast
BT1 3GG

Bankers

Danske Bank
Donegall Square West
Belfast
BT1 5JS

Registered Office and Head Office

1 Ravenhill Reach Close
Ormeau Embankment
Belfast
United Kingdom
BT6 8RB

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)

The Trustees present their report and the audited accounts for the period ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and Activities

a. Policies and objectives

The Cedar Foundation (Cedar) delivers a range of services throughout Northern Ireland in partnership with disabled people enabling them to get the most out of life and to be fully included in their communities. Our services are centred around the individual needs of each person to promote opportunity, choice and inclusion.

Our **Vision** is an inclusive society for all.

Our **Mission** is to support individuals and families living with disability, autism and brain injury to live the lives they choose.

Our **Values**:

- **C**ollaboration
  We are committed to ensuring our services are developed in partnership. We believe we work at our best in active collaboration with our service users, staff and partners.
- **E**quality
  We recognise the importance of a diverse and inclusive community, and we will make certain that everyone has an equal opportunity to make a contribution, and this is valued.
- **D**ignity
  We guarantee that dignity is at the centre of high-quality, person-centred support and our services are delivered with respect, care and compassion.
- **A**chievement
  We believe in ensuring that everyone involved in our organisation can achieve their full potential. Our ambition is to be recognised for our ability to deliver at an individual, team and organisational level.
- **R**esilience
  We are an adaptable, forward thinking and resilient organisation that sees difficult situations as an opportunity. We promote creativity and innovation, supporting each other to have the individual and collective strength to achieve this.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our 5-year Strategic Plan 2021-2026: Opportunity, Choice, Inclusion, was co-produced with service users, families and staff and aligned with current strategic direction. It takes cognisance of the voices of all our stakeholders and a review of performance data. It captures our ambitions for impact, the strategic context we are working within and is designed to embrace the changes we are likely to face over the next 5 years.

Strategic Aims and Priorities for 2023/2024:

- Individuals and families live the lives they choose, supported by our co-produced person-centred services
- Our resources are managed and allocated in a transparent manner to enable us to develop and deliver exceptional services
- We work to the highest possible standards and continuously improve the organisation ensuring we meet customer/stakeholder needs
- We are a competent and resilient organisation that is responsive to changing need and committed to innovation and excellence

Cedar is one of the largest disability charities in Northern Ireland. This year we supported 2,746 disabled people to participate in the life of their community. Our services include a range of living options; including supported living, residential care, at-home housing support; employability and community inclusion services for all ages, including family support and transitional planning for children and young people. We have specialist services to meet the needs of physical and sensory disability, long-term health conditions, learning disability, autism and brain injury. All our services are designed to enable each individual to reach their full potential and to provide an appropriate level of support to individuals, families and the wider community enabling inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life.

Through all of the services we provide we are working towards realising our vision of an inclusive society for all.

c. Main activities undertaken to further the charity's purposes for the public benefit

Cedar provides direct public benefit through the development and delivery of a range of inclusion services to disabled adults and children throughout Northern Ireland.

Employability services provide person centred opportunities and disability specialist support through, employability skills training, access to Further and Higher Education, career advice, work experience placements and support to service users to secure and maintain work roles. The benefits arising from these services include targeting social need, facilitating service users to become more included in society and more economically active through engagement with the labour market.

Children and Young People Community Inclusion Services provide support to give the best start in life and improve outcomes. We work in partnership with a range of agencies to create an inclusive world for disabled children, young people and their families. Services source and support opportunities to engage in community-based activities, provide early intervention support to assist young people to achieve their full potential when transitioning from school to Further or Higher Education, training or employment. The Youth Matters programme assists service users under the age of 18 to have improved access to inclusive community and youth activities which will impact on their general health and wellbeing and support them to be active citizens.

Adult Community Inclusion Services includes a range of innovative day opportunities and day care provision. These services promote peer support and meaningful community engagement for disabled people. Cedar's Inclusion Matters programme, and additional specialist services for Autism and for Brain Injury, supports people with disabilities to become equal citizens within their local communities increasing their social, economic and civic inclusion. These services focus on building the capacity of people with disabilities to engage with and contribute to their local community.

Living Options is designed to meet the individual needs of people who have brain injury, physical disability and sensory impairment, and for people who have learning disabilities, and autism. Types of accommodation include Supported Living in independent apartments or bungalows, registered residential homes providing 24-hour care and housing support services. The benefits from these services are delivering a person-centred housing support and care service to enhance independent living skills; enabling individuals to have more control of their lives; and helping users to achieve improvements in personal wellbeing, health and personal safety. Floating/Housing support services benefit service users by building the skills to have independence in maintaining tenancies, being safe and well, enhanced self-esteem and living fulfilling lives.

The benefits of all of the services provided can be demonstrated through the use of ServQual (service user satisfaction tool), independent evaluations and feedback from funders and purchasers through contract review meetings. Cedar measures impact on individual soft outcomes through a validated self-report distance travelled tool, Outcome Star in non-regulated services and a monthly monitoring review in registered services. Cedar is committed to quality improvement; having previously won the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) European and All Ireland excellence awards. Cedar is ISO 9001:2015 accredited, is an Investors in People recognised organisation, achieving Platinum Standard, and has maintained Investors in Volunteers certification.

Review of activities

The current 5-year Strategic Plan was adopted at the June 2021 Trustees' meeting. A mid-year review of performance and strategic alignment for the 2023/2024 operational year was conducted by the Executive Board, User Forum and SMT in November 2023.

We have delivered successfully on Year 3 under the guidance and good governance of our Trustees and advisors in partnership with the User Forum, Leadership and Senior Management team, underpinned with an operational staff team that have been properly resourced, trained, developed, and supported to deliver quality front-line and corporate support services.

"I have been privileged to see the growing confidence of my service users. Even when using zoom to interact with service users, I have seen them gaining the confidence to interact more with their community and user groups" (ABI Choices case worker)

"Cedar is a support mechanism; they are a call away; they listen and never judge. Always there to help" (Current SU)

"Invaluable service individualised to each person and their achievements" (Past SU)

Achievements and performance

Overall, the period under review was a very challenging but successful. The collective commitment and dedication of all the staff team has delivered excellent results during a period of change and external pressures in the Health and Social Care context. The organisational performance is demonstrated through the review of the Balanced Scorecard for the 2023/2024 year, which was monitored quarterly with the Executive Board and SMT.

(i) Performance and Compliance

Finance

- Turnover meeting target to sustain all services
  While staff recruitment and retention remain a challenge and agency usage has remained high throughout the year in registered services, commissioned hours for each service have been delivered to minimise loss of income. Re-profiling of the services previously funded by ESF and successful bid for UKSPF regional employment service have supported turnover and sustainability.
- A high level of grant and debtor control was maintained, cashflow was maximised with cash and investments remaining at an average of £5.4m during the year. This maximised the return from financial investments, delivering over £204.4k (£112.5k, 2023) return at Q4.
- Financial Improvement Plans (FIP) in place for all directorates to respond to a changed commissioning landscape in Employment & Community Inclusion, to improve income and expenditure controls in Living Options and corporate costs.
- 100% compliance sustained from all external auditing authorities, including DoE, DfC & DoH.
- Compliance with Charity Commission and Article 55 reporting deadlines.

Customer

- Service delivery target met, providing a service to 2,888 disabled people and their families in year across 25 services, our highest number so far.
- Very high service user satisfaction results sustained (99%), with 98% of leavers telling us they would recommend the service to others.
- Sustained high level of positive service impact on soft and hard outcome measures

Internal Processes

- Low complaint volumes with local resolutions achieved in almost all cases
- Sustained level of compliments and positive feedback
- No significant areas for improvement or requirements noted in RQIA inspections throughout 2023/24 for all regulated services

- Achieved full HSCT and NIHE Supporting People contractual compliance requirements
- Significant review of incident reporting to scope in cross-organisational lessons learnt processes for improved prevention and strategic level improvements
- Re-accreditation successful for Investing in Volunteers standard
- High level compliance with ISO standards achieving positive external audit report in January 2024

Organisational Capacity

- Investors in People Platinum status, that positions Cedar within the top 1% of IiP accredited organisations.
- 89% staff satisfaction in overall view of Cedar Foundation
- 98% of staff reported that their training needs were addressed in year
- 100% staff report that they feel equipped to meet job requirements
- Disability Awareness sessions jointly delivered by OD staff and User Forum to 497 people
- Targeted social media campaigns directed by the 2023/24 Strategic Communications Action Plan with significantly increased presence and impact
- 3 significant recognition awards achieved for Cedar leaders (CO3 leadership, NI Women's Award)
- SMT involvement in sector wide innovation and reform groups NISCC Workforce Review, Social Care Collaborative Forum, DfC Employment Strategy, Adult Safeguarding.
- European Network engagement with European Platform on Rehabilitation (EPR) in year with a number of attendances and contributions made at webinars and the annual conference in France.

BSI ISO External Auditor reported that Cedar's performance is well managed and captured in the 4 elements of the Balanced Scorecard format presented above:

'In line with the stated strategic direction and intended results of the quality management system, corporate score card objectives and 5-year Corporate Strategy (2021 - 2026), the management system has demonstrated that it is designed to support all of the above and deliver intended results. This was demonstrated through the review of Context, Risks & Opportunities, Internal Audits, internal review mechanisms including Management Review, Complaints, Incidents & Accidents & Safeguarding'. (January 2024)

(ii) Service Developments

Employability and Community Inclusion Services

- Effective closure of ESF Call 3 programme with all objectives achieved/exceeded. Maintained service provision for a further 6 months to secure successful outcomes for service users leaving the ESF funded programme.
- Launch of the UKSPF funded SkillSET service targeting new cohorts of service users to a 'work ready' service model with a greater focus on employment outcomes.
- Managed substantial change including significant reduction in funding which has required radical reprofiling of our service models, staff teams and management structure without the need for any compulsory redundancies.
- Ongoing engagement with Government Departments to shape development of disability employment services in NI.
- Launch of ABI Choices evaluation and participation at 14th World Congress on Brain Injury to present the research
- A forensic review of service models, their full costs against present income and development of effective consortium opportunities for new income generation.
- Cedar is now a Direct License Centre for Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and have successfully been awarded a grant of £10,000 over 3 years to facilitate this development.

Living Options Services

- The appointment of a new Director, following a retirement and leadership infrastructure review to promote succession planning and investment in enhanced opportunities for career progression.
- Recruitment Plan to stabilise the staff resource, reduce agency costs and staff vacancies with positive outcomes across the year.
- High level of strategic involvement with external sector-wide lobbying groups, collaborative workstreams/forums resulting in opportunities to meet with the Department of Health/SPPG/HSCTs, and Department for Communities to deliver successful increases in income.

Corporate Services

- The Finance Department began the year by incorporating the Croft Finance Department and the Cedar Finance Department to establish an optimum structure to meet the needs of the larger organisation, make use of team member's strengths and target the areas of development.
- Secured £100K Dormant Accounts funding to support the development and implementation of a cloud-based integrated HR and Payroll system to improve organisational resilience and enhance digitalisation
- Review of Agile Working Strategy through staff feedback survey and comprehensive report and action plan, establishing new working practices.
- Cross organisational Learning and Development innovation team to improve consistency of best practice standards for staff experience of L&D.
- Enhanced governance across organisation through new Quality & Governance Committee structure for sharing best practice and lessons learnt.

(iii) Innovation Work

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Cedar is committed to making our organisation a positive place to work. We recognize that we are still dealing with a level of change. We have taken the approach of investing in an Innovation Team, drawn from across Cedar, to focus on how we can support each other and share expertise and information on how to best promote health and wellbeing. The focus has now widened its remit to general Health & wellbeing, with a range of initiatives developed under the Department of Health 5 Pillars of wellbeing – Financial, Social, Physical, Mental & Digital with a wellbeing programme called Healthy Body Healthy Minds'.

Digitalisation (DX)

The DX Strategy provides a framework to capture a range of innovations across the organisation, ensuring equity of roll out and consistency of practice. It also provides assurance on cost control and governance in implementing new initiatives. The initiatives reflect new ways of working, a commitment to smarter and paperless practices that will future-proof the organisation and drive efficiencies.

1. Implement the first stage of an integrated HR and Payroll system
2. Building the functionality of the Cedar Hub launched last year (shared information on Sharepoint site for employees)
3. Implementation of a service user data information management system to gather and hold securely information on our work across all areas of Northern Ireland, for staff who work on site and remotely. This ensures we can demonstrate how service users have benefited from Cedar's work to be able to report on how we are performing to our funders and regulators at inspection.
4. Roll out of email licences to all employees to engage with new digital systems
5. Developing the use of AP system to reduce administrative time on processing purchase invoices

Co-production

This is a very important Innovation Theme for Cedar. We know we work best when we are collaborating. In particular, Cedar is committed to putting our service users at the heart of all that we do. Some of the co-production activities include:

- **Service Pathway Project** – This co-produced piece of work will shape our language and how we say what we do. It reflects the views from service users, User forum, Executive members and staff at Cedar.
- **Participation Partnership, NISCC, May 2023 –** service users sharing experiences and insights to help ensure that high standards are maintained in the development and regulation of the social care workforce
- **Learning Disability Pride, June 2023 -** to celebrate the theme 'Do Your Thing' promoting the positive impact that those with learning disabilities have on our communities.
- **Croft Family Forum -** A User Engagement Initiative to support additional activities to promote social inclusion and traditional and seasonal events and fundraising initiatives.
- **Peer Review Project, September 2023 –** supported living tenants from organisations are participating in training to be peer researchers. They will interview and gather feedback from service users across other providers to promote independent review and give a strong user experience voice.
- **User Engagement -** The core function of the Cedar User Forum is to be the voice of the service user in Cedar through consultation, advocacy and recruitment. The work of the User Forum is one example of how Cedar does co-production well and is a key aspect of our governance structure.
- **Benchmarking -** Supporting organisations with an understanding of User Involvement and Co-production, our User Forum has helped support other organisations benchmark and establish structures like Cedar to deliver co-production and user engagement. Examples include Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, Ulster University and NISCC.

People & Organisational Development (POD)

The POD Strategy is an ambitious map of actions to build organisational capacity, ensuring a positive people experience for those who work in Cedar and supporting our people to live our values and recognising when they do this well. Some of the key deliverables included:

- Agile Working Strategy, introduced during COVID in 2021, review undertaken seeking feedback from staff & managers. The results provided clear evidence that it is working well for both staff & managers and organisational performance and results evidence there is no negative impact on service delivery.
- Learning & Development review established to put in place an organisational approach to induction, audit and recommendations against current training and development policy, and also review of Cedar's leadership programme. We are also reviewing the model we use to evaluate training.
- Review of Recruitment Initiatives introduced during COVID to support attraction & retention of employees as well as a focus on reducing reliance on agency workers. This has taken the form of an evidence based review of data to support future decision making.
- Collective Leadership embedded into our culture & is most visible with the work of the innovation teams.

(iv) User Forum

The User Forum (Forum) has continued to ensure the voice of Cedar service users is represented throughout the organisation. This is achieved through the core functions of consultation, advocacy, and recruitment. The User Forum is composed of 42 members from across NI, reflecting Cedar's service range across all 5 Health Trust localities.

Advocacy - User Forum members have supported the co-production and co-delivery of 14 Disability Awareness Training sessions to almost 500 people to help understand and raise awareness of disability, brain injury and autism.

Consultations (51 completed)

- Regional level: Disability Strategy (Department for Communities), Consultation on the Proposed Closure of Muckamore Abbey Hospital (Department of Health)
- Regional and local level: Equality and Disability Plans for local Health and Social Care Trusts, Councils and Public Sector agencies alongside service specific reviews.
- Accessibility arrangements: City of Derry Airport, Northern Ireland Assembly. Digital accessibility for the Warm Home Scheme, Consumer Hub, and the Patient Client Council.

Recruitment

- Currently, 14 of the User Forum have participated in recruitment and selection training delivered by our Human Resources team to sit on interview panels in person or virtually. We had 22% of recruitment panels with User Forum representation in 23/24.

Financial performance & Risk Management

a) Financial Review

From a financial perspective, the year was a successful one, with all resources applied to achieve our Vision of ***an inclusive society for all***.

The year end 31 March 2024 was the first year when all the Croft Communities activities were undertaken through The Cedar Foundation rather than through a separate subsidiary company. As a result The Cedar Foundation results have shown a year on year increase in income and expenditure levels.

During the year, the organisation’s incoming resources increased by 26.98% to £19,894,104. Total expenditure increased by 22.38% to £19,708,220 resulting in a surplus of £185,884. This was an increase on the previous year’s deficit of £437,441, reflecting effective financial management, cost control and the securing of resources for service developments.

Our investments were valued at £3,126,819 in line with SORP recommendations, thereby further increasing our funds by £202,172.

During the year, the Board and Senior Leadership Team undertook an exercise to review the organisation’s reserves policy.

As a result of this exercise, we reclassified our unrestricted reserves into four broad categories:

- Risk reserves, which provide funding for the continuity of services, particularly where those services face risks and uncertainties around future funding levels and where there is a working capital requirement necessary to manage delays in relation to agreed funding from public sector funders;
- Development reserves, which have been set aside to future projects to improve and expand our service offering to our beneficiaries;
- Our Service Sustainability reserve, which will fund a time-bound reorganisation and reconfiguration of services over a three-year period to reflect current funding and cost service challenges and the cost improvement plans in place to address these challenges; and
- Other funds, which encompass a number of other reserves including a specific fixed asset reserve which recognises the illiquid nature of our fixed assets i.e. our buildings and equipment.

Further details on our reserves are included in Note 15 to the financial statements.

The Trustees believe that the charity remains in a good financial position. The main financial risks the Trustees have identified are outlined in the Principal Risks and Uncertainties section of this report.

b) Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

c) Financial risk management objectives and policies

The Cedar Foundation manages all its financial risks through a series of controls and maintenance of a Risk Register. This is reviewed on a quarterly basis and presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their consideration. The Risk Register defines individual risks on the basis of their likelihood and significance to the organisation. The risk management processes are clearly defined and agreed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, including the charity's Reserve Policy as a key part of those processes. The risk is segmented on the basis of sustainability costs in the event of shortfall or of withdrawal of funding and in relation to services where there is financial uncertainty or no revenue for operations in year.

d) Principal risks and uncertainties

The Cedar Foundation Risk Management Policy, which incorporates Croft Communities, states that the Trustees and Management Team recognise it is impossible to remove all risk, but effective, practicable risk management ensure Cedar maximises opportunities in pursuit of its' Vision and minimises the risks to which it may be exposed. In doing so we aim to enhance our ability to deliver the best possible outcomes for the people that depend on our services. Achievement of Cedar's Risk Management objectives require the collective support and active participation of Trustees, the Senior Management Team, all employees and partner organisations. At all levels, there is a need for understanding the nature of risk and the acceptance of responsibility for control or risks. Management of risk is a continuous and dynamic process which is kept under regular review.

The principal commercial, operational and financial risks that we have identified as having a serious potential impact on the performance and future prospects or reputation of the organisation, and have set out in our Corporate Risk Register, are as follows:

1. Children or adults at risk of being harmed while accessing a Cedar service.
2. Service delivery model fails to be strategically aligned.
3. Insufficient funds to sustain core services.
4. Full cost recovery not achieved.
5. Digital innovation not adequately resourced.
6. Lack of profile on specialist services to attract/retain funding
7. Non-compliance with legal requirements resulting in fine/compensation payments.
8. Cyberattack or other breach of ICT infrastructure.
9. Non-compliance with regulatory or contract requirements resulting in suspension of service.
10. Not attracting and retaining staff to deliver services safely.
11. Not attracting and retaining staff who share the values of Cedar/Croft.
12. Negative publicity impacting reputation of the organisation.
13. Incident resulting in death or serious injury as a result of failure to operate safe systems of work.

The Executive Committee and Senior Management Team are satisfied that appropriate actions have been identified and taken so that these risks are managed effectively. The Risk Management Policy, including risk appetite, is reviewed every 3 years and was last updated in March 2023. This is communicated across the organisation within our ISO 9001 Quality Management System.

The Corporate Risk Register is subject to quarterly review. In addition, a full annual review took place with updated risks in March 2024 to reflect the current work context and changes in the working environment. A Strategic Risk Scoring Matrix is prepared and linked directly to the residual risks. This uses a RAG System, Red, Amber, Green. All new mitigating actions to reduce, transfer or remove risk are captured in the Risk Register Action Plan and subject to quarterly review.

An Assurance Map is prepared based on the three lines of Defence Model, outlining the information collection and reporting arrangements at each assurance level. This process is undertaken by the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis through continual monitoring of the Risk Register Action Plan, which is included in quarterly Executive Committee Governance documents.

e) Principal funding

To fund our work Cedar Foundation relies on fees and grants through various Statutory and Government Departments. A range of other funding partners such as Community Fund, Charitable Trusts and Foundations as well as donations from the general public, companies and investment income.

f) Investment policy and performance

The Executive Committee take a risk averse approach to all investments. During the year the Committee decided to maintain the current investment in shares in Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities. The fund performed satisfactorily during the year and resulted in an increase in the value of shares held by Cedar Foundation. The year end value of the shares totalled £3,126,819 (2023: £2,924,647).

Structure, governance and management

a) Constitution

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company is recognised as a charity by HM Revenue & Customs under reference number XN47377 and registered with the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland No. NIC101121.

The principal object, for which the company is established, is to undertake and to join with others in undertaking the provision of services for disabled adults and children in Northern Ireland and to work in partnership with disabled adults and children and to develop services that promote choice, opportunity, independence and equality.

b) Method of appointment or election of Directors

The Executive Committee is elected by the Members of the Association. The Executive Committee are the Charity's Trustees and the legal directors of the company. Members of the Executive Committee serve for a 3 year term, after which they are eligible for re-election.

c) Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

It is company policy to provide an induction programme for newly appointed directors to acquaint them with the organisation's policy and practice, its aims and objectives, management and governance and also what is expected of them under charity law. This is supported by a comprehensive Governance Manual, which was updated in November 2023. In addition, a governance refresher workshop for all current Trustees was carried out in December 2021. This is offered on demand or at least repeated in 3-yearly cycles and would next be due in 2024. This year, instead of the usual governance update, a comprehensive governance review was conducted with the Executive Committee of Trustees on 29th February 2024.

The Code of Good Governance, supported by the NI Charity Commission, sets out five principles and practices of good governance for voluntary and community organisations. The Governance Health Check is a self-assessment tool which has also been devised by the Developing Governance Group as a practical resource to assist committees/boards to work towards adhering to the principles of the Code of Good Governance. It allows Cedar to demonstrate good governance practices to our stakeholders, beneficiaries and funders. The outcome of the governance review confirmed there are strong and effective practices in place, giving the trustees assurance in demonstrating that adherence and identifying areas where we can make changes to improve. The improvements are captured in a plan that was presented to the Executive Committee at the June meeting for action in the 24/25 year.

The Executive Committee meets every three months with occasional ad-hoc meetings for exceptional business if this is required. The constitution of the Executive Committee is kept under review with regard to the appropriate skills and expertise that are required to lead the organisation. The Governance Manual includes a schedule of matters, including a scheme of delegation, outline of committee structures and delegated powers, role descriptions of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Executive Committee members and the role of the Chief Executive.

d) Organisational structure and decision making

The 2022 Governance Manual Review and training ensured that the Board and its Committees are fit for purpose as the organisation continues to evolve.

The Group Committee Structure consists of a Finance & General Purposes Committee, Audit Sub-Committee and 2 Executive Review Panels.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee concentrates on Corporate Services matters, such as internal and external financial reporting, investment, risk register, property and infrastructure resources (e.g. ICT), Human Resources, organisational development (e.g. quality accreditation such as Investors in People). The Audit Sub-Committee meets annually to plan the Audits and receive the Auditor's Reports.

The Living Options Panel and the Employment and Community Inclusion Panel reflect the two areas of operations for the Cedar Foundation. They hear reports on overall performance, compliance and service developments.

The business transacted at the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Executive Panel meetings is reported to the Cedar Group Executive Committee at the subsequent scheduled meeting. The Board of Cedar Foundation Group subscribe to the seven principles of Public Life, included in the organisation's Governance Manual and are part of the Organisation's induction and governance training.

During the 2023/2024 year Cedar's Executive Committee met 4 times to review progress and plan for the organisation on the following dates:

20th June 2023
26th September 2023
12th December 2023
12th March 2024

The Finance & General Purposes Committee met to provide scrutiny and support in audit and risk matters on the following dates:

7th June 2023
20th September 2023
29th November 2023
28th February 2024

e) Risk Management

Cedar Foundation operates a formal Risk Management Process culminating in a Corporate Risk Register that identifies key risks, their likelihood, impact and the consequent actions necessary to manage them effectively. This is reviewed annually and was last updated in March 2024.

Whenever possible, we identify ways of providing independent assurance against the management of each risk. Corporate risks, mitigating actions and risk assurance map are scrutinised quarterly by the Senior Management Team, the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Cedar Executive Board.

Plan for future periods

The organisation has a clear course set for the future through its Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026.

This reflects a vision of 'an inclusive society for all' and our mission 'supporting individuals and families living with disability, autism and brain injury to live the lives they choose'. Our core values of Collaboration, Equality, Dignity, Achievement, Resilience, will continue to underpin everything we do as they are key to the success of the organisation.

The Strategic Objectives to support the delivery of our vision in 2024/25:

- Individuals and families live the lives they choose, supported by our co-produced person-centred services.
- Our resources are managed and allocated in a transparent manner to enable us to develop and deliver exceptional services.
- We work to the highest possible standards and continuously improve the organisation ensuring we meet customer/stakeholder needs.
- We are a competent and resilient organisation that is responsive to changing need and committed to innovation and excellence.

Key developments in support of these objectives for the incoming period will include:

- **Digitalisation:** A focus on the use and application of digital technology to enhance the digital inclusion of people with disabilities and efficiency of business processes.
- **Co-production:** working practices enhanced to promote opportunities for the service user voice in the planning, delivery and review of service experience
- **People & Organisational Development Strategy:** Building the capacity of staff to collectively respond to new ways of working, including an emphasis on health and wellbeing of all our people.
- **Finance and Corporate Resources Strategy:** to develop our approach to the impact of operating in an increasingly competitive and financially challenging environment, using our resources to best effect and responding to new income opportunities. At the heart of this Strategy is our commitment to build on our success as a value-based organisation committed to transparency and accountability in the management and deployment of all our resources.

Going forward, we have clear actions agreed within these developments listed above. Staff from across the organisation are actively engaged in and collectively leading forward to improve how we do things. We are building on a strong position of being well-informed, knowing what excellence looks like and committed to remaining as a provider of choice in the disability sector. This gives a strong foundation for continued learning and shared practice to achieve the outcomes of the organisation objectives set out in the Strategic Plan 2026.

Members Liability

The Foundation is a company limited by guarantee. Every member undertakes to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1, to the company's assets if it should be wound up while being a member, or within one year of ceasing to be a member.

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

The Cedar Executive Committee of Trustees (who are also the Directors of the Cedar Foundation for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with the applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resource, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statement on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation

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

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Directors at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- the Directors have taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as Directors in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

On 1 July 2024 our previous auditors, ASM (B) Ltd, joined the Sumer Group and transferred all of its audit engagements to Sumer AuditCo NI Limited. The auditors, Sumer AuditCo NI Limited, will be proposed for reappointment in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 24th September 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Elaine Armstrong

Mrs Elaine Armstrong,
Chief Executive Officer

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Cedar Foundation (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise: the Statements of Financial Activities; the Balance Sheet; the Statement of Cash Flows; and the related notes. 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 charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) (ISAs) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom and Ireland, including the Financial Reporting Council'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

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs require us to report to you where:

- the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and auditors

The Trustees are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation (continued)

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.

Opinion 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 Executive Committee Report including the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Executive Committee Report, including the Strategic Report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' 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 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.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation (continued)

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:

We considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: timing of recognition of income; and posting of unusual journals along with complex transactions. We discussed these risks with client management, designed audit procedures to test the timing of income, tested a sample of journals to confirm they were appropriate and reviewed areas of judgement for indicators of management bias to address these risks.

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 Auditors' Report.

Use of our report

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

Brian Clerkin

Brian Clerkin (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Sumer AuditCo NI Limited
Statutory Auditors
Glendinning House
6 Murray Street
Belfast
BT1 6DN

24 September 2024

Sumer AuditCo NI Ltd are eligible to act as auditors in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of financial activities
(incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024	2023
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	-	10,330	**10,330**	32,181
Charitable activities	3	2,608,044	17,071,291	**19,679,335**	15,522,302
Investments	4	-	204,439	**204,439**	112,541
Total income		2,608,044	17,286,060	**19,894,104**	15,667,024
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	3,396,446	16,311,774	**19,708,220**	16,104,465
Total expenditure		3,396,447	16,311,774	**19,708,220**	16,104,465
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		(788,402)	974,286	**185,884**	(437,441)
Other recognised gains/(losses):					
Gains/(losses) on assets and investments	15	-	200,582	**200,582**	(225,062)
Revaluation of Assets held for sale		-	-	**-**	423,594
Revaluation of Assets					
Extraordinary item – donation	19	-	-	**-**	2,994,280
Transfers between funds	15	788,402	(788,402)	**-**	-
Net movement in funds		-	386,466	**386,466**	2,755,371
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		-	12,274,027	**12,274,027**	9,518,655
Net movement in funds		-	386,466	**386,466**	2,755,371
Total funds carried forward		-	12,660,493	**12,660,493**	12,274,027

All amounts above relate to continuing operations of the company.

The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

	Notes	2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	10	**1,864,744**	2,033,466
Investments	11	**3,126,819**	2,924,647
		4,991,563	4,958,113
Current assets			
Debtors	12	**2,337,102**	2,700,444
Assets held for sale		**-**	484,911
Investments - short term deposits		**3,777,269**	1,227,885
Cash at bank and in hand		**2,734,127**	4,191,157
		8,848,498	8,604,397
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	**(1,179,568)**	(1,288,483)
Net current assets		**7,668,930**	7,315,914
Total Net assets		**12,660,493**	12,274,027
Charity funds			
Unrestricted funds	15	**12,660,493**	12,274,027
Restricted funds	15	**-**	-
Total funds		**12,660,493**	12,274,027

The accounts on pages 18 to 32 were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 24 September 2024.

Myrna Evans

Mrs Myrna Evans (Chairperson)

Elaine Armstrong

Ms Elaine Armstrong (CEO)

Co. Registration No. NI 002132

The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Cash Flows

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net cash provided by operating activities (see below)	**473,203**	(833,861)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	**204,439**	112,541
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	**488,622**	349,082
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	**(73,910)**	(100,665)
Sale/(purchase) of investments	**-**	-
Net cash (used in) investment activities	**619,151**	360,958
Change in cash in the reporting period	**1,092,354**	(472,903)
Cash at the beginning of the reporting period	**5,419,042**	5,891,945
Cash at the end of the reporting period	**6,511,396**	5,419,042

Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of financial activities)	**185,884**	(231,851)
Adjusted for:		
Depreciation charges	**236,997**	271,751
Interest and dividends received	**(204,439)**	(112,541)
(Profit) / Loss on sale of fixed assets	**333**	(10,441)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**(108,915)**	(374,049)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**363,343**	(376,730)
Net cash provided by operating activities	**473,203**	(833,861)

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	31 March 2023	**Cash Flow**	**31 March 2024**
	£	**£**	**£**
Cash at bank and in hand	4,191,157	(1,457,030)	**2,734,127**
Investments – short term deposits	1,227,885	2,549,384	**3,777,269**
Total cash and cash equivalents	5,419,042	1,092,354	**6,511,396**

The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the accounts

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and modified to include the revaluation of investments and in accordance with applicable accounting standards, the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice ("SORP") 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (FRS 102) and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102. A summary of the more important accounting policies, which have been applied consistently, is set out below.

Company status

The Foundation is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 2. In the event of the Foundation being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is £1 per member of the Foundation.

Income

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

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Charitable activities and Governance costs are costs incurred on the company's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Going Concern

No material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt about the ability of the charitable company to continue as a going concern have been identified by the Trustees.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Pension scheme

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Employer's contributions vary as a percentage of pensionable earnings depending on the staff member's agreed terms and conditions. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in independently administered funds, and contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Operating leases

Costs in respect of operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Tangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at their purchase cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets (excluding land), less their estimated residual values, on a straight-line basis over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned. The principal annual rates used for this purpose are as follows:

	%
Buildings	4
Motor vehicles	20
Fixtures and fittings	20
Computer equipment	33.33

Debtors

Debtors are measured at their recoverable amounts.

Creditors and provisions for liabilities and charges

Creditors and provisions for liabilities and charges are measured at their settlement amount.

Judgements and estimates

In the process of applying the charitable company's accounting policies, management has not made any significant judgements. There are no key assumptions concerning the future or other key sources of estimation, that have a significant risk of raising a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Investments

In accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, investments, are shown in the balance sheet at market value.

Interest receivable

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

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the company is demonstrably committed to either terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

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

2. Donations and legacies

	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2024**	2023
	£	£	**£**	£
Fundraising and donations	-	10,330	**10,330**	19,181
Legacies	-	-	**-**	13,000
	-	10,330	**10,330**	32,181

3. Incoming resources from charitable activities

	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2024**	2023
	£	£	**£**	£
Living Options	-	13,193,150	**13,193,150**	9,108,415
Living options – Supporting People	2,608,044	-	**2,608,044**	1,998,352
Employability & Community Inclusion	-	3,878,141	**3,878,141**	4,415,535
	2,608,044	17,071,291	**19,679,335**	15,522,302

4. Investment income

	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2024**	2023
	£	£	**£**	£
Income from investments	-	204,439	**204,439**	112,541
	-	204,439	**204,439**	112,541

5. Expenditure on charitable activities

The company allocates its costs between Restricted and Unrestricted expenditure as follows:

	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2024**	2023
	£	£	**£**	£
Living Options	-	11,721,018	**11,721,018**	7,578,873
Living Options – Supporting People	3,396,446	-	**3,396,446**	2,512,628
Employability & Community Inclusion	-	4,590,756	**4,590,756**	6,012,964
	3,396,446	16,311,774	**19,708,220**	16,104,465

Notes to the accounts (continued)

6. Employee information

The average weekly number of persons, including part time and relief staff employed by the company during the year was:

Company	2024	2023
	Number	Number
By activity:		
Admin & PR	**138**	148
Unit Managers & Deputies	**25**	23
Ancillary	**312**	183
	475	354

Company	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs		
Wages and salaries	**12,424,647**	9,843,076
Social security costs	**1,004,015**	806,001
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	**415,409**	311,419
Agency staff	**2,633,040**	2,654,704
Apprenticeship Levy	**44,853**	32,642
	16,521,964	13,647,842

Employee information (continued)

The number of employees in the Company whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	3	2
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	-	-
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	-	2
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	1	1
In the band £100,001 - £110,000	1	-

The total amount of employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) received by key management personnel during the period was £404,804 (2023: £470,351).

During the year no Trustee received any remuneration, benefits in kind or reimbursement of expenses (2023: £nil).

7. Net incoming resources

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation on tangible owned fixed assets	**236,997**	271,751
(Profit)/Loss on revaluation of investments	**(202,172)**	(225,062)
Interest and dividends receivable	**(204,439)**	(112,541)
Auditors' remuneration - audit	**18,000**	21,600
(Profit)/Loss on disposal of tangible assets	**333**	(10,441)

8. Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from taxation due to its charitable status as approved by HMRC. No tax is therefore payable on the surplus for the year (2023: nil).

9. Auditors' remuneration

	2024 £	2023 £
Fees payable to the company's auditor for the audit of the annual accounts	**18,000**	21,600

Notes to the accounts (continued)

10. Tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings £	Fixtures & fittings & computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost				
At 31 March 2023	**3,613,313**	**879,331**	**142,869**	**4,635,513**
Additions	-	73,910	-	73,910
Disposals	(157,542)	(54,984)	-	(212,526)
At 31 March 2024	**3,455,771**	**898,257**	**142,869**	**4,496,897**
Depreciation				
At 31 March 2023	**1,836,557**	**630,071**	**135,419**	**2,602,047**
Charge for the year	110,633	119,426	6,938	236,997
Disposals	(157,542)	(49,349)	-	(206,891)
At 31 March 2024	**1,789,648**	**700,148**	**142,357**	**2,632,153**
Net book values				
At 31 March 2023	1,776,756	249,260	7,450	2,033,466
At 1 April 2024	**1,666,123**	**198,109**	**512**	**1,864,744**

11. Investments

	2024 £
Investments at market value at 1 April 2023	2,924,647
Investment income reinvested	-
Purchase of investments	-
Disposal of investments	-
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation and realisation	202,172
Investments at market value at 31 March 2024	**3,126,819**

At 31 March 2024 The Cedar Foundation held 199,913 shares (2023: 199,913 shared) valued at 1,564.09 pence per share (2023: 1,463.96 pence per share) in the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities. This revaluation resulted in a £202,172 increase in market value. The historic cost of the total investments held at the year end was £2,500,000 (2023: £2,500,000).

Notes to the accounts (continued)

12. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	**1,803,973**	1,701,131
Other debtors	**207,496**	380,488
Prepayments and accrued income	**317,881**	224,886
Grants receivable	**7,752**	393,938
	2,337,102	2,700,444

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	**147,444**	432,654
Other taxation and social security	**259,657**	196,415
Other creditors	**140,756**	143,753
Accruals and deferred income	**631,711**	515,661
	1,179,568	1,288,483

14. Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Opening balance	**190,684**	483,772
Amount released to income	**(111,297)**	(347,112)
Amount deferred in year	**119,256**	54,024
	198,643	190,684

Notes to the accounts (continued)

15. Analysis of funds

Analysis of funds by type

	At 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains/ (Losses)	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£		£
Unrestricted funds						
Reserve funds						
Fixed Asset Reserve	2,033,468	-	-	-	(168,724)	1,864,744
Fair value reserve	424,647	-	-	(470,114)	202,172	156,705
Risk – employability services	-	-	-	873,742	-	873,742
Risk – Living Options	-	-	-	5,475,939	-	5,475,939
Risk – Community Services	-	-	-	802,826	-	802,826
Risk – Corporate Services	-	-	-	744,189	-	744,189
Risk – Premises	-	-	-	66,710	-	66,710
Designated funds						
Organisation Efficiency & ESG Development	-	-	-	100,000	-	100,000
Development Capital Projects	-	-	-	50,000	-	50,000
Income Diversification Development	-	-	-	90,000	-	90,000
Croft Day Centre Development	471,193	-	-	-	-	471,193
ECI Development	-	-	-	160,000	-	160,000
LO Development	-	-	-	180,000	-	180,000
Service Development	1,651,853	-	-	(1,651,853)	-	-
General funds						
General Funds	1,188,219	17,286,060	(16,311,774)	(2,329,639)	167,134	-
Sustainability	6,504,647	-	-	(6,504,647)	-	-
User Forum & Volunteer Programme	-	-	-	82,365	-	82,365
Service sustainability – 3 year plan	-	-	-	1,542,080	-	1,542,080
Total unrestricted funds	12,274,027	17,286,060	(16,311,774)	(788,402)	200,582	12,660,493
Restricted funds						
Supporting People	-	2,608,044	(3,396,446)	788,402	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	2,608,044	(3,396,446)	788,402	-	-
Total funds	12,274,027	19,894,104	(19,708,220)	-	200,582	12,660,493

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Unrestricted funds

General funds

User Forum

Cedar is a user-led organisation and effective user engagement is central to achieving our vision. Co-production is a core innovation theme in our Strategic Plan and having an active User Forum is a key mechanism for ensuring user engagement. The use of reserves to fund core costs of the Forum including staffing costs for Facilitators, service user costs for travel, training and infrastructure, will enable members of the Forum to fully undertake their role, delivering on advocacy, consultation, recruitment and selection.

Volunteer programme

Cedar is committed to having a volunteer programme to support our beneficiaries. Volunteers bring diversity, which enriches the organisation as well as a range of qualities, skills and expertise that adds value to our services and enhances the experiences of our service users. Volunteers dedicate time to supporting our service users to achieve their planned outcomes, which enhances the support offered by our employees. The use of reserves, supports employing a Volunteer Coordinator and enables us to reimburse volunteers appropriately for expenses such as travel and training. Effectively resourcing our volunteer programme ensures we can continue to maintain our Investing in Volunteers quality standard evidencing good practice in volunteer management.

Service sustainability reserve

Cedar Foundation has determined an approach to underwrite services for a period of time that are high performing and meeting need and demand for our beneficiaries, but not reaching full-cost recovery, allowing time to source alternative funding options or to make informed decisions on long-term viability. This allows the organisation to maintain key services that reflect the charity’s purpose and strategic direction.

Since 2021, a combination of factors, including economic change and political uncertainties, has led Cedar to exercise prudence and minimise pay increases to keep costs within the constraints of funder uplifts or loss of key funding streams due to Brexit. This has resulted in Cedar no longer paying above minimum wage for care and support staff and not maintaining alignment with NJC benchmark for salaried staff posts, at variance with our previous position.

There have been improvements in the last year in the labour market which has meant a more positive outcome for recruitment exercises and a decrease in the use of agency staff. This has meant for 24/25 financial year the Trustees have supported the decision to take a different approach to build upon recent successes and ensure competitive pay through a temporary draw on sustainability reserves. Cedar have re-aligned to NJC benchmark and increased the support worker hourly rate above NMW/NLW.

While Department of Health and other government income uplifts are still likely to be modest on existing contracts, it is imperative that Cedar attract and retain the best staff to meet its objectives. It is anticipated that this move will encourage increasing positive recruitment outcomes and stabilise the workforce and retain highly experienced staff. The stabilisation of the workforce will allow the management teams to focus on increasing income through existing streams, diversifying income and cost efficiency measures.

Each of the directorates have defined targets within the Balanced Scorecard and a Financial Improvement Plan to drive efforts to reduce the call upon reserves over the next 3 years on a journey to maximising full cost recovery for the majority of services in the longer term.

Reserve fund

Fixed Asset Reserve

This fund represents the net book value of all the Charity's fixed assets. The Fund is then utilised to offset the impact on the general fund of the depreciation charged on the relevant assets.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Fair Value Reserve

At the end of each accounting year Cedar post a fair value adjustment to the Fair Value Reserve to account for the movement in the share price of investments held. The total value held in this reserve is periodically reviewed to only hold a prudent amount to allow for reasonable fluctuations in the market, any surplus funds held are then released to the General Funds.

Risk Reserve

The Trustees of Cedar Foundation have a liquidity-based approach to reserves which results in the charity holding reserves mainly in cash and easily realisable investments. As a risk averse organisation, the reserves strategy is closely aligned to the organisation's risk register and as such, a significant percentage of the reserves are held in the Risk Reserve Fund to ensure continuing operations, particularly in relation to fluctuations in cash flow.

Each service area has been assessed for risk, particularly in relation to how payments by funders affect the cash flow. The risk reserve fund aims to retain the equivalent value of 6 months of salary costs for each service area. At each year end calculations are undertaken to monitor the percentage of sustainable reserves against actual salary costs. Appropriations and/or adjustments are made from year end surplus to those areas within the fund which require additional provision due to increases or decreases in requirements against the 6-month benchmark. The risk reserve has priority over other designated reserves in the event of limited year end surplus and appropriations.

The Trustees recognise that the long-term strategic goal of Cedar is to ensure that there is the equivalent value of 6 months' salary costs held in reserves, however, in this current period due to the need to allocate increased levels of Service Sustainability reserves and invest in other areas of the organisation for development and improvement, the organisation's Risk Reserve sits at 5.5 months. Strategically this will allow measures to be taken forward to future-proof Cedar and ensure continuity of service.

Designated Funds

Organisational Efficiency & SG/Net Zero Reserve

Cedar Foundation is committed to work towards achieving the UN's ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) Sustainable Development Goals. To achieve this Cedar Foundation is dedicated to reviewing its overall efficiency, infrastructure and capital investment to make them more sustainable and has committed part of their reserves to this development.

Specific targets are captured in the Organisational Balanced Scorecard for the 2024/25 operational year, including:

- Income diversification (e.g. Corporate Partnerships)
- Efficiency savings in supplier management
- Premises review for usage and energy efficiency
- Digitalisation Strategy to improve efficiencies through technology

Service Development Reserve

The Trustees recognise that a proportion of its reserves should be utilised for development opportunities in order to remain competitive in an increasingly challenging environment, particularly with the need for competitive tendering for our services and building new partnerships to attract emerging funding opportunities.

Restricted Reserves

These can only be used for a specific purpose. There are no restricted reserves held by Cedar currently.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Analysis of funds by net asset type - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	1,864,744	-	1,864,744
Fixed asset investments	3,126,819	-	3,126,819
Current assets	8,848,498	-	8,848,498
Creditors due within one year	(1,179,568)	-	(1,179,568)
Total	12,660,493	-	12,660,493

Analysis of funds by net asset type - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	2,033,466	-	2,033,466
Fixed asset investments	2,924,647	-	2,924,647
Current assets	8,604,397	-	8,604,397
Creditors due within one year	(1,288,483)	-	(1,288,483)
Total	12,274,027	-	12,274,027

16. Contingent liabilities

A contingent liability exists to repay grants received, where certain conditions have not been fulfilled by the company. In the opinion of the Trustees, the terms of the letters of offer have been complied with and no liability is expected.

17. Guarantors

The company is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of guarantors is limited to £1 in the event of the company being wound up.

18. Related Party transactions

The Board of Trustees are considered to be the Charity's ultimate controlling party.

During the year ended 31 March 2024 the Cedar Foundation paid IT software subscription and support services costs totalling £102,469 (2023: £71,016) to Aspirico UK Limited (iplanit), an IT software company for which trustee Mr Clive Evans is an employee.

During the year the Cedar Foundation paid a £500 (2023: £582) corporate membership fee to Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment for which the Head of Service for Employability within the charity is a board member. The same individual is also a Board member of Volunteer Now Enterprise Ltd for which the Cedar Foundation paid £1,752 (2023: £2,334) for the delivery of recruitment, adult safeguarding and child safeguarding training.

The Director of People and Organisational Development within the Cedar Foundation is also a member on the board of the Confederation of Community Groups as a Cedar representative. During the year the Cedar Foundation paid £17,910 and £1,136 to the Confederation of Community Groups and the Confederation of Community Groups Newry & District in respective of rent and rates for the use of a meeting room and a suite. Included within the previously mentioned balances was also a £472 membership subscription.

19. Extraordinary item - Donation

On 31 March 2023, Croft Communities merged with The Cedar Foundation, all assets and liabilities were transferred to The Cedar Foundation as of this date by way of an Extraordinary Donation. This transfer was treated within the 31st March 2023 year end financial statements as an "Extraordinary Item - Donation" in the amount of £2,994,280. This donation was made up of the transfer of the following assets and liabilities:

	£
Fixed Assets	811,532
Debtors	448,422
Creditors	(130,124)
Bank	1,864,450
	2,994,280

The Cedar Foundation

Northern Ireland - Charity number 101121

Annual report

The Cedar Foundation

Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Registered No: NI 002132
Charity number: NIC 101121

Annual report

Trustees and advisers

Trustees

Company registered number
NI 002132

Charity registered number
NIC 101121

Auditors

Sumer Auditco NI Limited
Statutory Auditors
Glendinning House, 6 Murray Street
Belfast
BT1 6DN

Chief Executive Officer

Mrs Elaine Armstrong

Solicitors

Tughans
30 Victoria Street
Belfast
BT1 3GG

Bankers

Danske Bank
Donegall Square West
Belfast
BT1 5JS

Registered Office and Head Office

1 Ravenhill Reach Close
Ormeau Embankment
Belfast
United Kingdom
BT6 8RB

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)

The Trustees present their report and the audited accounts for the period ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and Activities

a. Policies and objectives

The Cedar Foundation (Cedar) delivers a range of services throughout Northern Ireland in partnership with disabled people enabling them to get the most out of life and to be fully included in their communities. Our services are centred around the individual needs of each person to promote opportunity, choice and inclusion.

Our **Vision** is an inclusive society for all.

Our **Mission** is to support individuals and families living with disability, autism and brain injury to live the lives they choose.

Our **Values**:

- **C**ollaboration
  We are committed to ensuring our services are developed in partnership. We believe we work at our best in active collaboration with our service users, staff and partners.
- **E**quality
  We recognise the importance of a diverse and inclusive community, and we will make certain that everyone has an equal opportunity to make a contribution, and this is valued.
- **D**ignity
  We guarantee that dignity is at the centre of high-quality, person-centred support and our services are delivered with respect, care and compassion.
- **A**chievement
  We believe in ensuring that everyone involved in our organisation can achieve their full potential. Our ambition is to be recognised for our ability to deliver at an individual, team and organisational level.
- **R**esilience
  We are an adaptable, forward thinking and resilient organisation that sees difficult situations as an opportunity. We promote creativity and innovation, supporting each other to have the individual and collective strength to achieve this.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our 5-year Strategic Plan 2021-2026: Opportunity, Choice, Inclusion, was co-produced with service users, families and staff and aligned with current strategic direction. It takes cognisance of the voices of all our stakeholders and a review of performance data. It captures our ambitions for impact, the strategic context we are working within and is designed to embrace the changes we are likely to face over the next 5 years.

Strategic Aims and Priorities for 2023/2024:

- Individuals and families live the lives they choose, supported by our co-produced person-centred services
- Our resources are managed and allocated in a transparent manner to enable us to develop and deliver exceptional services
- We work to the highest possible standards and continuously improve the organisation ensuring we meet customer/stakeholder needs
- We are a competent and resilient organisation that is responsive to changing need and committed to innovation and excellence

Cedar is one of the largest disability charities in Northern Ireland. This year we supported 2,746 disabled people to participate in the life of their community. Our services include a range of living options; including supported living, residential care, at-home housing support; employability and community inclusion services for all ages, including family support and transitional planning for children and young people. We have specialist services to meet the needs of physical and sensory disability, long-term health conditions, learning disability, autism and brain injury. All our services are designed to enable each individual to reach their full potential and to provide an appropriate level of support to individuals, families and the wider community enabling inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life.

Through all of the services we provide we are working towards realising our vision of an inclusive society for all.

c. Main activities undertaken to further the charity's purposes for the public benefit

Cedar provides direct public benefit through the development and delivery of a range of inclusion services to disabled adults and children throughout Northern Ireland.

Employability services provide person centred opportunities and disability specialist support through, employability skills training, access to Further and Higher Education, career advice, work experience placements and support to service users to secure and maintain work roles. The benefits arising from these services include targeting social need, facilitating service users to become more included in society and more economically active through engagement with the labour market.

Children and Young People Community Inclusion Services provide support to give the best start in life and improve outcomes. We work in partnership with a range of agencies to create an inclusive world for disabled children, young people and their families. Services source and support opportunities to engage in community-based activities, provide early intervention support to assist young people to achieve their full potential when transitioning from school to Further or Higher Education, training or employment. The Youth Matters programme assists service users under the age of 18 to have improved access to inclusive community and youth activities which will impact on their general health and wellbeing and support them to be active citizens.

Adult Community Inclusion Services includes a range of innovative day opportunities and day care provision. These services promote peer support and meaningful community engagement for disabled people. Cedar's Inclusion Matters programme, and additional specialist services for Autism and for Brain Injury, supports people with disabilities to become equal citizens within their local communities increasing their social, economic and civic inclusion. These services focus on building the capacity of people with disabilities to engage with and contribute to their local community.

Living Options is designed to meet the individual needs of people who have brain injury, physical disability and sensory impairment, and for people who have learning disabilities, and autism. Types of accommodation include Supported Living in independent apartments or bungalows, registered residential homes providing 24-hour care and housing support services. The benefits from these services are delivering a person-centred housing support and care service to enhance independent living skills; enabling individuals to have more control of their lives; and helping users to achieve improvements in personal wellbeing, health and personal safety. Floating/Housing support services benefit service users by building the skills to have independence in maintaining tenancies, being safe and well, enhanced self-esteem and living fulfilling lives.

The benefits of all of the services provided can be demonstrated through the use of ServQual (service user satisfaction tool), independent evaluations and feedback from funders and purchasers through contract review meetings. Cedar measures impact on individual soft outcomes through a validated self-report distance travelled tool, Outcome Star in non-regulated services and a monthly monitoring review in registered services. Cedar is committed to quality improvement; having previously won the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) European and All Ireland excellence awards. Cedar is ISO 9001:2015 accredited, is an Investors in People recognised organisation, achieving Platinum Standard, and has maintained Investors in Volunteers certification.

Review of activities

The current 5-year Strategic Plan was adopted at the June 2021 Trustees' meeting. A mid-year review of performance and strategic alignment for the 2023/2024 operational year was conducted by the Executive Board, User Forum and SMT in November 2023.

We have delivered successfully on Year 3 under the guidance and good governance of our Trustees and advisors in partnership with the User Forum, Leadership and Senior Management team, underpinned with an operational staff team that have been properly resourced, trained, developed, and supported to deliver quality front-line and corporate support services.

"I have been privileged to see the growing confidence of my service users. Even when using zoom to interact with service users, I have seen them gaining the confidence to interact more with their community and user groups" (ABI Choices case worker)

"Cedar is a support mechanism; they are a call away; they listen and never judge. Always there to help" (Current SU)

"Invaluable service individualised to each person and their achievements" (Past SU)

Achievements and performance

Overall, the period under review was a very challenging but successful. The collective commitment and dedication of all the staff team has delivered excellent results during a period of change and external pressures in the Health and Social Care context. The organisational performance is demonstrated through the review of the Balanced Scorecard for the 2023/2024 year, which was monitored quarterly with the Executive Board and SMT.

(i) Performance and Compliance

Finance

- Turnover meeting target to sustain all services
  While staff recruitment and retention remain a challenge and agency usage has remained high throughout the year in registered services, commissioned hours for each service have been delivered to minimise loss of income. Re-profiling of the services previously funded by ESF and successful bid for UKSPF regional employment service have supported turnover and sustainability.
- A high level of grant and debtor control was maintained, cashflow was maximised with cash and investments remaining at an average of £5.4m during the year. This maximised the return from financial investments, delivering over £204.4k (£112.5k, 2023) return at Q4.
- Financial Improvement Plans (FIP) in place for all directorates to respond to a changed commissioning landscape in Employment & Community Inclusion, to improve income and expenditure controls in Living Options and corporate costs.
- 100% compliance sustained from all external auditing authorities, including DoE, DfC & DoH.
- Compliance with Charity Commission and Article 55 reporting deadlines.

Customer

- Service delivery target met, providing a service to 2,888 disabled people and their families in year across 25 services, our highest number so far.
- Very high service user satisfaction results sustained (99%), with 98% of leavers telling us they would recommend the service to others.
- Sustained high level of positive service impact on soft and hard outcome measures

Internal Processes

- Low complaint volumes with local resolutions achieved in almost all cases
- Sustained level of compliments and positive feedback
- No significant areas for improvement or requirements noted in RQIA inspections throughout 2023/24 for all regulated services

- Achieved full HSCT and NIHE Supporting People contractual compliance requirements
- Significant review of incident reporting to scope in cross-organisational lessons learnt processes for improved prevention and strategic level improvements
- Re-accreditation successful for Investing in Volunteers standard
- High level compliance with ISO standards achieving positive external audit report in January 2024

Organisational Capacity

- Investors in People Platinum status, that positions Cedar within the top 1% of IiP accredited organisations.
- 89% staff satisfaction in overall view of Cedar Foundation
- 98% of staff reported that their training needs were addressed in year
- 100% staff report that they feel equipped to meet job requirements
- Disability Awareness sessions jointly delivered by OD staff and User Forum to 497 people
- Targeted social media campaigns directed by the 2023/24 Strategic Communications Action Plan with significantly increased presence and impact
- 3 significant recognition awards achieved for Cedar leaders (CO3 leadership, NI Women's Award)
- SMT involvement in sector wide innovation and reform groups NISCC Workforce Review, Social Care Collaborative Forum, DfC Employment Strategy, Adult Safeguarding.
- European Network engagement with European Platform on Rehabilitation (EPR) in year with a number of attendances and contributions made at webinars and the annual conference in France.

BSI ISO External Auditor reported that Cedar's performance is well managed and captured in the 4 elements of the Balanced Scorecard format presented above:

'In line with the stated strategic direction and intended results of the quality management system, corporate score card objectives and 5-year Corporate Strategy (2021 - 2026), the management system has demonstrated that it is designed to support all of the above and deliver intended results. This was demonstrated through the review of Context, Risks & Opportunities, Internal Audits, internal review mechanisms including Management Review, Complaints, Incidents & Accidents & Safeguarding'. (January 2024)

(ii) Service Developments

Employability and Community Inclusion Services

- Effective closure of ESF Call 3 programme with all objectives achieved/exceeded. Maintained service provision for a further 6 months to secure successful outcomes for service users leaving the ESF funded programme.
- Launch of the UKSPF funded SkillSET service targeting new cohorts of service users to a 'work ready' service model with a greater focus on employment outcomes.
- Managed substantial change including significant reduction in funding which has required radical reprofiling of our service models, staff teams and management structure without the need for any compulsory redundancies.
- Ongoing engagement with Government Departments to shape development of disability employment services in NI.
- Launch of ABI Choices evaluation and participation at 14th World Congress on Brain Injury to present the research
- A forensic review of service models, their full costs against present income and development of effective consortium opportunities for new income generation.
- Cedar is now a Direct License Centre for Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and have successfully been awarded a grant of £10,000 over 3 years to facilitate this development.

Living Options Services

- The appointment of a new Director, following a retirement and leadership infrastructure review to promote succession planning and investment in enhanced opportunities for career progression.
- Recruitment Plan to stabilise the staff resource, reduce agency costs and staff vacancies with positive outcomes across the year.
- High level of strategic involvement with external sector-wide lobbying groups, collaborative workstreams/forums resulting in opportunities to meet with the Department of Health/SPPG/HSCTs, and Department for Communities to deliver successful increases in income.

Corporate Services

- The Finance Department began the year by incorporating the Croft Finance Department and the Cedar Finance Department to establish an optimum structure to meet the needs of the larger organisation, make use of team member's strengths and target the areas of development.
- Secured £100K Dormant Accounts funding to support the development and implementation of a cloud-based integrated HR and Payroll system to improve organisational resilience and enhance digitalisation
- Review of Agile Working Strategy through staff feedback survey and comprehensive report and action plan, establishing new working practices.
- Cross organisational Learning and Development innovation team to improve consistency of best practice standards for staff experience of L&D.
- Enhanced governance across organisation through new Quality & Governance Committee structure for sharing best practice and lessons learnt.

(iii) Innovation Work

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Cedar is committed to making our organisation a positive place to work. We recognize that we are still dealing with a level of change. We have taken the approach of investing in an Innovation Team, drawn from across Cedar, to focus on how we can support each other and share expertise and information on how to best promote health and wellbeing. The focus has now widened its remit to general Health & wellbeing, with a range of initiatives developed under the Department of Health 5 Pillars of wellbeing – Financial, Social, Physical, Mental & Digital with a wellbeing programme called Healthy Body Healthy Minds'.

Digitalisation (DX)

The DX Strategy provides a framework to capture a range of innovations across the organisation, ensuring equity of roll out and consistency of practice. It also provides assurance on cost control and governance in implementing new initiatives. The initiatives reflect new ways of working, a commitment to smarter and paperless practices that will future-proof the organisation and drive efficiencies.

1. Implement the first stage of an integrated HR and Payroll system
2. Building the functionality of the Cedar Hub launched last year (shared information on Sharepoint site for employees)
3. Implementation of a service user data information management system to gather and hold securely information on our work across all areas of Northern Ireland, for staff who work on site and remotely. This ensures we can demonstrate how service users have benefited from Cedar's work to be able to report on how we are performing to our funders and regulators at inspection.
4. Roll out of email licences to all employees to engage with new digital systems
5. Developing the use of AP system to reduce administrative time on processing purchase invoices

Co-production

This is a very important Innovation Theme for Cedar. We know we work best when we are collaborating. In particular, Cedar is committed to putting our service users at the heart of all that we do. Some of the co-production activities include:

- **Service Pathway Project** – This co-produced piece of work will shape our language and how we say what we do. It reflects the views from service users, User forum, Executive members and staff at Cedar.
- **Participation Partnership, NISCC, May 2023 –** service users sharing experiences and insights to help ensure that high standards are maintained in the development and regulation of the social care workforce
- **Learning Disability Pride, June 2023 -** to celebrate the theme 'Do Your Thing' promoting the positive impact that those with learning disabilities have on our communities.
- **Croft Family Forum -** A User Engagement Initiative to support additional activities to promote social inclusion and traditional and seasonal events and fundraising initiatives.
- **Peer Review Project, September 2023 –** supported living tenants from organisations are participating in training to be peer researchers. They will interview and gather feedback from service users across other providers to promote independent review and give a strong user experience voice.
- **User Engagement -** The core function of the Cedar User Forum is to be the voice of the service user in Cedar through consultation, advocacy and recruitment. The work of the User Forum is one example of how Cedar does co-production well and is a key aspect of our governance structure.
- **Benchmarking -** Supporting organisations with an understanding of User Involvement and Co-production, our User Forum has helped support other organisations benchmark and establish structures like Cedar to deliver co-production and user engagement. Examples include Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, Ulster University and NISCC.

People & Organisational Development (POD)

The POD Strategy is an ambitious map of actions to build organisational capacity, ensuring a positive people experience for those who work in Cedar and supporting our people to live our values and recognising when they do this well. Some of the key deliverables included:

- Agile Working Strategy, introduced during COVID in 2021, review undertaken seeking feedback from staff & managers. The results provided clear evidence that it is working well for both staff & managers and organisational performance and results evidence there is no negative impact on service delivery.
- Learning & Development review established to put in place an organisational approach to induction, audit and recommendations against current training and development policy, and also review of Cedar's leadership programme. We are also reviewing the model we use to evaluate training.
- Review of Recruitment Initiatives introduced during COVID to support attraction & retention of employees as well as a focus on reducing reliance on agency workers. This has taken the form of an evidence based review of data to support future decision making.
- Collective Leadership embedded into our culture & is most visible with the work of the innovation teams.

(iv) User Forum

The User Forum (Forum) has continued to ensure the voice of Cedar service users is represented throughout the organisation. This is achieved through the core functions of consultation, advocacy, and recruitment. The User Forum is composed of 42 members from across NI, reflecting Cedar's service range across all 5 Health Trust localities.

Advocacy - User Forum members have supported the co-production and co-delivery of 14 Disability Awareness Training sessions to almost 500 people to help understand and raise awareness of disability, brain injury and autism.

Consultations (51 completed)

- Regional level: Disability Strategy (Department for Communities), Consultation on the Proposed Closure of Muckamore Abbey Hospital (Department of Health)
- Regional and local level: Equality and Disability Plans for local Health and Social Care Trusts, Councils and Public Sector agencies alongside service specific reviews.
- Accessibility arrangements: City of Derry Airport, Northern Ireland Assembly. Digital accessibility for the Warm Home Scheme, Consumer Hub, and the Patient Client Council.

Recruitment

- Currently, 14 of the User Forum have participated in recruitment and selection training delivered by our Human Resources team to sit on interview panels in person or virtually. We had 22% of recruitment panels with User Forum representation in 23/24.

Financial performance & Risk Management

a) Financial Review

From a financial perspective, the year was a successful one, with all resources applied to achieve our Vision of ***an inclusive society for all***.

The year end 31 March 2024 was the first year when all the Croft Communities activities were undertaken through The Cedar Foundation rather than through a separate subsidiary company. As a result The Cedar Foundation results have shown a year on year increase in income and expenditure levels.

During the year, the organisation's incoming resources increased by 26.98% to £19,894,104. Total expenditure increased by 22.38% to £19,708,220 resulting in a surplus of £185,884. This was an increase on the previous year's deficit of £437,441, reflecting effective financial management, cost control and the securing of resources for service developments.

Our investments were valued at £3,126,819 in line with SORP recommendations, thereby further increasing our funds by £202,172.

During the year, the Board and Senior Leadership Team undertook an exercise to review the organisation's reserves policy.

As a result of this exercise, we reclassified our unrestricted reserves into four broad categories:

- Risk reserves, which provide funding for the continuity of services, particularly where those services face risks and uncertainties around future funding levels and where there is a working capital requirement necessary to manage delays in relation to agreed funding from public sector funders;
- Development reserves, which have been set aside to future projects to improve and expand our service offering to our beneficiaries;
- Our Service Sustainability reserve, which will fund a time-bound reorganisation and reconfiguration of services over a three-year period to reflect current funding and cost service challenges and the cost improvement plans in place to address these challenges; and
- Other funds, which encompass a number of other reserves including a specific fixed asset reserve which recognises the illiquid nature of our fixed assets i.e. our buildings and equipment.

Further details on our reserves are included in Note 15 to the financial statements.

The Trustees believe that the charity remains in a good financial position. The main financial risks the Trustees have identified are outlined in the Principal Risks and Uncertainties section of this report.

b) Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

c) Financial risk management objectives and policies

The Cedar Foundation manages all its financial risks through a series of controls and maintenance of a Risk Register. This is reviewed on a quarterly basis and presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their consideration. The Risk Register defines individual risks on the basis of their likelihood and significance to the organisation. The risk management processes are clearly defined and agreed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, including the charity's Reserve Policy as a key part of those processes. The risk is segmented on the basis of sustainability costs in the event of shortfall or of withdrawal of funding and in relation to services where there is financial uncertainty or no revenue for operations in year.

d) Principal risks and uncertainties

The Cedar Foundation Risk Management Policy, which incorporates Croft Communities, states that the Trustees and Management Team recognise it is impossible to remove all risk, but effective, practicable risk management ensure Cedar maximises opportunities in pursuit of its' Vision and minimises the risks to which it may be exposed. In doing so we aim to enhance our ability to deliver the best possible outcomes for the people that depend on our services. Achievement of Cedar's Risk Management objectives require the collective support and active participation of Trustees, the Senior Management Team, all employees and partner organisations. At all levels, there is a need for understanding the nature of risk and the acceptance of responsibility for control or risks. Management of risk is a continuous and dynamic process which is kept under regular review.

The principal commercial, operational and financial risks that we have identified as having a serious potential impact on the performance and future prospects or reputation of the organisation, and have set out in our Corporate Risk Register, are as follows:

1. Children or adults at risk of being harmed while accessing a Cedar service.
2. Service delivery model fails to be strategically aligned.
3. Insufficient funds to sustain core services.
4. Full cost recovery not achieved.
5. Digital innovation not adequately resourced.
6. Lack of profile on specialist services to attract/retain funding
7. Non-compliance with legal requirements resulting in fine/compensation payments.
8. Cyberattack or other breach of ICT infrastructure.
9. Non-compliance with regulatory or contract requirements resulting in suspension of service.
10. Not attracting and retaining staff to deliver services safely.
11. Not attracting and retaining staff who share the values of Cedar/Croft.
12. Negative publicity impacting reputation of the organisation.
13. Incident resulting in death or serious injury as a result of failure to operate safe systems of work.

The Executive Committee and Senior Management Team are satisfied that appropriate actions have been identified and taken so that these risks are managed effectively. The Risk Management Policy, including risk appetite, is reviewed every 3 years and was last updated in March 2023. This is communicated across the organisation within our ISO 9001 Quality Management System.

The Corporate Risk Register is subject to quarterly review. In addition, a full annual review took place with updated risks in March 2024 to reflect the current work context and changes in the working environment. A Strategic Risk Scoring Matrix is prepared and linked directly to the residual risks. This uses a RAG System, Red, Amber, Green. All new mitigating actions to reduce, transfer or remove risk are captured in the Risk Register Action Plan and subject to quarterly review.

An Assurance Map is prepared based on the three lines of Defence Model, outlining the information collection and reporting arrangements at each assurance level. This process is undertaken by the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis through continual monitoring of the Risk Register Action Plan, which is included in quarterly Executive Committee Governance documents.

e) Principal funding

To fund our work Cedar Foundation relies on fees and grants through various Statutory and Government Departments. A range of other funding partners such as Community Fund, Charitable Trusts and Foundations as well as donations from the general public, companies and investment income.

f) Investment policy and performance

The Executive Committee take a risk averse approach to all investments. During the year the Committee decided to maintain the current investment in shares in Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities. The fund performed satisfactorily during the year and resulted in an increase in the value of shares held by Cedar Foundation. The year end value of the shares totalled £3,126,819 (2023: £2,924,647).

Structure, governance and management

a) Constitution

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company is recognised as a charity by HM Revenue & Customs under reference number XN47377 and registered with the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland No. NIC101121.

The principal object, for which the company is established, is to undertake and to join with others in undertaking the provision of services for disabled adults and children in Northern Ireland and to work in partnership with disabled adults and children and to develop services that promote choice, opportunity, independence and equality.

b) Method of appointment or election of Directors

The Executive Committee is elected by the Members of the Association. The Executive Committee are the Charity's Trustees and the legal directors of the company. Members of the Executive Committee serve for a 3 year term, after which they are eligible for re-election.

c) Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

It is company policy to provide an induction programme for newly appointed directors to acquaint them with the organisation's policy and practice, its aims and objectives, management and governance and also what is expected of them under charity law. This is supported by a comprehensive Governance Manual, which was updated in November 2023. In addition, a governance refresher workshop for all current Trustees was carried out in December 2021. This is offered on demand or at least repeated in 3-yearly cycles and would next be due in 2024. This year, instead of the usual governance update, a comprehensive governance review was conducted with the Executive Committee of Trustees on 29th February 2024.

The Code of Good Governance, supported by the NI Charity Commission, sets out five principles and practices of good governance for voluntary and community organisations. The Governance Health Check is a self-assessment tool which has also been devised by the Developing Governance Group as a practical resource to assist committees/boards to work towards adhering to the principles of the Code of Good Governance. It allows Cedar to demonstrate good governance practices to our stakeholders, beneficiaries and funders. The outcome of the governance review confirmed there are strong and effective practices in place, giving the trustees assurance in demonstrating that adherence and identifying areas where we can make changes to improve. The improvements are captured in a plan that was presented to the Executive Committee at the June meeting for action in the 24/25 year.

The Executive Committee meets every three months with occasional ad-hoc meetings for exceptional business if this is required. The constitution of the Executive Committee is kept under review with regard to the appropriate skills and expertise that are required to lead the organisation. The Governance Manual includes a schedule of matters, including a scheme of delegation, outline of committee structures and delegated powers, role descriptions of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Executive Committee members and the role of the Chief Executive.

d) Organisational structure and decision making

The 2022 Governance Manual Review and training ensured that the Board and its Committees are fit for purpose as the organisation continues to evolve.

The Group Committee Structure consists of a Finance & General Purposes Committee, Audit Sub-Committee and 2 Executive Review Panels.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee concentrates on Corporate Services matters, such as internal and external financial reporting, investment, risk register, property and infrastructure resources (e.g. ICT), Human Resources, organisational development (e.g. quality accreditation such as Investors in People). The Audit Sub-Committee meets annually to plan the Audits and receive the Auditor's Reports.

The Living Options Panel and the Employment and Community Inclusion Panel reflect the two areas of operations for the Cedar Foundation. They hear reports on overall performance, compliance and service developments.

The business transacted at the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Executive Panel meetings is reported to the Cedar Group Executive Committee at the subsequent scheduled meeting. The Board of Cedar Foundation Group subscribe to the seven principles of Public Life, included in the organisation's Governance Manual and are part of the Organisation's induction and governance training.

During the 2023/2024 year Cedar's Executive Committee met 4 times to review progress and plan for the organisation on the following dates:

20th June 2023
26th September 2023
12th December 2023
12th March 2024

The Finance & General Purposes Committee met to provide scrutiny and support in audit and risk matters on the following dates:

7th June 2023
20th September 2023
29th November 2023
28th February 2024

e) Risk Management

Cedar Foundation operates a formal Risk Management Process culminating in a Corporate Risk Register that identifies key risks, their likelihood, impact and the consequent actions necessary to manage them effectively. This is reviewed annually and was last updated in March 2024.

Whenever possible, we identify ways of providing independent assurance against the management of each risk. Corporate risks, mitigating actions and risk assurance map are scrutinised quarterly by the Senior Management Team, the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Cedar Executive Board.

Plan for future periods

The organisation has a clear course set for the future through its Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026.

This reflects a vision of 'an inclusive society for all' and our mission 'supporting individuals and families living with disability, autism and brain injury to live the lives they choose'. Our core values of Collaboration, Equality, Dignity, Achievement, Resilience, will continue to underpin everything we do as they are key to the success of the organisation.

The Strategic Objectives to support the delivery of our vision in 2024/25:
- Individuals and families live the lives they choose, supported by our co-produced person-centred services.
- Our resources are managed and allocated in a transparent manner to enable us to develop and deliver exceptional services.
- We work to the highest possible standards and continuously improve the organisation ensuring we meet customer/stakeholder needs.
- We are a competent and resilient organisation that is responsive to changing need and committed to innovation and excellence.

Key developments in support of these objectives for the incoming period will include:
- **Digitalisation:** A focus on the use and application of digital technology to enhance the digital inclusion of people with disabilities and efficiency of business processes.
- **Co-production:** working practices enhanced to promote opportunities for the service user voice in the planning, delivery and review of service experience
- **People & Organisational Development Strategy:** Building the capacity of staff to collectively respond to new ways of working, including an emphasis on health and wellbeing of all our people.
- **Finance and Corporate Resources Strategy:** to develop our approach to the impact of operating in an increasingly competitive and financially challenging environment, using our resources to best effect and responding to new income opportunities. At the heart of this Strategy is our commitment to build on our success as a value-based organisation committed to transparency and accountability in the management and deployment of all our resources.

Going forward, we have clear actions agreed within these developments listed above. Staff from across the organisation are actively engaged in and collectively leading forward to improve how we do things. We are building on a strong position of being well-informed, knowing what excellence looks like and committed to remaining as a provider of choice in the disability sector. This gives a strong foundation for continued learning and shared practice to achieve the outcomes of the organisation objectives set out in the Strategic Plan 2026.

Members Liability

The Foundation is a company limited by guarantee. Every member undertakes to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1, to the company's assets if it should be wound up while being a member, or within one year of ceasing to be a member.

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

The Cedar Executive Committee of Trustees (who are also the Directors of the Cedar Foundation for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with the applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resource, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statement on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation

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

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Directors at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- the Directors have taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as Directors in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

On 1 July 2024 our previous auditors, ASM (B) Ltd, joined the Sumer Group and transferred all of its audit engagements to Sumer AuditCo NI Limited. The auditors, Sumer AuditCo NI Limited, will be proposed for reappointment in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 24th September 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Elaine Armstrong

Mrs Elaine Armstrong,
Chief Executive Officer

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Cedar Foundation (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise: the Statements of Financial Activities; the Balance Sheet; the Statement of Cash Flows; and the related notes. 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 charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) (ISAs) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom and Ireland, including the Financial Reporting Council'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

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs require us to report to you where:

- the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and auditors

The Trustees are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation (continued)

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.

Opinion 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 Executive Committee Report including the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Executive Committee Report, including the Strategic Report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' 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 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.

The Cedar Foundation

Northern Ireland - Charity number 101121

Annual return

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation (continued)

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:

We considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: timing of recognition of income; and posting of unusual journals along with complex transactions. We discussed these risks with client management, designed audit procedures to test the timing of income, tested a sample of journals to confirm they were appropriate and reviewed areas of judgement for indicators of management bias to address these risks.

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 Auditors' Report.

Use of our report

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

Brian Clerkin

Brian Clerkin (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Sumer AuditCo NI Limited
Statutory Auditors
Glendinning House
6 Murray Street
Belfast
BT1 6DN

24 September 2024

Sumer AuditCo NI Ltd are eligible to act as auditors in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Accounts

Consolidated Statement of financial activities
(incorporating the Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 £	2022 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations & Legacies	3	-	33,564	**33,564**	22,356
Charitable activities	4	2,458,519	15,775,482	**18,256,817**	17,771,962
Investments	5	-	112,541	**112,541**	78,613
Total income		2,458,519	15,921,587	**18,380,106**	17,872,931
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	3,127,777	15,484,179	**18,611,956**	17,433,403
Total expenditure		3,127,777	15,484,179	**18,611,956**	17,433,403
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		(669,258)	437,407	**(231,851)**	439,528
Other recognised gains/(losses):					
(Losses)/gains on revaluation of investments		-	(225,062)	**(225,062)**	164,217
Other Gains/(losses)			219	**219**	-
Revaluation of Assets held for sale		-	423,594	**423,594**	-
Transfers between funds		669,258	(669,258)	**-**	-
Net movement in funds		-	(33,100)	**(33,100)**	603,745
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		-	12,307,127	**12,307,127**	11,703,381
Net movement in Funds		-	(33,100)	**(33,100)**	603,745
Total funds carried forward			12,274,027	**12,274,027**	12,307,126

All amounts above relate to continuing operations of the group.

The notes on pages 28 to 40 form part of these accounts.

Company Statement of financial activities
(incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 £	2022 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	-	32,181	**32,181**	15,729
Charitable activities	4	1,998,352	13,523,950	**15,522,302**	15,501,930
Investments	5	-	112,541	**112,541**	78,613
Total income		1,998,352	13,668,672	**15,667,024**	15,596,273
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	2,512,628	13,591,837	**16,104,465**	15,251,698
Total expenditure		2,512,628	13,591,837	**16,104,465**	15,251,698
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		(514,276)	76,835	**(437,441)**	344,574
Other recognised gains/(losses):					
(Losses)/gains on revaluation of investments	16	-	(225,062)	**(225,062)**	164,436
Revaluation of Assets held for sale		-	423,594	**423,594**	-
Extraordinary item – donation		-	2,994,280	**2,994,280**	-
Transfers between funds		514,276	(514,276)	**-**	-
Net movement in funds		-	2,755,371	**2,755,371**	509,010
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		-	9,518,655	**9,518,655**	9,009,645
Net movement in funds		-	2,755,371	**2,755,371**	509,010
Total funds carried forward		-	12,274,027	**12,274,027**	9,518,655

All amounts above relate to continuing operations of the company.

The notes on pages 28 to 40 form part of these accounts.

Consolidated Balance Sheet

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	11	**2,033,466**	2,281,549
Investments	12	**2,924,647**	3,149,709
		4,958,113	5,431,258
Current assets			
Debtors	13	**2,700,444**	2,323,714
Assets held for sale		**484,911**	322,743
Investments - short term deposits		**1,227,885**	1,215,631
Cash at bank and in hand		**4,191,157**	4,676,314
		8,604,397	8,538,402
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	**(1,288,483)**	(1,662,532)
Net current assets		**7,315,914**	6,875,870
Total Net assets		**12,274,027**	12,307,126
The funds of the group			
Unrestricted funds	16	**12,274,027**	**12,307,126**
Restricted funds	16	**-**	-
Total funds		**12,274,027**	**12,307,126**

The Balance Sheet for Croft Communities at the year end was £nil following the transfer of all assets and liabilities to The Cedar Foundation at the 31 March 2023.

The accounts on pages 23 to 40 were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 26 September 2023.

Myrna Evans

Mrs Myrna Evans (Chairperson)

E Armstrong

Mrs Elaine Armstrong (CEO)

Co. Registration No. NI 002132

The notes on pages 28 to 40 form part of these accounts.

Company Balance Sheet

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	11	**2,033,466**	1,440,274
Investments	12	**2,924,647**	3,149,709
		4,958,113	4,589,983
Current assets			
Debtors	13	**2,700,444**	2,133,781
Assets held for sale		**484,911**	-
Investments – short term deposits		**1,227,885**	1,215,631
Cash at bank and in hand		**4,191,157**	3,075,056
		8,604,397	6,424,468
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	**(1,288,483)**	(1,495,795)
Net current assets		**7,315,914**	4,928,673
Total net assets		**12,274,027**	9,518,655
The funds of the charity			
Unrestricted funds	16	**12,274,027**	9,518,655
Restricted funds	16	**-**	-
Total funds		**12,274,027**	9,518,655

The accounts on pages 23 to 40 were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 26 September 2023.

Myrna Evans

Mrs Myrna Evans (Chairperson)

EArmstrong

Mrs Elaine Armstrong (CEO)

Co. Registration No. NI 002132

The notes on pages 28 to 40 form part of these accounts.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net cash provided by operating activities (see below)	**(833,861)**	5,865
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	**112,541**	78,613
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	**349,082**	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	**(100,665)**	(198,858)
Sale/(purchase) of investments	**-**	(500,000)
Net cash (used in) investment activities	**360,958**	(620,245)
Cash and short term deposits gifted to subsidiary	**-**	-
Change in cash in the reporting period	**(472,903)**	(614,380)
Cash at the beginning of the reporting period	**5,891,945**	6,506,325
Cash at the end of the reporting period	**5,419,042**	5,891,945

Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Consolidated Statement of financial activities)	**(231,851)**	439,528
Adjusted for:		
Depreciation charges	**271,751**	287,110
Interest and dividends received	**(112,541)**	(78,613)
(Profit) / Loss on sale of fixed assets	**(10,441)**	11,738
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**(374,049)**	(102,096)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**(376,730)**	(551,802)
Net cash provided by operating activities	**(833,861)**	5,865

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	31 March 2022	**Cash Flow**	**31 March 2023**
	£	**£**	**£**
Cash at bank and in hand	4,676,314	(485,157)	**4,191,157**
Investments – short term deposits	1,215,631	12,254	**1,227,885**
Total cash and cash equivalents	5,891,945	(472,903)	**5,419,042**

The notes on pages 28 to 40 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the accounts

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and modified to include the revaluation of investments and in accordance with applicable accounting standards, the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice ("SORP") 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (FRS 102) and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102. A summary of the more important accounting policies, which have been applied consistently, is set out below.

Company status

The Foundation is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 2. In the event of the Foundation being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is £1 per member of the Foundation.

Consolidation

The consolidated financial statements incorporate the financial statements of the company and its subsidiary undertakings as listed in Note 12.

Income

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

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Charitable activities and Governance costs are costs incurred on the company's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Going Concern

No material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt about the ability of the Company or Group to continue as a going concern have been identified by the Trustees.

Pension scheme

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Employer's contributions vary as a percentage of pensionable earnings depending on the staff member's agreed terms and conditions. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in independently administered funds, and contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Operating leases

Costs in respect of operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Tangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at their purchase cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets (excluding land), less their estimated residual values, on a straight-line basis over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned. The principal annual rates used for this purpose are as follows:

	%
Buildings	4
Motor vehicles	20
Fixtures and fittings	20
Computer equipment	33.33

Debtors

Debtors are measured at their recoverable amounts.

Creditors and provisions for liabilities and charges

Creditors and provisions for liabilities and charges are measured at their settlement amount.

Judgements and estimates

In the process of applying the Company and Group's accounting policies, management has not made any significant judgements. There are no key assumptions concerning the future or other key sources of estimation, that have a significant risk of raising a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Investments

In accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, investments, other than those in subsidiary companies, are shown in the balance sheet at market value. Investments in subsidiary companies are stated at cost, where relevant.

Interest receivable

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

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the company is demonstrably committed to either terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

Financial instruments

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

2. Volunteers

The contribution made by our volunteers is critical to the successful delivery of services.

3. Donations and legacies

Group	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2023**	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Fundraising and donations	-	20,564	**20,564**	22,356
Legacies	-	13,000	**13,000**	-
Grants	-	-	**-**	-
	-	33,564	**33,564**	22,356

Company	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2023**	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Fundraising and donations	-	19,181	**19,181**	15,729
Legacies	-	13,000	**13,000**	-
Grants	-	-	**-**	-
	-	32,181,	**32,181**	15,729

4. Incoming resources from charitable activities

Group	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2023**	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Living Options	-	11,359,947	**11,359,947**	10,444,796
Living options – Supporting People	2,458,519	-	**2,458,519**	2,245,051
Employability & Community Inclusion	-	4,415,535	**4,415,535**	5,082,115
	2,458,519	15,775,482	**18,234,001**	17,771,962

Company	Restricted	Unrestricted	**2023**	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Living Options	-	9,108,415	**9,108,415**	8,551,478
Living options – Supporting People	1,998,352	-	**1,998,352**	1,868,337
Employability & Community Inclusion	-	4,415,535	**4,415,535**	5,082,115
	1,998,352	13,523,950	**15,522,302**	15,501,930

Notes to the accounts (continued)

5. Investment income

Group	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	**2023 £**	2022 £
Income from investments	-	112,541	**112,541**	78,613
	-	112,541	**112,541**	78,613

Company	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	**2023 £**	2022 £
Income from investments	-	112,541	**112,541**	78,613
	-	112,541	**112,541**	78,613

6. Expenditure on charitable activities

The company allocates its costs between Restricted and Unrestricted expenditure as follows:

Group	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	**2023 £**	2022 £
Living Options	-	9,471,215	**9,471,215**	9,925,418
Living Options – Supporting People	3,127,777	-	**3,127,777**	2,753,121
Employability & Community Inclusion	-	6,012,964	**6,012,964**	4,754,865
	3,127,777	15,484,179	**18,611,956**	**17,433,403**

Company	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	**2023 £**	2022 £
Living Options	-	7,578,873	**7,578,873**	8,236,801
Living Options – Supporting People	2,512,628	-	**2,512,628**	2,260,032
Employability & Community Inclusion	-	6,012,964	**6,012,964**	4,754,865
	2,512,628	13,591,837	**16,104,465**	15,251,698

Direct care staff costs include the provision of personal care and housing support to the people we support.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

7. Employee information

The average weekly number of persons, including part time and relief staff employed by the group during the year was:

Group	**2023**	2022
	Number	Number
By activity:		
Admin & PR	**49**	51
Unit Managers & Deputies	**36**	33
Ancillary	**324**	309
	409	393

Company	**2023**	2022
	Number	Number
By activity:		
Admin & PR	**44**	46
Unit Managers & Deputies	**32**	29
Ancillary	**242**	223
	318	298

Group	**2023**	2022
	£	£
Staff costs		
Wages and salaries	**11,420,162**	10,701,418
Social security costs	**929,107**	894,871
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	**343,041**	359,517
Agency staff	**3,010,834**	1,907,756
Apprenticeship Levy	**32,642**	33,846
	15,735,786	13,897,408

Company	**2023**	2022
	£	£
Staff costs		
Wages and salaries	**9,843,076**	9,899,107
Social security costs	**806,001**	778,395
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	**311,419**	331,596
Agency staff	**2,654,704**	1,875,791
Apprenticeship Levy	**32,642**	33,846
	13,647,842	12,918,735

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Employee information (continued)

The number of employees in the Group and Company whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	2	-
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	-	1
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	2	2
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	1	-

The total amount of employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) received by key management personnel during the period was £470,351.

During the year no Trustee received any remuneration, benefits in kind or reimbursement of expenses (2022: £nil).

8. Net incoming resources

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Group Depreciation on tangible owned fixed assets	**271,751**	287,110
(Profit)/Loss on revaluation of investments	**(225,062)**	(164,436)
Interest and dividends receivable	**(112,541)**	(78,613)
Auditors' remuneration - audit	**21,600**	18,000
(Profit)/Loss on disposal of tangible assets	**(10,441)**	11,738

9. Taxation

The group is exempt from taxation due to its charitable status as approved by the Inland Revenue and Revenue Commissioners. No tax is therefore payable on the surplus for the year (2022: nil).

10. Auditors' remuneration

	2023	2022
	£	£
Fees payable to the company's auditor for the audit of the group and subsidiary annual accounts	**21,600**	18,000

Notes to the accounts (continued)

11. Tangible fixed assets

Group tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings £	Fixtures & fittings & computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2022	3,693,369	803,539	142,869	4,639,777
Additions	21,584	79,080	-	100,664
Disposals	(101,640)	(3,288)	-	(104,928)
At 31 March 2023	**3,613,313**	**879,331**	**142,869**	**4,635,513**
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2022	1,766,495	467,400	124,334	2,358,229
Charge for the year	96,930	163,736	11,085	271,751
Disposals	(26,868)	(1,065)	-	(27,933)
At 31 March 2022	**1,836,557**	**630,071**	**135,419**	**2,602,047**
Net book values				
At 31 March 2023	**1,776,756**	**249,260**	**7,450**	**2,033,466**
At 1 April 2022	1,926,875	336,139	18,535	2,281,546

Company tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings £	Fixtures & fittings & computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2022	2,855,219	774,158	141,669	3,771,046
Transfer – Croft Communities	791,064	19,716	752	811,532
Additions	20,644	71,280	-	91,924
Disposals	(88,185)	-	-	(88,185)
At 31 March 2023	**3,578,742**	**865,154**	**142,421**	**4,583,317**
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2022	1,748,070	458,631	124,074	2,330,775
Charge for the year	80,786	157,866	10,897	249,549
Disposals	(26,870)	(603)	-	27,473
At 31 March 2023	**1,801,986**	**615,894**	**134,971**	**2,552,851**
Net book values				
At 31 March 2023	**1,776,756**	**249,260**	**7,450**	**2,033,466**
At 1 April 2022	1,107,149	315,527	17,595	1,440,271

Notes to the accounts (continued)

12. Investments

	2023
	£
Investments at market value at 1 April 2022	3,149,709
Investment income reinvested	-
Purchase of investments	-
Disposal of investments	-
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation and realisation	(225,062)
Investments at market value at 31 March 2023	**2,924,647**

During the year the Cedar Foundation did not purchase any additional shares in the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund. At 31 March 2023 The Cedar Foundation held 199,913 shares valued at 1,463.96 pence per share (2022: 1,575.54 pence per share) in the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities. This revaluation resulted in a £225,062 decrease in market value. The historic cost of the total investments held at the year end was £2,500,000 (2022: £2,500,000).

13. Debtors

	Group 2023	Group 2022	**Company 2023**	Company 2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Amounts falling due within one year:				
Trade debtors	**1,701,131**	1,187,695	**1,701,131**	1,118,007
Other debtors	**380,488**	289,145	**380,488**	269,717
Prepayments and accrued income	**224,886**	205,802	**224,886**	173,725
Grants receivable	**393,938**	641,073	**393,938**	572,331
	2,700,444	2,323,714	**2,700,444**	2,133,781

14. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2023	Group 2022	**Company 2023**	Company 2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Trade creditors	**432,654**	442,455	**432,654**	409,993
Other taxation and social security	**196,415**	190,153	**196,415**	189,615
Other creditors	**143,753**	152,959	**143,753**	135,246
Accruals and deferred income	**515,661**	876,966	**517,251**	760,941
	1,288,483	1,662,532	**1,290,073**	1,495,795

Notes to the accounts (continued)

15. Deferred income

Included in accruals and deferred income is deferred income of £190,684 (2022: £483,772) for the Group, and £190,684 (2022: £483,772) for the Company. Deferred income comprises deferred grants and income for services to be provided after the year end.

16. Analysis of funds

Analysis of funds by type – Group

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains/ (Losses)	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£		£
Unrestricted funds						
Designated funds						
Fixed Asset Reserve	2,281,549	-	-	-	(248,081)	2,033,468
Sustainability	6,504,647	-	-	-	-	6,504,647
Service Development	1,651,635	-	-	-	218	1,651,853
Day centre reserve	471,193	-	-	-	-	471,193
General funds						
General Funds	748,392	15,921,587	(15,484,179)	(669,258)	671,678	1,188,219
Fair value reserve	649,709	-	-	-	(225,062)	424,647
Total unrestricted funds	12,307,125	15,921,587	(15,484,179)	(669,258)	198,753	12,274,027
Restricted funds						
Supporting people - Cedar	-	1,998,352	(2,512,628)	514,276	-	-
Supporting People - Croft	-	460,167	(615,149)	154,982	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	2,458,519	(3,127,777)	669,258	-	-
Total funds	12,307,125	18,380,106	(18,611,956)	-	198,753	12,274,027

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Analysis of funds by type - Company

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Gains/ (Losses) and revaluations	Extra-ordinary donation	At 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds							
Designated funds							
Fixed Asset Reserve	1,440,271	-	-	-	(248,081)	841,276	2,033,466
Sustainability	4,910,638	-	-	560,000	-	823,946	6,294,584
Service Development	1,362,694	-	-	-	-	762,998	2,125,692
General funds							
General Funds	1,155,343	13,668,672	(13,591,837)	(1,074,276)	748,511	566,060	1,395,638
Fair value reserve	649,709	-	-	-	(225,062)	-	424,647
Total unrestricted funds	9,518,655	13,668,672	(13,591,837)	(514,276)	275,368	2,994,280	12,274,027
Restricted funds							
Supporting people	-	1,998,352	(2,512,628)	514,276	-	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	1,998,352	(2,512,628)	514,276	-	-	-
Total funds	9,518,655	15,667,024	(16,104,465)	-	275,368	2,994,280	12,274,027

Designated Funds

Fixed asset reserve

This fund represents the net book value of all the Charity's fixed assets. The Fund is then utilised to offset the impact on the general fund of the depreciation charged on the relevant assets.

Sustainability reserves

The Trustees of The Cedar Foundation have a liquidity based approach to reserves which results in the charity holding reserves mainly in cash and easily realisable investments. As a risk averse organisation, the reserves strategy is closely aligned to the organisation's risk register and as such, a significant percentage of the reserves, in the region of 75%, are held in this fund to ensure continuing operations, particularly in relation to fluctuations in cash flow.

Each service area has been assessed for risk, particularly in relation to how payments by funders affect the cash flow. The Sustainability Reserves Fund aims to retain the equivalent value of 6 months of salary costs for each service area. At each year end calculations are undertaken to monitor the percentage of sustainable reserves against actual salary costs. Appropriations and/or adjustments are made from year end surplus to those areas within the fund which require additional provision due to increases or decreases in requirements against the 6-month benchmark. The sustainability reserve has priority over the service development reserve in the event of limited year end surplus and appropriations.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Day Centre Reserve

The trustees of Croft Communities made a decision to open a day centre reserve fund whereby they set aside funds to go towards the building of a day centre.

16. Analysis of funds (continued)

Service Development reserves

The Trustees also recognise that a proportion of its reserves should also be utilised for development opportunities and for infrastructure and capital investment in order to remain competitive in an increasingly challenging environment, particularly with the need for competitive tendering for our services. Within the Service Development Fund, appropriations of general surplus are currently made within the following areas at year end depending on requirements during that particular financial year and known or planned expenditure in the incoming year.

Analysis of funds by net asset type - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	2,033,466	-	2,033,466
Fixed asset investments	2,924,647	-	2,924,647
Current assets	8,604,397	-	8,604,397
Creditors due within one year	(1,288,483)	-	(1,288,483)
Total	12,274,027	-	12,274,027

Analysis of funds by net asset type - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	2,281,546	-	2,281,546
Fixed asset investments	3,149,709	-	3,149,709
Current assets	8,538,402	-	8,538,402
Creditors due within one year	(1,662,532)	-	(1,662,532)
Total	12,307,125	-	12,307,125

Notes to the accounts (continued)

17. Contingent liabilities

A contingent liability exists to repay grants received, where certain conditions have not been fulfilled by the company. In the opinion of the Trustees, the terms of the letters of offer have been complied with and no liability is expected.

18. Guarantors

The company is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of guarantors is limited to £1 in the event of the company being wound up.

19. Control

The company is controlled by a Board of Trustees.

20. Related Party transactions

During the year there were a number of transactions with related parties. All transactions were undertaken on an arm's length basis in furtherance of the company's charitable capabilities. The following amounts were paid during the year:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Volunteer Now	**2,334**	201
North Down Community Network	**-**	2,280
Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment	**582**	500
Confederation of Community Groups (rental of premises)	**18,858**	18,476
Aspirico UK Limited	**71,016**	-

21. Extraordinary item - Donation

On 31 March 2023, Croft Communities merged with The Cedar Foundation, all assets and liabilities were transferred to The Cedar Foundation as of this date by way of an Extraordinary Donation. This transfer is treated within these financial statements as an "Extraordinary Item - Donation" in the amount of £2,994,280. This donation is made up of the transfer of the following assets and liabilities which have been included within each of the relevant headings above:

	£
Fixed Assets	811,532
Debtors	448,422
Creditors	(130,124)
Bank	1,864,450
	2,994,280

22. Covid-19 related grants

Special recognition payments were recognised from Business Services Organisation and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive during the year totalling £9,020 and £3,075 respectively to cover staff payments and administration costs.

In addition, we recognised similar amounts from the South-Eastern Health and Social Care Trust of £9,082 (2022: £100,164) and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust of £2,708 (2022: £144,920), which were Covid-19 related grants to cover expenditure incurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Cedar Foundation

Northern Ireland - Charity number 101121

Annual report

The Cedar Foundation

Annual report and consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Registered No: NI 002132
Charity number: NIC 101121

Annual report

Trustees and advisers

Trustees

Company registered number
NI 002132

Charity registered number
NIC 101121

Auditors

ASM (B) Ltd
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors
Glendinning House, 6 Murray Street
Belfast
BT1 6DN

Chief Executive Officer

Mrs Elaine Armstrong

Solicitors

Tughans
30 Victoria Street
Belfast
BT1 3GG

Bankers

Danske Bank
Donegall Square West
Belfast
BT1 5JS

Registered Office and Head Office

1 Ravenhill Reach
Ormeau Embankment
Belfast
BT6 8RB

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)

The Trustees present their report and the audited accounts for the period ended 31 March 2023.

Objectives and Activities

a. Policies and objectives

The Cedar Foundation (Cedar) delivers a range of services throughout Northern Ireland in partnership with disabled people enabling them to get the most out of life and to be fully included in their communities. Our services are centred around the individual needs of each person to promote choice, opportunity, independence and equality.

Our **Vision** is an inclusive society for all.

Our **Mission** is to support individuals and families living with disability, autism and brain injury to live the lives they choose.

Our **Values**:

- Collaboration
  We are committed to ensuring our services are developed in partnership. We believe we work at our best in active collaboration with our service users, staff and partners.
- Equality
  We recognise the importance of a diverse and inclusive community, and we will make certain that everyone has an equal opportunity to make a contribution, and this is valued.
- Dignity
  We guarantee that dignity is at the centre of high-quality, person-centred support and our services are delivered with respect, care and compassion.
- Achievement
  We believe in ensuring that everyone involved in our organisation can achieve their full potential. Our ambition is to be recognised for our ability to deliver at an individual, team and organisational level.
- Resilience
  We are an adaptable, forward thinking and resilient organisation that sees difficult situations as an opportunity. We promote creativity and innovation, supporting each other to have the individual and collective strength to achieve this.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our 5-year Strategic Plan 2021-2026: Opportunity, Choice, Inclusion, was co-produced with service users, families and staff and aligned with current strategic direction. It takes cognisance of the voices of all our stakeholders and a review of performance data. It captures our ambitions for impact, the strategic context we are working within and is designed to embrace the changes we are likely to face over the next 5 years.

Strategic Aims and Priorities for 2022/2023:

- Individuals and families live the lives they choose, supported by our co-produced person-centred services
- Our resources are managed and allocated in a transparent manner to enable us to develop and deliver exceptional services
- We work to the highest possible standards and continuously improve the organisation ensuring we meet customer/stakeholder needs
- We are a competent and resilient organisation that is responsive to changing need and committed to innovation and excellence

Cedar is one of the largest disability charities in Northern Ireland. This year we supported 2,560 people with a disability to participate in the life of their community. Our services include a range of living options; including supported living, residential care, at-home housing support; and employability and community inclusion services for all ages, including family support and transitional planning for children and young people. We have specialist services to meet the needs of physical/sensory disability, learning disability, autism and brain injury. All our services are designed to enable each individual to reach their full potential and to provide an appropriate level of support to individuals, families and the wider community enabling inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life.

Through all of the services we provide we are working towards fulfilling our mission and realising our vision of an inclusive society for all.

c. Main activities undertaken to further the charity's purposes for the public benefit

Cedar provides direct public benefit through the development and delivery of a range of inclusion services to disabled adults and children throughout Northern Ireland.

Employability services provide person centred opportunities and disability specialist support through, employability skills training, access to Further and Higher Education, career advice, work experience placements and support to service users to secure and maintain work roles. The benefits arising from these services include targeting social need, facilitating service users to become more included in society and more economically active through engagement with the labour market.

Children and Young People Community Inclusion Services provide support to give the best start in life and improve outcomes. We work in partnership with a range of agencies to create an inclusive world for disabled children, young people and their families. Services source and support opportunities to engage in community-based activities. Other supports include the provision of an early intervention service to assist young service users to achieve their full potential when transitioning from school to Further or Higher Education, training or employment. The Youth Matters programme assists service users under the age of 18 to have improved access to inclusive community and youth activities which will impact on their general health and wellbeing and support them to be active citizens.

Adult Community Inclusion Services promote peer support and meaningful community engagement for disabled people. Cedar's Inclusion Matters programme, specialist services for Autism (Right 4U☺) and Brain Injury (Choices & ARROW) supports people with disabilities to become equal citizens within their local communities increasing their social, economic and civic inclusion. These services focus on building the strengths and capacities of people with disabilities to engage with and contribute to their local community.

Living Options is designed to meet the individual needs of people who have brain injury, physical disability and sensory impairment, and for people who have learning disabilities, and autism. Types of accommodation include Supported Living in independent apartments or bungalows, registered residential homes providing 24-hour care and housing support services. The benefits from these services are delivering a person-centred housing support and care service to enhance independent living skills; enabling individuals to have more control of their lives; and helping users to achieve improvements in personal wellbeing, health and personal safety. Floating/Housing support services benefit service users by building the skills to have independence in maintaining tenancies, being safe and well, enhanced self-esteem and living fulfilling lives.

The benefits of all of the services provided can be demonstrated through the use of ServQual (service user satisfaction tool), independent evaluations and feedback from funders and purchasers through contract review meetings. Cedar measures impact on individual soft outcomes through a validated self-report distance travelled tool, Outcome Star. Cedar is committed to quality improvement; having previously won the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) European and All Ireland excellence awards. Cedar is ISO 9001:2015 accredited, is an Investors in People recognised organisation, achieving Platinum Standard, and has maintained Investors in Volunteers certification.

Review of activities

The current 5-year Strategic Plan was adopted at the June 2021 Trustees' meeting. A mid-year review of performance and strategic alignment for the 2022/2023 operational year was conducted by the Executive Board, User Forum and SMT in November 2022.

We have delivered successfully on Year 2 under the guidance and good governance of our Trustees and advisors in partnership with the User Forum, Leadership and Senior Management team, underpinned with an operational staff team that have been properly resourced, trained, developed, and supported to deliver quality front-line and corporate support services.

Achievements and performance

Overall, the period under review whilst challenging, was very successful. The collective commitment and dedication of all the staff team has delivered excellent results during a period of change and external pressures in the Health and Social Care work context. The organisational performance is demonstrated through the review of the Balanced Scorecard for the 2022/2023 year, which was monitored quarterly with the Executive Board and SMT.

(i) Performance and Compliance

Finance

- Turnover meeting target to sustain all services
  While staff recruitment and retention remain a challenge and agency usage has remained high throughout the year in registered services, commissioned hours for each service have been delivered resulting in no loss of income
- Introduction of Financial Improvement Plans (FIP) to prepare for a new commissioning landscape in Employment & Community Inclusion and to improve income and expenditure controls in Living Options post covid.
- 100% compliance sustained from all external auditing authorities, including DoE, ESF, DfC & DoH.
- Compliance with Charity Commission NI and Article 55 reporting deadlines.

Customer

- Service delivery target met, providing a service to 2,560 disabled people and their families in year across 31 services
- Very high service user satisfaction results sustained (98%)
- Sustained high level of positive service impact on both soft and hard outcome measures
- Successful completion of the final ESF funded programme – Inclusion Works with positive closure report demonstrating all performance targets met.

Internal Processes

- Low complaint volumes with local resolutions achieved in most cases
- Sustained level of compliments and positive feedback
- No significant areas for improvement or requirements noted in RQIA inspections throughout 2022/23 for all regulated services
- Achieved full HSCT and NIHE Supporting People contractual compliance requirements
- Inclusion Works received the highest possible outcome from Education & Training Inspectorate (ETI), with participant feedback which "*referenced the positive impact of the project on the development of their employability skills, social inclusion, and preparation for work, with some of them describing the impact as 'life changing' and 'lifesaving'.*"
- Continued compliance with GDPR and in all areas of record keeping, new records management system implemented across the organisation for data retention
- High level compliance with ISO standards achieving full re-accreditation process in January 2023

Organisational Capacity

- Investors in People Platinum status, which we are particularly proud of in a time of challenge and change. This positions Cedar within the top 1% of IiP accredited organisations.
- 85% staff satisfaction in overall view of Cedar Foundation
- 98% of staff reported that their training needs were addressed in year
- 100% staff report that they feel equipped to meet job requirements
- DoH funding secured to provide QCF training to link into succession planning within Cedar.
- Investing in-house to develop Cedar Trainers for CPI Safety Intervention training and Outcome Star practitioners
- Targeted social media campaigns directed by the 2022/23 Strategic Communications Action Plan
- SMT involvement in sector wide consultations on MCA, Mental Health Strategy, NISCC Workforce Review, Review of Regional Resettlement of People with Learning Disabilities, DfC Employment Strategy
- European Network engagement with European Platform on Rehabilitation (EPR) in year with a number of attendances and contributions made at webinars and the annual conference.

(ii) Service Developments

Employability and Community Inclusion Services

- External review of Cedar's Employment Service model to advise on reconfiguration of service models and signpost to new and emerging funding opportunities for future sustainability.
- Targeted, strategic lobbying work as a sector and individual organisation, to raise the awareness of the impact of loss of EU funding in NI
- Engagement with Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department of Economy and UK Department of Levelling-up, Communities & Housing to shape development of disability employment services in NI for post-ESF provision for employment and inclusion services for disabled people
- Successful collaborative bid with 7 partners submitted to UK Shared Prosperity Fund for new SkillSET employment programme for 2023-25
- Conducted service reviews of Short Breaks respite service and Choices Brain Injury Service to promote future sustainability and procurement processes
- Using a comprehensive project initiation plan, implementation of the ARROW Social Inclusion programme for adults with Brain Injury

Living Options Services

- Completion of the merger between Croft Communities Ltd subsidiary organisation and Cedar. Guided by a comprehensive integration milestone plan, incorporating a TUPE process, financial, legal and governance work.

Corporate Services

- Leadership Capacity Review resulting in a newly established Finance Directorate and a People and Organisational Development Directorate. This reflects the growth of the organisation and requirement to provide a high level of support to the wider organisation, adapting to change and ensuring that resource management and policy adherence is operated to the highest standards of compliance and governance.

  BSI external auditor quote (January 2023):
  "The effectiveness of the management system would be deemed to be very high. Each service/function has clear linkage to the strategic direction through the work plans, P&Ds and departmental scorecards and service improvement plans. The revised organisation structure and the dispersed leadership model have enhanced the effectiveness of the Quality Management Systems"

(iii) Innovation Work

Mental Health and Wellbeing

A Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy was launched in May 2022 with a 'task and finish' improvement team representing all services. This was aligned to the DoH strategy with actions to address: early intervention and prevention; right support at the right time; new ways of working. The Cedar Team delivered on all action plan goals in year, including providing a wide range of resources on the Staff Hub, promotion of Westfield Health Care benefits and 9 newly appointed and trained Mental Health First Aiders available to staff.

Digitalisation (DX)

The DX Strategy provides a framework to capture a range of innovations across the organisation, ensuring equity of roll out and consistency of practice. It also provides assurance on cost control and governance in implementing new initiatives. The initiatives reflect new ways of working, a commitment to smarter and paperless practices:

1. Equals cards across Cedar and Croft with associated on-line training to move away from handling cash across sites.
2. Online payslips for staff
3. Roll out of Lightyear, online invoicing and payment system. This included testing, training and trouble shooting and establishing Lightyear Champions for on-going support. Project roll out was commendable from start to finish and an example of co-production through design, piloting and refinement.
4. Research and development of a business case for an integrated HR and Payroll system.
5. Design and implementation of a new Sharepoint system, called Cedar Hub
6. Design of a service user data information management system for the high volume of service users across a range of services in ECI. A test site is ready in anticipation of full implementation next year.
7. Roll out of email licences to Living Options staff for organisation-wide digital accessibility

Coproduction

The Coproduction Strategy aligned to the organisation strategic plan 2021-2026 has guided a more targeted approach to embedding this practice in all areas of our work. For example, an Innovation Team has drawn on the experience of a wide range of Cedar stakeholders to jointly draft a lifespan service pathway for our key service user groups (brain injury, autism, learning disability, physical disability, d/Deaf, Blind) to highlight Cedar support at all milestone stages. Consultation and active workshop participation took place with Service Users, Carers, Staff, SMT and Executive Board.

People & Organisational Development (POD)

The POD Strategy is an ambitious map of actions to build organisational capacity, ensuring a positive people experience for those who work in Cedar and supporting our people to live our values and recognising when they do this well. One achievement in year was the bi-annual staff and volunteer STAR Awards hosted to recognise and reward exceptional commitment and contribution to the organisation. The event was attended by over 100 staff, volunteers, Executive Committee and User Forum members and recognised those involved in Cedar who consistently go above and beyond in their role. There were five overall Winners across four categories, a further nine Judges' Commendations and two special recognition 'Shirley Jackson' awards presented to staff who had made a significant impact to services 'behind the scenes'. Long service in the organisation was recognised for 19 staff with over 20 years' service, and 3 staff over 30 years' service to Cedar.

(iv) User Forum

The User Forum (Forum) has continued to ensure the voice of Cedar service users is represented throughout the organisation. This is achieved through the core functions of **consultation, advocacy**, and **recruitment**.

The seven regional forum groups met monthly within their respective Health and Social Care Trust localities, using a blended approach of online and in person arrangements. The Forum engaged quarterly with the Chief Executive to appraise and inform the Executive Committee on matters about user involvement.

Consultation: The Forum advocated on the needs of people with disabilities through consultation to Government, actively engaging in key issues such as the Department for Communities Disability Strategy, Reform of Adult Social Care, Assistive Technology, Autism Strategy and the Proposed Closure of Muckamore Abbey Hospital (Department of Health). The Forum continues to advocate at regional and local level on matters pertaining to disability seeking to promote opportunity, choice, and inclusion. For example, consultations on Equality and Disability Plans for local Health and Social Care Trusts, Councils and Public Sector agencies alongside service specific reviews.

Furthermore, the Forum have engaged in consultation to review their accessibility arrangements for people with disabilities. Highlights include the environmental accessibility arrangements at City of Derry Airport and the Northern Ireland Assembly. Digital accessibility for the Warm Home Scheme, Consumer Hub, and the Patient Client Council. This high-level on-going engagement reflects how the Forum advocate and remain focused on making a positive difference to the lives of disabled people.

Advocacy: Forum members actively engaged in supporting us to ensure that Co-production is embedded in all our work. Members of the Forum presented at the launch of Cedar's Coproduction Strategy in July 2022 Coproduction week. User Forum members have supported the co-production and co-delivery of our Disability Awareness Training sessions both internally and externally.

Recruitment: Currently 19 (40%) members of the Forum are trained in recruitment and selection, enabling members to sit on interview panels. In 2022/2023, 11% of interview panels had User Forum members participating in the recruitment and selection of Cedar staff.

Through all its activities, the Forum continues to ensure that service users are at the core of Cedar's governance structures.

(v) Covid-19

In May 2023, the World Health Organisation announced that 'Covid-19 is now an established and on-going health issue which no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern.' During the 22/23 year Cedar still experienced impact from covid-related disruptions. Our practice was proportionate to living with the new circumstances, while maintaining safe working environments by:

- Ensuring essential support and delivery of commissioned hours is provided throughout the evolving Covid-19 situation, including the successful handling of Covid-19 outbreaks, maintaining levels of service provision, managing safe staffing levels in light of a sector wide workforce crisis.
- Regular management briefings to ensure effective and efficient response to change ensuring essential services are delivered.
- Regular staff briefings/meeting to provide essential support.
- Development, implementation and review of Covid-19 Contingency Planning and Risk Assessments for services.
- Securing and supplying adequate resources and PPE supplies.
- Co-ordination and submission of compliance reports to Trusts/funders
- Support to progress agile working, where appropriate.

Cedar have worked in partnership with commissioners and funders as our work has continued to be influenced by changing aspects of the pandemic with needs met in a way that reflected the developing circumstances and prioritising those most at risk. This encompassed site risk assessments, staff and service user risk assessments, enhanced training for staff, service users and volunteers with rigorous infection control measures specific to each service area. In particular ensuring access to vaccination and testing in our Living Options services to minimise outbreaks and impact for the most vulnerable in these facilities.

Financial performance & Risk Management

a) Financial Review

From a financial perspective, the year was a successful one, with all resources applied to achieve our Vision of ***an inclusive society for all***.

During the year, the organisation's incoming resources increased by 0.45% to £15,667,024. Total expenditure increased by 5.59% to £16,104,465 resulting in a deficit of £437,441. This was a decrease on the previous year's surplus of £344,574.

Our investments were valued at £2,924,647 in line with SORP recommendations, thereby further decreasing our funds by £225,062.

In order to strengthen the sustainability of our work, the Trustees approved the designation of £560,000 (2022: £400,000) of free reserve to sustainability reserves as outlined at Note 16 of the financial statements.

An effective reserves base is essential for the organisation to continue to manage risk. Our free reserves now stand at £12,274,027 the equivalent of 9.15 months' expenditure compared to 7.49 months for the previous year. This is ahead of the sector benchmark of 6 months but reflects the organisation's exposure to risk and need to underpin future service development in the face of cost and revenue pressures.

The Trustees believe that the group remains in a good financial position. The main financial risks the Trustees have identified are outlined in the Principal Risks and Uncertainties section of this report.

b) Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

c) Financial risk management objectives and policies

The Cedar Foundation, now including Croft Communities, manages all its financial risks through a series of controls and maintenance of a Risk Register. This is reviewed on a quarterly basis and presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their consideration.

The Risk Register defines individual risks on the basis of their likelihood and significance to the organisation. The risk management processes are clearly defined and agreed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, including the charity's Reserve Policy as a key part of those processes. The risk is segmented on the basis of sustainability costs in the event of shortfall or of withdrawal of funding and in relation to services where there is financial uncertainty or no revenue for operations in year.

d) Principal risks and uncertainties

The Cedar Foundation Risk Management Policy, which incorporates Croft Communities, states that the Trustees and Management Team recognise it is impossible to remove all risk, but effective, practicable risk management ensure Cedar maximises opportunities in pursuit of its' Vision and minimises the risks to which it may be exposed. In doing so we aim to enhance our ability to deliver the best possible outcomes for the people that depend on our services. Achievement of Cedar's Risk Management objectives requires the collective support and active participation of Trustees, the Senior Management Team, all employees and partner organisations. At all levels, there is a need for understanding the nature of risk and the acceptance of responsibility for control of risks. Management of risk is a continuous and dynamic process which is kept under regular review.

The principal commercial, operational and financial risks that we have identified as having a serious potential impact on the performance and future prospects or reputation of the organisation are set out in our Corporate Risk Register, as follows:

1. Children or adults at risk of being harmed while accessing a Cedar service.
2. Service delivery model fails to be strategically aligned.
3. Insufficient funds to sustain core services.
4. Full cost recovery not achieved.
5. Not adapting to and resourcing digital innovation.
6. Lack of growth in Physical Disability/ABI Services due to underdevelopment of services.
7. Non-compliance with legal requirements resulting in fine/compensation payments.
8. Cyberattack or other breach of ICT infrastructure.
9. Non-compliance with regulatory or contract requirements resulting in suspension of service.
10. Insufficient staffing levels to deliver services safely.
11. Not attracting and retaining staff who share the values of Cedar/Croft.
12. Negative publicity impacting reputation of the organisation.
13. Incident resulting in death or serious injury as a result of failure to operate safe systems of work.

The Executive Committee and Senior Management Team are satisfied that appropriate actions have been identified and taken so that these risks are managed effectively. The Risk Management Policy, including risk appetite, is reviewed every 3 years and was last updated in March 2023. This is communicated across the organisation within our ISO 9001 Quality Management System.

The Corporate Risk Register is subject to quarterly review. In addition, a full annual review took place with updated risks in March 2023 to reflect the current work context and changes in the working environment. A Strategic Risk Scoring Matrix is prepared and linked directly to the residual risks. This uses a RAG rating, Red, Amber, Green. All new mitigating actions to reduce, transfer or remove risk are captured in the Risk Register Action Plan and subject to quarterly review.

An Assurance Map is prepared based on the three lines of Defence Model, outlining the information collection and reporting arrangements at each assurance level. This process is undertaken by the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis through continual monitoring of the Risk Register Action Plan, which is included in quarterly Executive Committee Governance documents.

e) Principal funding
To fund our work Cedar Foundation relies on fees and grants through various Statutory and Government Departments. A range of other funding partners such as Community Fund, Charitable Trusts and Foundations as well as donations from the general public, companies and investment income.

f) Investment policy and performance
The Executive Committee take a risk averse approach to all investments. During the year the Committee decided to maintain its investment of shares in the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities at £2,500,000. The year end value of the shares totalled £2,924,647 (2022: £3,149,709).

g) Financial situation as a result of Covid-19
The financial implications of Covid-19 remain under review. As Cedar's income is principally derived from contract and grant aid specific to the services provided, reviews focused on the following:

1. Sustaining service delivery for residents and tenants of Cedar.
2. Active engagement with service commissioners with regard to alternative ways of working where relevant and the consequential impact on service targets/Service Level Agreements (e.g. in delivering Day Care/Day Opportunities support).
3. Negotiation with commissioners for additional resources/financial support to cover additional Covid-19 expenditure (e.g. infection control resources, staff absences).
4. Continuous reviews conducted within Cedar SMT to consider any financial or operational uncertainties emerging as a result of Covid-19.

Structure, governance and management

a) Constitution
The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company is recognised as a charity by HM Revenue & Customs under reference number XN47377 and registered with the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland No. NIC101121.

The principal object, for which the company is established, is to undertake and to join with others in undertaking the provision of services for disabled adults and children in Northern Ireland and to work in partnership with disabled adults and children and to develop services that promote choice, opportunity, independence and equality.

b) Method of appointment or election of Directors

The Executive Committee is elected by the Members of the Association. The Executive Committee are the Charity's Trustees and the legal directors of the company. Members of the Executive Committee serve for a 3 year term, after which they are eligible for re-election.

c) Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

It is company policy to provide an induction programme for newly appointed directors to acquaint them with the organisation's policy and practice, its aims and objectives, management and governance and also what is expected of them under charity law. This is supported by a comprehensive Governance Manual (updated in November 2022). A comprehensive training workshop based on the Governance Manual, the principles of good governance and Cedar's policies and procedures was delivered to new members when they joined in year. A refresher session for all Trustees was carried out in December 2021. The refresher is due to be repeated in 3-yearly cycles.

The Executive Committee meets every three months with occasional ad-hoc meetings for exceptional business as required. The constitution of the Executive Committee is kept under review with regard to the appropriate skills and expertise that are required to lead the organisation. The Governance Manual includes a schedule of matters, including a scheme of delegation, outline of committee structures and delegated powers, role descriptions of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Executive Committee members and CEO.

d) Organisational structure and decision making

The 2022 Governance Manual Review and training ensured that the Board and its Committees are fit for purpose as the organisation continues to evolve.

The Group Committee Structure consists of a Finance & General Purposes Committee, Audit Sub-committee, 2 Executive Review Panels and a Croft Advisory Panel.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee concentrates on Corporate Services matters, such as internal and external financial reporting, investment, risk register, property and infrastructure resources (e.g. ICT), Human Resources, organisational development (e.g. quality accreditation such as Investors In People). The Audit Sub-Committee meets to plan the Audits and receive the Auditor's Report. There is a clear separation between Croft Communities Ltd and Cedar Foundation Group Accounts.

By contrast, the Executive Review Panels and Croft Advisory Panel concentrate on operational issues relating to specific areas of operation. The Employment and Community Inclusion Panel and Living Options Panel reflect the two areas of operations for the Cedar Foundation Group. The Croft Advisory Panel meets to specifically review the work of Croft Communities Ltd. The Cedar Executive Review Panel for Croft business is the Living Options Executive Review Panel.

The business transacted at the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Executive Panel meetings is reported to the Cedar Group Executive Committee at the subsequent scheduled meeting. The Board of Cedar Foundation Group subscribe to the seven principles of Public Life, included in the organisation's Governance Manual and are part of the Organisation's induction and governance training.

During the 2022/2023 year Cedar's Executive Committee met 4 times to review progress and plan for the organisation on the following dates:

21st June 2022
27th September 2022
13th December 2022
14th March 2023

The Finance & General Purposes Committee met to provide scrutiny and support in audit and risk matters on the following dates:

8th June 2022
21st September 2022
30th November 2022
1st March 2023

There is an annual Croft Communities Ltd Board of Directors meeting to present and review all aspects of governance and performance in line with the NI Charity Commission for NI regulations. This was last held on 14th March 2023.

e) Risk Management

Cedar Foundation Group, including Croft Communities, operates a formal Risk Management Process culminating in a Corporate Risk Register that identifies key risks, their likelihood, impact and the consequent actions necessary to manage them effectively. In the last year, Croft Communities have been fully scoped into the overall Cedar Foundation Risk Management system, reflected in the annual review conducted in March 2023.

Whenever possible, we identify ways of providing independent assurance against the management of each risk. Corporate risks, mitigating actions and risk assurance map are scrutinised quarterly by the Senior Management Team, the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Cedar Executive Board.

Plan for future periods

The organisation has a clear course set for the future through its Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026.

This reflects a vision of 'an inclusive society for all' and our mission 'supporting individuals and families living with disability, autism and brain injury to live the lives they choose'. Our core values of Collaboration, Equality, Dignity, Achievement, Resilience, will continue to underpin everything we do as they are key to the success of the organisation.

The Strategic Objectives to support the delivery of our vision in 2023/2024:

- Individuals and families live the lives they choose, supported by our co-produced person-centred services.
- Our resources are managed and allocated in a transparent manner to enable us to develop and deliver exceptional services.
- We work to the highest possible standards and continuously improve the organisation ensuring we meet customer/stakeholder needs.
- We are a competent and resilient organisation that is responsive to changing need and committed to innovation and excellence.

Key developments in support of these objectives for the incoming period will include:

- **Digitalisation:** A focus on the use and application of digital technology to enhance the digital inclusion of people with disabilities and efficiency of business processes.
- **Co-production:** working practices enhanced to promote opportunities for the service user voice in the planning, delivery and review of service experience
- **People & Organisational Development:** Building the capacity of staff to collectively respond to new ways of working, including an emphasis on health and wellbeing of all our people. Completion of the Croft/Cedar integration plan, including moving towards scoping Croft into the ISO quality management accreditation.

Going forward, we have clear actions agreed within these 3 Innovation Themes listed above. Staff from across the organisation are actively engaged in and collectively leading forward to improve how we do things. We are building on a strong position of being well-informed, knowing what excellence looks like and committed to remaining as a provider of choice in the disability sector. This gives a strong foundation for continued learning and shared practice to achieve the outcomes of the organisation objectives set out in the Strategic Plan 2026.

Members Liability

The Foundation is a company limited by guarantee. Every member undertakes to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1, to the company's assets if it should be wound up while being a member, or within one year of ceasing to be a member.

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

The Cedar Executive Committee of Trustees (who are also the Directors of the Cedar Foundation for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with the applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resource, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statement on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation

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

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Directors at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- the Directors have taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as Directors in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, ASM (B) Ltd, will be proposed for reappointment in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.
This report was approved by the Trustees on 26 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Mrs Elaine Armstrong, Chief Executive
26 September 2023

The Cedar Foundation

Northern Ireland - Charity number 101121

Annual return

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Cedar Foundation (the 'parent company') and its subsidiaries (the 'Group') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise: the consolidated and company statements of financial activities; the consolidated and company balance sheets; the consolidated statement of cash flows; and the related notes. 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 company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of the Group's and the parent company's incoming resources and application of resources, including the Group's and the parent company's income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) (ISAs) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom and Ireland, including the Financial Reporting Council'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

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs require us to report to you where:

- the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Group's or the parent company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation (continued)

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and auditors

The Trustees are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion 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 Executive Committee Report including the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Executive Committee Report, including the Strategic Report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Cedar Foundation (continued)

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 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 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 Auditors' 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 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:

We considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: timing of recognition of income; and posting of unusual journals along with complex transactions. We discussed these risks with client management, designed audit procedures to test the timing of income, tested a sample of journals to confirm they were appropriate and reviewed areas of judgement for indicators of management bias to address these risks.

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 Auditors' Report.

Use of our report

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

Brian Clerkin (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
ASM (B) Ltd
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
Glendinning House
6 Murray Street
Belfast
BT1 6DN

26 September 2023

ASM (B) Ltd are eligible to act as auditors in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.