Voice of Young People in Care

Northern Ireland · Charity number 105019

Details

Known as	VOYPIC
Status	Received
Company number	30526
Registered	2016-05-03
Register	View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register

Contact

Address	100 Great Patrick Street Belfast Bt1 2lu BT1 2LU
Phone	02890244888
Email	info@voypic.org
Website	www.voypic.org

Activities

Purposes: The Company is established for exclusively for charitable purpose namely for the advancement of education and the relief of poverty in relation to children and young people in Northern Ireland who have experience of being in and on the edge of care or being looked after by voluntary or statutory bodies and Trusts and other such public organisations (which experience is referred to in this Memorandum and Articles of Association as that of 'care') with a view to ensuring that the general welfare and interests of such children and young people are advanced.

What the charity does: The prevention or relief of poverty,The advancement of education,The advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation or the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity,The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage

How the charity works: Advice/advocacy/information,Education/training,Human rights/equality,Research/evaluation,Youth development

Who the charity helps: Children (5-13 year olds),Youth (14-25 year olds)

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Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£1,197,990	£1,208,310	£-143,936	25

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Elsa		
Josephine		
Ms Edel Doherty		
Ms Maelisa Kennedy		
Ms Sinead Campbell		
Peter Treasurer		

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Voice of Young People in Care

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105019

Accounts

Charity registration number NIC105019 (Northern Ireland)

Company registration number NI030526

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Directors	Mr P McClenaghan - Chair	
	Mrs M McCallin	
	Ms M Kennedy - Vice Chair	
	Ms E Doherty	
	Dr P McCafferty	
	Ms S Campbell	
	Dr R McCooey	
	Mr H Robinson	
	Ms E Ibrahim - Young Peoples' representative	(Appointed 16 May 2024)
	Ms J Dowell - Young Peoples' representative	(Appointed 1 June 2024)
	Mr P Allen - Treasurer	(Appointed 13 January 2025)
Secretary	Miss A Toal	
Charity number	NIC105019	
Company number	NI030526	
Registered office	100 Great Patrick Street Belfast BT1 2LU	
Auditor	GMcG Lisburn Century House 40 Crescent Business Park Lisburn BT28 2GN	
Bankers	Danske Bank Forestside Shopping Centre Upper Galwally Belfast BT8 6FX	
Solicitors	Scullion & Green 50 St Patricks Avenue Downpatrick Co Down BT30 6DW	

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

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VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The directors present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the company's Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities
Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) was established for exclusively charitable purposes; namely to ensure that the general welfare and interests of care experienced children and young people are advanced.

Mission, Vision, and Values
Created in 1993 by a group of young people in care and professionals, VOYPIC is the charity for children and young people with a lived-in experience of care in Northern Ireland. We promote the rights and voice of children in care and care leavers.

The current strategic plan focuses on four key strategic aims:

1. Empowering children and young people
2. Innovating practice through participation and co-production
3. Creating change through policy advocacy
4. Organisational growth and stability

Our Mission: Working together with children and young adults for a better care experience and life after care.

Our Vision: Every child in care in Northern Ireland feels safe, valued and loved. Every young person leaving care does so with dignity and respect, and thrives into adulthood.

OUR WORK:
Advocacy and Awareness-raising
We raise awareness of the rights of children and young people, their views and experiences living in and leaving care, and their priorities for change.

Making Connections and Capacity Building
We connect young people with a lived experience of care with their peers. We host regular groups, participation forums and activities that build self-confidence, personal, social and life skills, whilst making new connections and friends.

Independent Advocacy and Advice Service
We support young people to exercise their rights by assisting them to; participate in decision making processes, express their views and concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Youth Participation and Co-production
We help children and young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. We create a culture of listening that enables children and young people to influence the world around them. Our programmes equip and prepare young people to take part in co-production activities.

Influencing Change through Policy Advocacy
We use our specialist knowledge and insight into the views and experiences of children and young people. We work in partnership with them to influence the development of legislation, policy and practice.

OUR VALUES:
VOYPIC's work is underpinned by five core values which not only inform what we do but also how we do it.

Relationship Based: We are driven by the needs and aspirations of children and young people. We listen, learn, and work in partnership with them to ensure their voice is heard. We are dedicated to empowering young people so that they reach their potential in whatever they choose to do.

Commitment: We are committed, passionate and enthusiastic champions for change. We are persistent and determined in promoting the voice and defending the rights of children and young people in leaving care and into adulthood.

Social Justice: We work to a strong moral code rooted in ideals of social justice. We challenge the oppression and discrimination faced by children and young people in care and seek to reduce the stigma they face in their daily lives.

Respect for Rights: We respect the rights of children and young people and are prepared to challenge others to do the same.

Solution Focused: We are positive about the future. We are proud of what we do and what we have achieved. We face problems with a solution-oriented mentality, and we encourage our staff, stakeholders and young people themselves to be problem solvers.

The directors have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the company should undertake.

Achievements and performance
2024-2025 ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 our staff team consisted of **23** members.

During the year we supported **777** children and young people; **620** were supported directly through our services with **157** children and young people attending other events and activities.

444 Children and young people received support through our regional independent advocacy service.

196 Members of MyVOYPIC scheme.

157 Children and young people attended activity days.

132 Children and young people took part in participation forums.

55 Young people were supported through our independent advocacy service at Beechcroft.

52 Young adults received individual advocacy support through the Leading Change programme.

35 Children and young people received one to one support and coaching.

26 Children and young people received advocacy support through Speak Up programme.

15 young people took part in a youth leadership programme.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1. EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY SUPPORT:

VOYPIC delivers independent advocacy services to children in care and care leavers up to the age of 30 in compliance with national advocacy standards, the Advocacy Charter, and national/international human rights obligations. The services are structurally independent from statutory organisations and service delivery. Each service is free from conflict of interests in design and operation and actively seeks to reduce conflicting interests.

1. REGIONAL INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY SERVICE FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS

The Regional Independent Advocacy Service, commissioned by SPPG, supports children in care and young people in receipt of statutory leaving and aftercare services.

- **444** children and young people received advocacy support
- **73%** of closed advocacy cases were fully resolved,
- **25%** of closed cases were partially resolved
- **2%** of casework closed unresolved.

Independent Advocacy Support and Secure Care

VOYPIC provides individual advocacy support to young people being presented at the Regional Multi Agency Panel for Admission to secure care.

In 2024-2025 VOYPIC supported **40** young people at **59** presentations to the Regional Multi Agency Panel for Admission to Secure Care. Advocates support young people to share their wishes and feelings to the panel about any safety concerns. **98%** of all young people offered advocacy support for panel accepted help. Young people continued to avail of advocacy support for care and exit planning whilst placed in secure care.

Advocacy Workshops

24 advocacy workshops were delivered to **258** young people living in foster families and young people leaving care across Northern Ireland. Theses workshops are designed to educate children and young people about their rights and entitlements whilst in care. The workshops explored a range of issues, including rights and entitlements for unaccompanied and asylum-seeking young people, transitions in education for 16+ young people, support whilst leaving care, review meetings, accommodation, personal safety and consent.

Impact of Regional Advocacy Service Support

- **96%** of young people felt listened to because of the advocacy support they receive
- **98%** of young people stated they would use the advocacy service again
- **70%** of young people whose cases had been resolved reported that their rights were protected through our advocacy support
- **92%** of young people felt they were able to influence decision making with the help of their advocate.

2. ADVOCACY IN BEECHCROFT CHILD & ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

Beechcroft Child & Adolescent Mental Health Unit provides specialist care to young people from across Northern Ireland. VOYPIC provides a dedicated advocate located in the hospital on behalf of the BHSCT. We supported **55** individuals to share their views and take part in decision making regarding their care and discharge.

3. SPEAK UP PILOT ADVOCACY PROJECT

This year we piloted independent advocacy support for young people involved in child protection Case Conferences in the northern area. The pilot assessed the effectiveness of advocacy to support young people's meaningful participation in child protection processes. During the year we supported **21** young people in case conferences.

4. ADVOCACY FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Often, the need for help and support does not end when a young person moves on from leaving and aftercare services. With support from The National Lottery Community Fund, we have been able to support **52**care leavers, aged 21+, who no longer had access to statutory support services. These young adults received help with housing, finance and accessing community services.

STRATEGIC AIM 2. INNOVATING THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

PARTICIPATION FORUMS

We facilitated weekly participation forums in each of the five HSCTs, involving **132** children and young people. Our participation forums help young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. They provide a safe space for young people to have their say and engage directly with decision makers on matters important to them.

This year, young people in the forums:

- Designed an animation about 'Coming into Care' and arranged drop-in sessions to inform social workers about the animation and how to use it with children and young people they work with.
- Took part in engagement and consultation sessions on care planning
- Explored the impact of frequent changes in social workers and long-term sickness on care-experienced young people to inform research design
- Shared their experiences of having a social worker with various decision makers

LEADING CHANGE PROGRAMME

The Leading Change programme, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, supports care experienced young people 14-30 across Northern Ireland through:

- Independent advocacy for young adults aged 21-30 yrs, **52** young adults supported in year
- Coaching and mentoring support, **35** young people supported in year
- Youth leadership training and development, **15** young people engaged in leadership programme

YOUNG REPS

VOYPIC's Young Reps are care-experienced young people aged 16+ who represent the views and experiences of their peers. They advocate on behalf of young people in and leaving care and advise the VOYPIC Board and leadership team on how to deliver the Strategic Plan. Membership of the group is through application, with each member appointed for a period of two years. Two members of the Young Reps Forum are selected by their peers to become ex-officio members of the Board of Directors.

ULSTER UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

Led by Ulster University, VOYPIC assisted in the design and delivery of a short course for young people with care experience who were considering a course in social work, psychology etc in higher education. The course helped participants understand the impact of early childhood trauma. It also assisted participants to consider strategies they could utilise to manage their emotional health and wellbeing health while studying. VOYPIC complemented this learning by offering dedicated mentoring support, empowering young people to build confidence and take positive steps toward pursuing a place at university and achieving their goals.

DRAG – DATA RESEARCH ADVISORY GROUP

The Data Research Advisory Group (DRAG) is a group of four young people, working in partnership with researchers from the Administrative Data Research Centre NI (ADRC NI). The Research Centre is a partnership between research specialists at Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University.

This year members of DRAG advised on research into the long-term mental health outcomes for the care experienced community. This group continues to shape the research, developing research questions, and providing context for findings from the data. One young person completed an internship at ADRC during the summer 2024, producing an academic paper on the involvement of young people in data research.

STRATEGIC AIM 3. CREATING CHANGE

CARE DAY 25

In February 2025 we held our tenth annual CARE DAY campaign. For a second year, the flagship event of the campaign was the Care Day Awards Ceremony. Nominations opened in October, with judging taking place in January. The awards ceremony was held on the evening of Care Day – Friday 21 February- in Belfast City Hall. To mark the tenth anniversary of Care Day, we asked local councils to plant a tree in a public park, to show their support for the campaign and the care experienced community in their local area. We attended tree-planting ceremonies in Armagh, Ballymena, Derry-Londonderry and Bangor as part of this activity.

Queens University Belfast & Mamelani Projects in Cape Town

VOYPIC partnered with Queens University Belfast, and Mamelani Project, Cape Town, to organise an international exchange between care experienced young people between South Africa and Northern Ireland and to document their experiences; discussions and learning from each other in a filmmaking project which was co-produced by the young people involved. Throughout this journey, they realised that while the systems in each country might look different, many of the challenges they face are the same: stigma, lack of support after leaving care, and the importance of relationships that don't just end when they leave the system. They also discovered strengths in their stories and lessons about community, resilience, and hope.

Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services

VOYPIC continues to be a member of the Reimagine Collective, working in partnership with children's organisations to inform the outworking of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services. Additionally, this group forms the basis of the RESET Workstream of the DoH Reform Programme. VOYPIC also maintains membership of four workstreams of the Reform Programme.

ENYA/ENOC

Northern Ireland is represented on the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People. Each year, ENOC selects a theme related to children's rights, and in 2024 the theme chosen was 'children in alternative care'. ENOC is advised by the European Network of Young Advisors (ENYA), a group of young people from each of the member nations who consider the selected theme in their home nation, before coming together to agree key messages for the ombudspersons.

In partnership with the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, VOYPIC worked with a 15 young people to explore the rights of young people in care. Two young people attended the ENYA Forum in Bratislava, Slovakia, in July. The young people worked with peers from across Europe to develop a series of policy calls for decision makers in the various jurisdictions. One young person was selected to attend ENOC conference in Helsinki, Finland, alongside the NI Commissioner.

POLICY CONSULTATIONS /ENGAGEMENT WITH DECISION MAKERS

VOYPIC submitted two policy consultation responses in 2024-25:

- Budget 24-25 EQIA – Department of Health
- Draft Programme for Government – The Executive Office

Additionally, oral evidence was provided to the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Health on two occasions. A further workshop with the Committee for Health was facilitated, involving seven young people and three members of the Committee. Meetings were also held with the Minister for Health, the Minister for Finance, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Mayors or representatives of four local councils.

FIVE NATIONS, ONE VOICE NETWORK: (5N1V)

The Network continues to meet to develop relationships and shared learning across the five charities. During the year staff from across the network came together for Knowledge Exchange session based on shared interests and priority areas of work.

YOUTH & POLICING PARTNERSHIP FORUM

VOYPIC worked alongside the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, the PSNI, the Northern Ireland Policing Board, the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, and a range of other children's sector organisations to establish the Youth and Policing Partnership Forum. The first Forum meeting was hosted by NIPB, on 8 March.

STRATEGIC AIM 4. GROWTH AND STABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIEINCE

To improve VOYPIC's long term sustainability, resilience and capacity, support from the Dormant Accounts Fund NI helped the charity to develop the leadership team's capacity and to strengthen governance arrangements at Board level. The review of governance was completed by Trustees in year, with a review of the charity's articles of association and membership.

Financial review

VOYPIC strives to meet all targets and objectives agreed with its funders, with all expenditure being monitored and benchmarked against budgets.

The Board of Directors consider that the unrestricted funds of the charity have sufficient resources and assets available which are adequate to fulfill their obligations.

At 31 March 2025 the balance of unrestricted reserves was £402,490 (2024 - £407,218), of which £57,887 (2024 - £19,296) has been designated by the Board at the year end.

Restricted funds are restricted for the purpose specified in letters of offer provided by the funding bodies. At 31 March 2025 the balance of restricted funds totaled £1,021,159 (2024 - £1,044,751).

Reserves policy:

The Board aims to maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds at a level which equates to approximately three months of unrestricted charitable expenditure. Currently we hold the equivalent of 3.5 months expenditure. The Board of Directors monitor and review the reserves policy on an annual basis.

The Board considers that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, VOYPIC will be able to continue its activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors has decided that VOYPIC should hold financial reserves because:

1. VOYPIC has no long-term funding sources and is entirely dependent for income from year to year on short term grants and donor funding, which is inevitably subject to fluctuation.
2. VOYPIC requires protection against, and the ability to continue operating, despite fluctuation in income or events threatening to the organisation.
3. VOYPIC requires the ability to continue to employ workers and continue our projects in between periods of grant funding.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors considers it prudent that unrestricted reserves should be sufficient to:

- avoid the necessity of realising fixed assets held for the charity's use and
- cover three months of direct and indirect expenditure.

Going Concern: The charity's funding streams have remained constant during the year 2024-2025. With a projected shortfall for the year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 of £73,532. The Board recognises the low level of risk. However, they take an active approach in seeking to mitigate any risk to the charity's future. A fundraising plan is in place to address any potential shortfalls, and scenario planning continues.

The Board has considered the secured funding in place for the next few years, which enables the board to forward plan and be proactive about their funding in the future.

The directors are satisfied that the charity's financial sustainability of services to care experienced children and young people in the financial year 2025-2026.

The directors aim to increase fundraising activities and to generate additional income by ways of increased training and consultancy work.

After making enquiries, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

At 31 March 2025, the charity had cash in bank of £424,688, with unrestricted funds of £420,490 at the year end, £57,887 of which have been designated for use in the year ending 31 March 2026.

In summary, based on the funding in place for 2025/2026 the directors have a reasonable expectation that the organisation has adequate resources to continue its operational activity. Along with written representations from the Board and the reserves of the charity. We do not believe there to be a concern over the operation of VOYPIC in the foreseeable future.

Risk review

The Board has a risk management strategy which comprises:

- An annual review of principle risks;
- The establishment of policies, systems & procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available funds and cash flow.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee, registered with Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and a registered charity for taxation purposes. It is run by a Board of Directors, no more than twelve and no less than five in total.

The directors who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr P McClenaghan - Chair	
Mr C Nicol	(Resigned 9 January 2025)
Mrs M McCallin	
Ms M Kennedy - Vice Chair	
Ms E Doherty	
Dr P McCafferty	
Ms S Campbell	
Dr R McCooey	
Mr H Robinson	
Ms E Ibrahim - Young Peoples' representative	(Appointed 16 May 2024)
Ms J Dowell - Young Peoples' representative	(Appointed 1 June 2024)
Mr P Allen - Treasurer	(Appointed 13 January 2025)

The Board of Directors has the power at any time to fill any vacancy on the board by co-option. At the Annual General Meeting directors are appointed by election. The Board of Directors meet on a monthly basis. New board members may be sought through open advertising. The interview panel is made up of young people and current board members. When appointed, board members complete a full induction into the charity and receive a welcome pack which includes a brief history of the charity, a copy of the last three years annual accounts, annual reports and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee; 'What you need to know and Public Benefit running a charity.'

None of the directors has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the directors are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

Key Management Personnel Remuneration
The Board of Directors and the Chief Executive comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling the charity and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis. All Board members give of their time freely and no remuneration was paid in the year. Board members are required to disclose all relevant conflict of interests and register them at each monthly board meeting and in accordance with the Trust's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises.

Employee involvement
The charity's policy is to consult and discuss with employees any matters likely to affect their interests. Information of matters of concern is given through staff briefings which seek to achieve a common awareness on the part of all employees of the financial and economic factors affecting charity's performance.

Disabled persons
Applications for employment are fully considered, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the applicant concerned. In the event of members of staff becoming disabled, every effort is made to ensure that their employment within the charity continues and that the appropriate training is arranged. It is the policy of the charity that the training, career development and promotion of disabled persons should as far as possible, be identical to that of other employees.

Statement of directors' responsibilities
The directors, who also act as trustees for the charitable activities of Voice of Young People in Care, are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

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 2019 (FRS 102);

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that GMcG Lisburn be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the directors has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption.

The directors' report was authorised and approved by the Board of Directors.

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Mr P McClenaghan - Chair

Director

Date: 12/08/25.

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Opinion

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

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 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) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' 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.
- the directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the statement of directors' responsibilities, the directors 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 directors 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 directors are responsible for assessing the 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 directors either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and assessing potential risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliances with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- The nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance, including the charitable company's remuneration policies for directors, bonus levels and performance targets, if any;
- Results of our enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- Any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the charitable company's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
    - Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instance of non-compliance;
    - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
    - The internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- The matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in income recognition. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the charitable company operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Companies Act 2006, and local tax legislation.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the charitable company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty.

Audit response to risks identified

Our procedures to respond to the risks identified included the following:

- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- Enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with tax authorities; and
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. In addition, as with any audit, there remains a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as they may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

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

Use of our report

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

Susan Dunlop

Mrs Susan Dunlop FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of GMcG Lisburn

21/08/25.

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Century House
40 Crescent Business Park
Lisburn
BT28 2GN

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:							
Donations and other income	3	25,850	-	25,850	36,486	-	36,486
Charitable activities	4	-	1,149,798	1,149,798	-	1,149,361	1,149,361
Investments	5	22,342	-	22,342	15,879	-	15,879
Total income		48,192	1,149,798	1,197,990	52,365	1,149,361	1,201,726
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	8	38,621	1,169,689	1,208,310	73,759	1,186,810	1,260,569
Total expenditure		38,621	1,169,689	1,208,310	73,759	1,186,810	1,260,569
Net income/(expenditure)		9,571	(19,891)	(10,320)	(21,394)	(37,449)	(58,843)
Transfers between funds	14	3,701	(3,701)	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	10	13,272	(23,592)	(10,320)	(21,394)	(37,449)	(58,843)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		407,218	1,044,751	1,451,969	428,612	1,082,200	1,510,812
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		420,490	1,021,159	1,441,649	407,218	1,044,751	1,451,969

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025		2024	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	15		1,019,527		1,053,422
Investments	16		1		1
			1,019,528		1,053,423
Current assets					
Debtors	17	141,369		191,623	
Cash at bank and in hand		424,688		417,484	
		566,057		609,107	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	(37,267)		(100,168)	
Net current assets			528,790		508,939
Total assets less current liabilities			1,548,318		1,562,362
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		(106,669)		(110,393)
Net assets excluding pension liability			1,441,649		1,451,969
Net assets			1,441,649		1,451,969
The funds of the company					
Restricted income funds	22		1,021,159		1,044,751
Unrestricted funds	23		420,490		407,218
			1,441,649		1,451,969

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the directors on 12/08/25 and signed on their behalf by:

Mr P McClenaghan - Chair
Director

Ms M Kennedy - Vice Chair
Director

Company registration number NI030526 (Northern Ireland)

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	29		32		3,402
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(7,397)		(70,710)	
Investment income received		22,342		15,879	
Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities			14,945		(54,831)
Financing activities					
Proceeds from borrowings		-		35,000	
Repayment of borrowings		(3,543)		(4,393)	
Net cash (used in)/generated from financing activities			(3,543)		30,607
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			11,434		(20,822)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			413,254		434,076
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			424,688		413,254
Relating to:					
Cash at bank and in hand			424,688		417,484
Bank overdrafts included in creditors payable within one year			-		(4,230)

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Voice of Young People In Care is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in Northern Ireland. The registered office and principal place of business is 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast, BT1 2LU.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The company is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated funds comprise funds which have been set aside at the discretion of the directors for specific purposes. The purposes and uses of the designated funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the company has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

The charity receives grants in respect of the provision of specified services, projects and activities. Income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement after any performance conditions have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. If entitlement is not met then these amounts are deferred.

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

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.5 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under one of the following headings: Costs of raising funds, Expenditure on charitable activities and Other expenditure.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, depreciation costs and administrative payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at the office. Office costs, depreciation costs, governance costs and payroll costs are allocated to charitable activities based on useage. The allocation of the support costs is analysed in note 9.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Land & buildings	2% Straight line
Leasehold improvements	25% Straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% Straight line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are stated at cost.

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.9 Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the company's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

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

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the company's accounting policies, the directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements (Continued)

Key sources of estimation uncertainty

Fixed assets

The annual depreciation charge on fixed assets depends primarily on the estimated lives of each type of asset and estimates of residual values. The directors regularly review these assets lives and change them as necessary to reflect current thinking on remaining lives in light of prospective economic utilisation and physical condition of the assets concerned. Changes in assets lives can have a significant impact on depreciation charges for the period. Detail of the useful lives is included in the accounting policies.

Restricted and unrestricted funds

Judgements are made in relation to allocation of income and expenditure to restricted and unrestricted funds. The directors consider it appropriate to allocate these funds based on interpretation of donations received.

Support costs

Judgements are made in relation to the allocation of support costs of the charity to its charitable activities. The directors consider it appropriate to allocate these costs based on the allocation of grant funding to the charitable activities in the year.

Deferred and accrued income

Income is deferred or accrued based on when the directors believe the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

3 Donations and other income

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2025	2024
	£	£
Donations and gifts	25,850	36,486
Donations and gifts		
Other income	7,535	27,586
Training	2,415	8,900
Consultancy	9,900	-
Care Day	6,000	-
	25,850	36,486

4 Income from charitable activities

	Advocacy 2025 £	Participation 2025 £	Policy Voice 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Advocacy 2024 £	Participation 2024 £	Policy Voice 2024 £	Building Project 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Grants receivable for charitable activities (see note 6)	676,368	340,027	133,403	1,149,798	657,101	345,652	142,640	3,968	1,149,361
Analysis by fund									
Restricted funds	676,368	340,027	133,403	1,149,798	657,101	345,652	142,640	3,968	1,149,361

5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Rental income	9,657	4,556
Interest receivable	12,685	11,323
	22,342	15,879

6 Grants receivable for charitable activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Belfast City Council	2,393	1,500
BHSCT	63,239	58,999
University of Ulster	12,000	-
Armagh City & Banbridge Council	733	-
PCSP Ards and North Down	4,410	-
Queens University	4,996	-
SBNI	9,985	-
DOH Care Day	5,000	5,000
DOH Core Funding	20,590	20,590
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	83,100	82,000
Include Youth	-	8,103
Include Youth - Building	-	3,967
National Lottery Community Fund	158,081	130,555
Dormant Accounts Fund NI	11,900	85,800
Childrens' Court Guardian	7,128	5,940
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	8,750	8,750
SPPG Secure Care Youth Programme	4,500	4,300
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 1	594,678	562,502
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 3	158,315	171,355
	1,149,798	1,149,361

7 Description of charitable activities

The charity continues to remain focused on its main charitable objectives of; Advocacy, participation, policy voice, training and education. These charitable objectives are described in more detail below:

Advocacy and Awareness-raising
We raise awareness of the rights of children and young people, their views and experiences living in and leaving care, and their priorities for change.

Making Connections and Capacity Building
We connect young people with a lived experience of care with their peers. We host regular groups, participation forums and activities that build self-confidence, personal, social and life skills, whilst making new connections and friends.

Independent Advocacy and Advice Service
We support young people to exercise their rights by providing assistance to; participate in decision making processes, express their views and concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Youth Participation and Coproduction
We help children and young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. We create a culture of listening that enables children and young people to influence the world around them. Our programmes equip and prepare young people to take part in co-production activities.

Influencing Change through Policy Advocacy
We use our specialist knowledge and insight into the views and experiences of children, young people, we work in partnership with them to influence the development of legislation, policy and practice.

8 Charitable activities

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Training & Education	Building Project	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	522,990	247,293	106,667	-	-	876,950	908,548
Depreciation and impairment	3,038	938	11,623	207	25,483	41,289	41,719
Staff subsistence and travel	22,958	8,644	2,360	-	-	33,962	31,315
Project activities	4,375	18,152	883	455	-	23,865	52,735
Designated expenditure	8,210	8,211	8,211	8,211	-	32,843	33,917
	561,571	283,238	129,744	8,873	25,483	1,008,909	1,068,234
Share of support costs (see note 9)	109,241	64,301	17,489	-	-	191,031	185,435
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	4,913	3,023	434	-	-	8,370	6,900
	675,725	350,562	147,667	8,873	25,483	1,208,310	1,260,569

8 **Charitable activities (Continued)**

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Training & Education	Building Project	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Analysis by fund							
Unrestricted funds	7,915	13,917	7,916	8,873	-	38,621	
Restricted funds	667,810	336,645	139,751	-	25,483	1,169,689	
	675,725	350,562	147,667	8,873	25,483	1,208,310	
For the year ended 31 March 2024							
Unrestricted funds	10,089	44,153	10,086	9,431	-		73,759
Restricted funds	699,848	341,773	119,706	-	25,483		1,186,810
	709,937	385,926	129,792	9,431	25,483		1,260,569

9 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2025	2024	Basis of allocation
	£	£	£	£	
Rent and rates	19,812	-	19,812	17,686	Useage
Insurance	12,447	-	12,447	11,484	Useage
Heat and light	9,629	-	9,629	10,949	Useage
Maintenance	19,382	-	19,382	17,346	Useage
Recruitment	2,427	-	2,427	7,273	Useage
Staff training	14,700	-	14,700	20,421	Useage
Other staff costs	22,104	-	22,104	14,950	Useage
Print, post & stationery	7,555	-	7,555	9,295	Useage
Telephone	11,089	-	11,089	9,847	Useage
IT support	15,816	-	15,816	10,038	Useage
Bank charges	194	-	194	154	Useage
Subscriptions	1,620	-	1,620	1,410	Useage
Hosting and PR	14,332	-	14,332	10,611	Useage
Corporate services SLA	30,000	-	30,000	26,608	Useage
Corporate services governance	1,362		1,362	-	Useage
Sundry office expenses	8,562	-	8,562	17,363	Useage
Audit and accountancy fees	-	8,370	8,370	6,900	Governance
	191,031	8,370	199,401	192,335	
Analysed between					
Charitable activities	191,031	8,370	199,401	192,335	

10 Net movement in funds

	2025	2024
	£	£
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	8,370	6,900
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	41,099	41,515
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	190	204

11 Directors

None of the directors (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the company during the year.

No companies of which trustees are directors made donations to the charitable company during the year.

12 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
	25	23

Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	769,168	795,931
Social security costs	62,480	67,146
Other pension costs	45,302	45,471
	876,950	908,548

The charity considers its key management personnel to comprise of the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive, the Children's Services Manager, Resource Manager and the Engagement Manager. The total employment benefits including employer pension contributions of the key management personnel were £172,649 (2024 - £178,543).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

14 Transfers

Transfers from the restricted fund to the unrestricted fund in the year were as follows;

University of Ulster
- £2,001 was funds agreed with funder to be transferred to unrestricted.

Other restricted funds

- £1,700 was funds agreed with funder to be transferred to unrestricted.

15 Tangible fixed assets

	Land & buildings	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2024	1,080,786	23,780	77,165	1,181,731
Additions	-	-	7,397	7,397
Disposals	-	-	(3,305)	(3,305)
At 31 March 2025	1,080,786	23,780	81,257	1,185,823
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2024	74,222	23,780	30,307	128,310
Depreciation charged in the year	21,616	-	19,483	41,099
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	-	(3,113)	(3,113)
At 31 March 2025	95,838	23,780	46,677	166,296
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2025	984,946	-	34,580	1,019,527
At 31 March 2024	1,006,564	-	46,858	1,053,422

Freehold land and buildings represents the charity's share of the purchase and redevelopment costs of a property that is owned jointly with another charity.

16 Fixed asset investments

	Unlisted investments
	£
Cost or valuation	
At 1 April 2024 & 31 March 2025	1
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2025	1
At 31 March 2024	1

The charity holds 50% of the issued share capital in a joint venture company Vi-able Corporate Services Limited (Vi-able).

17 Debtors

	2025	2024
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	131,150	182,155
Prepayments	10,219	9,468
	141,369	191,623

18 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Bank overdrafts	20	-	4,230
Other borrowings	20	6,355	6,174
Trade creditors		15,506	51,681
Other creditors		1,518	1,536
Accruals		13,888	36,547
		37,267	100,168

19 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Borrowings	20	106,669	110,393

20 Loans and overdrafts

	2025 £	2024 £
Bank overdrafts	-	4,230
Other borrowings	113,024	116,567
	113,024	120,797
Payable within one year	6,355	10,404
Payable after one year	106,669	110,393
Amounts included above which fall due after five years:		
Payable by instalments	77,826	82,372

21 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes	2025 £	2024 £
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	45,302	45,471

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund.

22 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Building project	914,382	3,967	(25,483)	892,866	-	(25,483)	-	867,383
Belfast City Council	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	2,393	(2,393)	-	-
BHSCT	4,729	58,999	(58,337)	5,391	63,239	(59,840)	-	8,790
Community Foundation	2,040	-	(2,040)	-	-	-	-	-
DOH Core Funding	2,615	20,590	(23,205)	-	20,590	(20,590)	-	-
DOH TSP training	450	-	(450)	-	-	-	-	-
Erasmus+	2,939	-	(1,688)	1,251	-	-	1,251	-
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	12,173	82,000	(68,596)	25,577	83,100	(75,589)	-	33,088
SPPG Secure Care Youth Programme	4,556	4,300	(2,668)	6,188	4,500	(1,909)	-	8,779
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 1	81,407	562,502	(629,743)	14,166	594,678	(587,946)	-	20,898
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 3	17,207	171,356	(180,420)	8,143	158,315	(158,470)	-	7,988
National Lottery Community Fund	10,736	130,555	(140,920)	371	158,081	(153,763)	-	4,689
Dormant Accounts Fund NI	-	85,800	(23,061)	62,739	11,900	(31,096)	-	43,543
Childrens' Court Guardian	1,519	5,940	-	7,459	7,128	(5,108)	-	9,479
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	8,750	(1,290)	7,460	8,750	(12,398)	(1,251)	5,063
Act For Change	7,711	-	(7,711)	-	-	1,474	-	1,474
NHSCT Pilot	14,374	-	(2,809)	11,565	-	(11,565)	-	-
DOH Care Day	-	-	-	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
University of Ulster	-	-	-	-	12,000	(9,999)	(2,001)	-
Armagh City & Banbridge Council	-	-	-	-	733	(705)	(28)	-
PCSP Ards and North down	-	-	-	-	4,410	(4,313)	(97)	-
Queens University	-	-	-	-	4,996	(4,996)	-	-
SBNI	-	-	-	-	9,985	-	-	9,985
Other Restricted Funds	5,362	13,102	(16,889)	1,575	-	-	(1,575)	-
	1,082,200	1,149,361	(1,186,810)	1,044,751	1,149,798	(1,169,689)	(3,701)	1,021,159

22 Restricted funds (Continued)

BUILDING PROJECT
To enable the purchase of new premises at 100 Great Patrick Street and to support the ongoing development of same.

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
This was a summer community grant which provided funding for young people's summer activities.

BHSCT
A direct advocacy service to children and young people accommodated in Beechcroft.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
To deliver a coaching, mentoring support and a bursary to support young people aged 16-25 who are in or have left care.

DOH CORE FUNDING
Implementation of Department of Health Children's Social Care Services Reform programme which is informed by the lived experience of children in care and young care leavers.

DOH TSP Training
Training support programme for voluntary and community sector.

ERASMUS+
The project aims to support young children's participation in child welfare/protection services by strengthening professional collaboration with children aged 12 years and under.

ESMEE FAIRBAIRN FOUNDATION
To deliver and develop a corporate parenting training programme, co-designed with and delivered by care experienced young people to agencies supporting them, to reduce barriers and inequalities faced by children in care and care leavers.

SPPG SECURE CARE YOUTH PROGRAMME
To facilitate a study to investigate good practice in secure care.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE GROUP (SPPG)
The provision of advocacy services for looked after children aged 10-17 and care experienced people aged 18-21 years across Northern Ireland. To skill young people to engage with decision makers and maintenance of Participation Forums in each social care trust.

NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND

"Leading Change project" providing regional advocacy and mentoring support for care experienced young people aged 21-30 yrs.

DORMANT ACCOUNTS FUND NI
To fund Ready Steady Resilient, to improve VOYPIC's long term sustainability, resilience, and capacity.

CHILDRENS' COURT GUARDIAN
To support annual conference and to provide a participation forum programme.

PAUL HAMLYN - 5 NATIONS ONE VOICE (5NIV)
Funding to support 5 nations CEO meetings.

22 Restricted funds (Continued)

ACT FOR CHANGE
Paul Hamlyn & Esmee Fairbairn matched by # iwilll fund to support 'Shake it Off' programme which tackles stigma in care and social justice.

NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST (NHSCT) PILOT
To provide independent advocacy support to young people who were involved in child protection case conferences.

DOH CARE DAY
Contributions toward the cost of Care Day.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER
Funding to support the charity's role in discrimination study.

ARMAGH CITY & BANBRIDGE COUNCIL
To support Young People's project activity costs.

PCSP ARDS AND NORTH DOWN
To support diversity and detached youth engagement project targeting ASB in the borough.

QUEENS UNIVERSITY
To support ESRC Impact Acceleration Collaboration.

SBNI
To support the development of child friendly version of child criminal exploitation guidance and action plan.

23 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Activities - Booted and Suited	-	-	-	639	639
Youth Activities	-	-	(9,555)	19,809	10,254
Youth Activities Southern Area	2,500	-	-	-	2,500
Youth Activities Western Area	-	-	-	310	310
Workplace Co-ordinator	14,796	-	(9,864)	3,345	8,277
Regional dilapidation costs	2,000	-	(5,109)	18,000	14,891
Mortgage 100 GPS (12 months)	-	-	-	11,016	11,016
Consultant	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
General funds	387,922	48,192	(14,093)	(59,418)	362,603
	407,218	48,192	(38,621)	3,701	420,490

23 Unrestricted funds (Continued)

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Activities - Booted and Suited	789	-	(150)	(639)	-
Youth Activities	16,968	-	(2,470)	(14,498)	-
Youth Activities Southern Area	-	-	-	2,500	2,500
Youth Activities Western Area	310	-	-	(310)	-
Workplace Co-ordinator	-	-	-	14,796	14,796
Moving and dilapidation costs	24,775	-	(24,775)	-	-
Regional dilapidation costs	10,000	-	-	(8,000)	2,000
Mortgage 100 GPS (12 months)	11,016	-	-	(11,016)	-
100 GPS Project Build	50,000	-	(50,000)	-	-
General funds	314,754	52,365	3,636	17,167	387,922
	428,612	52,365	(73,759)	-	407,218

The VOYPIC Board of Directors at the end of the financial year 2025 agreed to designate £57,887 from unrestricted reserves to cover the following;

- £639 Booted & Suited
- £10,254 donations designate to youth activities
- £2,500 donations designated to youth activities in the Southern Area
- £310 fundraising designated to youth activities in the Western Area
- £8,277 staff costs
- £14,891 regional dilapidation costs increased for regional offices
- £11,016 Mortgage 100 GPS
- £10,000 Consultant Support.

24 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	24,336	995,191	1,019,527	25,167	1,028,255	1,053,422
Investments	1	-	1	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	396,153	132,637	528,790	382,050	126,889	508,939
Long term liabilities	-	(106,669)	(106,669)	-	(110,393)	(110,393)
	420,490	1,021,159	1,441,649	407,218	1,044,751	1,451,969

25 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities

A contingent liability exists to repay grants received in relation to capital building costs should certain conditions not be fulfilled by the charity. In this regard charges have been registered by The Department for Communities who partly financed the building works.

A legal charge dated 15 December 2022 in favour of The Department of Communities is held over the property at 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast, BT1 2LH. This charge is in respect of funding received for the development of the property.

26 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

At the reporting end date the company had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Within one year	1,766	1,766
Between two and five years	1,325	3,091
	3,091	4,857

27 Share capital

The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of the members is limited to £1 per member.

28 Related party transactions

(i) Control

The charity was under the control of the Board of Directors throughout the year.

(ii) Vi-able Corporate Services Limited

The charity holds 50% of the issued share capital in a joint venture company Vi-able Corporate Services Limited (Vi-able).

During the year Vi-able charged the charity £43,313 (2024 - £41,673), £30,000 for the provision of corporate services and £13,313 for the provision of management and governance services.

During the year Vi-able occupied offices at 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast a property jointly owned by the charity and Include Youth, with rent and service charges receivable by the charity of £4,556 (2024 - £4,556).

At the year end there were debtor balances owing from Vi-able Corporate Services Limited of £12,818 (2024- £13,933). Of which £10,516 (2024 - £10,516) was owed to VOYPIC and £2,302 (2024 - £3,417) owed in relation to 100 Great Patrick Street.

29 Cash generated from operations

	2025	2024
	£	£
Deficit for the year	(10,320)	(58,843)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(22,342)	(15,879)
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	190	204
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	41,099	41,515
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	50,256	1,186
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(58,851)	35,219
Cash generated from operations	32	3,402

30 Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1 April 2024	Cash flows	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	417,484	7,204	424,688
Bank overdrafts	(4,230)	4,230	-
	413,254	11,434	424,688
Loans falling due within one year	(6,174)	(181)	(6,355)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(110,393)	3,724	(106,669)
	296,687	14,977	311,664

Voice of Young People in Care

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105019

Accounts

Charity registration number NIC 105019

Company registration number NI030526 (Northern Ireland)

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Directors	Mr P McClenaghan - Chair	
	Mr C Nicol - Treasurer	
	Mrs M McCallin	
	Ms M Kennedy - Vice Chair	
	Ms E Doherty	
	Dr P McCafferty	
	Ms S Campbell	(Appointed 3 January 2024)
	Dr R McCooey	(Appointed 5 January 2024)
	Mr H Robinson	(Appointed 3 January 2024)
	Ms E Ibrahim - Young Peoples' representative	(Appointed 16 May 2024)
	Ms J Dowell - Young Peoples' representative	(Appointed 1 June 2024)
Secretary	Miss A Toal	
Charity number	NIC 105019	
Company number	NI030526	
Registered office	100 Great Patrick Street Belfast BT1 2LU	
Auditor	GMcG Lisburn Century House 40 Crescent Business Park Lisburn BT28 2GN	
Bankers	Danske Bank Forestside Shopping Centre Upper Galwally Belfast BT8 6FX	
Solicitors	Scullion & Green 50 St Patricks Avenue Downpatrick Co Down BT30 6DW	

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

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VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The directors present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the company's Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities
Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) was established for exclusively charitable purposes; namely to ensure that the general welfare and interests of care experienced children and young people are advanced.

Mission, Vision, and Values
Created in 1993 by a group of young people in care and professionals, VOYPIC is the charity for children and young people with a lived-in experience of care in Northern Ireland. We promote the rights and voice of children in care and care leavers.

The current strategic plan focuses on four key strategic aims:

1. Empowering children and young people
2. Innovating practice through participation and co-production
3. Creating change
4. Organisational growth and stability

Our Mission: Working together with children and young adults for a better care experience and life after care.

Our Vision: Every child in care in Northern Ireland feels safe, valued and loved. Every young person leaving care does so with dignity and respect, and thrives into adulthood.

OUR WORK:
Advocacy and Awareness-raising
We raise awareness of the rights of children and young people, their views and experiences living in and leaving care, and their priorities for change.

Making Connections and Capacity Building
We connect young people with a lived experience of care with their peers. We host regular groups, participation forums and activities that build self-confidence, personal, social and life skills, whilst making new connections and friends.

Independent Advocacy and Advice Service
We support young people to exercise their rights by providing assistance to; participate in decision making processes, express their views and concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Youth Participation and Co-production
We help children and young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. We create a culture of listening that enables children and young people to influence the world around them. Our programmes equip and prepare young people to take part in co-production activities.

Influencing Change through Policy Advocacy
We use our specialist knowledge and insight into the views and experiences of children and young people; we work in partnership with them to influence the development of legislation, policy and practice.

OUR VALUES:
VOYPIC's work is underpinned by five core values which not only inform what we do but also how we do it.

Relationship Based: We are driven by the needs and aspirations of children and young people. We listen, learn, and work in partnership with them to ensure their voice is heard. We are dedicated to empowering young people so that they reach their potential in whatever they choose to do.

Commitment: We are committed, passionate and enthusiastic champions for change. We are persistent and determined in promoting the voice and defending the rights of children and young people in leaving care and into adulthood.

Social Justice: We work to a strong moral code rooted in ideals of social justice. We challenge the oppression and discrimination faced by children and young people in care and seek to reduce the stigma they face in their daily lives.

Respect for Rights: We respect the rights of children and young people and are prepared to challenge others to do the same.

Solution Focused: We are positive about the future. We are proud of what we do and what we have achieved. We face problems with a solution-oriented mentality, and we encourage our staff, stakeholders and young people themselves to be problem solvers.

The directors have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the company should undertake.

Achievements and performance
2023-2024 Organisational Overview

From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 our staff team consisted of 23 members.

During the year we supported 621 children and young people; 554 were supported directly through our services with 67 children and young people attending VOYPIC events and activities.

416 Children and young people received support through our regional independent advocacy service for children in care and care leavers.

14 Children and young people received advocacy support through Speak Up programme.

19 Young adults received individual advocacy support through the See Me Hear Me programme.

21 Children and young people received one to one support and coaching.

88 Children and young people took part in social action programmes.

120 Children and young people took part in participation forums.

63 Children and young people participated in policy consultations.

17 Young people undertook a leadership role.

58 Young people were supported through our independent advocacy service at Beechcroft.

159 Children and young people attended activity days.

139 Members of MyVOYPIC scheme.

STRATEGIC AIM 1. EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY SUPPORT:

Regional independent advocacy service for children in care and care leavers

- **416** children and young people received advocacy support
- **335** advocacy cases were closed during the year
- **82%** of closed advocacy cases were fully resolved, an increase of **4%** from previous year
- **13.5%** of closed cases were partially resolved
- **2.5%** of casework closed unresolved, a decrease of **3.5%** from previous year.

Impact of Advocacy Support

- **94%** of young people felt listened to because of the advocacy support they receive
- **91%** of young people stated they would use the advocacy service again
- **68%** of young people whose cases had been resolved reported that their rights were protected through our advocacy support
- **60%** of young people felt they were able to influence decision making with the help of their advocate.

Advocacy in Secure Care

In 2023-2024 VOYPIC supported **46** young people at **65** presentations to the Regional Multi Agency Panel for Admission to Secure Care. Advocates support young people to share their wishes and feelings to the panel about any safety concerns, and how they can keep themselves safe. **90%** of all young people offered advocacy support for panel accepted help. Young people continued to avail of advocacy support for care and exit planning whilst placed in secure care.

Advocacy Workshops

26 advocacy workshops were delivered to **284** young people living in foster families and young people leaving care across Northern Ireland. Theses workshops are designed to educate children and young people about their rights and entitlements whilst in care. The workshops explore a range of issues; support for leaving care, review meetings, accommodation, play, and identity.

Advocacy in Beechcroft Child & Adolescent Mental Health Unit

Beechcroft Child & Adolescent Mental Health Unit provides specialist care to young people from across Northern Ireland. VOYPIC provides a dedicated advocate located in the hospital on behalf of the BHSCT.

We supported **58** individuals through **62** pieces of advocacy case work. We helped young people share their views, participate in Patient Forums, and take part in consultations on issues such as administering IV nutrition and mealtimes.

Speak up Pilot

This year we piloted advocacy support for young people in Northern Health & Social Care Trust area to participate in child protection case conferences. The pilot is assessing the effectiveness of advocacy to support young people's meaningful involvement in child protection processes. During the year we supported **14** young people in case conferences.

Advocacy for Young Adults

Often, the need for help and support does not end when a young person moves on from leaving and aftercare services. With support from The National Lottery Community Fund, we have been able to support **19** young adults, aged 21+, who no longer have access to statutory support services, to resolve **30** different issues.

PARTICIPATION SERVICES:

SEE ME HEAR ME programme

Through this programme VOYPIC facilitated the development of three peer support groups for young care leavers. Thirty-three young people took part in the groups throughout the year. Peer support groups provide a space and environment for care leavers to meet with their peers and create and sustain social networks within their communities.

88 young people took part in social action projects. These projects give young people an opportunity to use their lived experience to affect change in their community. Examples of social action projects undertaken this year include:

- Guerilla chalk street art and urban gardening, in partnership with Ulster University, Belfast
- Production and distribution of health and hygiene packs
- Creation and publication of a storybook about coming into care
- Development of a 'Pizza Advice'- a pizza box advice centre
- Delivery of second 'Care 2 Swap' – a social clothes swap event
- Organising and running a Halloween Haunted House for young people in care.

Participation Forums

We facilitated weekly participation forums in each of the five HSCTs, involving **120** children and young people. Our participation forums help young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. They provide a safe space for young people to have their say and engage directly with decision makers on matters important to them.

STRATEGIC AIM 2. INNOVATING THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

Young Reps

Young Reps are the youth leaders of VOYPIC. They represent and advocate on behalf of young people in and leaving care and advise the VOYPIC Board of Directors and the VOYPIC Leadership Team on how to deliver the Strategic Plan. There are currently 17 VOYPIC Young Reps, including two *ex-officio* members of the VOYPIC Board of Directors.

During the year the Young Reps took part in a team-building residential and undertook training for their new role. For example, they received Media Training with Bespoke Communications, to develop their skills and confidence to use traditional and social media to communicate their key messages on life in care.

Young Reps coordinated and helped deliver VOYPIC's 30th birthday activities in October 2023 and contributed to the annual Care Day working group and the Care Day Awards Ceremony in February 2024.

Ulster University Partnership

We worked with young leaders to co-design a series of workshops for students in Ulster University, focused on improving student's understanding of care and issues impacting children and young people. Workshops were delivered in both the Belfast and Magee campus.

UNICEF Partnership

We continued to work in partnership with the Derry & Strabane District Council, the Western Health and Social Care Trust, and other voluntary and community organisations to promote Derry as a 'Child Friendly City'. We supported young people to take part in several workshops and online training sessions throughout the year, to promote young people's rights across the DSDC area.

STRATEGIC AIM 3. CREATING CHANGE

Care Day 24 'Celebrating and Connecting the Care Experienced Community'

Care Day 24 was held on Friday 16th February 2024. In the lead up to the big day the Young Reps hosted a coffee morning for 'VOYPIC Alumni', that is young people who participated in VOYPIC's programmes in the past. This reunion was attended by over 30 former service users, who took the opportunity to reconnect and have a tour of the new building at 100 Great Patrick Street.

During Care Day 24, everyone was encouraged to put their 'Hands Up for Care Day'. Once again, many individuals and organisations across Northern Ireland, around the UK and Ireland, and further afield, got involved in the activity, by writing on their hand and sharing a selfie on social media. This provided a great opportunity to 'celebrate and connect the care experienced community' globally on Care Day.

On the morning of Care Day, VOYPIC hosted a 'Family Fun Day' in New Life City Church, Belfast. This event was attended by more than 50 care experienced families, all enjoying games, craft activities, a petting farm, and giant inflatables.

The flagship event for Care Day 24 was the first annual Care Day Awards. Between Christmas and the start of February, anyone could nominate a care experienced young person for a Care Day Award, in a range of categories. Sixty-five nominations were received across the categories, and the judges met in early February to select the winners.

The awards were presented at a special ceremony on the event of Care Day, in the Great Hall of Queen's University, Belfast. The event was hosted by BBC reporter, Mark Simpson. The event was a resounding success, with many commenting on the celebratory, positive nature of the ceremony, and praising the stories of those recognised with an award.

Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services

The Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services was published on Wednesday 21 June 2023.

Throughout the period of the review, VOYPIC supported a group of young people with experience of the services covered by the review to act as the Experts by Experience (EBE) Reference Group to the Review. Young people were involved in the launch event, including speaking about the experiences of the EBE Reference Group, and taking part in media interviews.

VOYPIC supported young people to participate in the public consultation on the recommendations of the Review, and the Department of Health's proposals for delivery on the recommendations. In March, a group of young people from the EBE Reference Group and VOYPIC Young Reps attended a meeting of the Health Committee at Stormont where the Review was being considered.

PSNI-NICCY Project

VOYPIC supported three young people to take part in a programme of activities coordinated by NICCY and the PSNI. This included young people being part of the launch of the PSNI Youth Engagement Strategy, as well as participating in a steering group to develop a new structure for youth engagement with policing in Northern Ireland.

UNCRC Reporting

In spring 2023, VOYPIC supported four young people to travel to Geneva, to present to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as part of the UK delegation to the Committee. On return, the young people worked with peers from partner organisations to plan and host a briefing session for a larger group of young people, informing them of the engagement. They also helped deliver a session for professionals, including duty bearers, in the autumn.

All-Party Group on Youth Participation

VOYPIC has taken up membership of the All-Party Working Group on Youth Participation, chaired by Colin McGrath MLA and facilitated by the Northern Ireland Youth Forum (NIYF). A member of the VOYPIC staff team, alongside at least one young person from the organisation, has attended each meeting since the APG was established in October 2023.

Five Nations, One Voice network: (5N1V)

The Network continues to meet to develop relationships and shared learning across the five charities. During the year staff from across the network came together for Knowledge Exchange session based on shared interests and priority areas of work.

STRATEGIC AIM 4. GROWTH AND STABILITY

Grand Opening of 100GPS

Following years of planning and development VOYPIC was delighted to move into their new premises at 100 Great Patrick Street in November 2022, alongside Include Youth and Viable Corporate Services.

To mark this achievement a planning group, made up of young people and staff from VOYPIC and Include Youth, came together to develop plans for a grand opening. Young people took a leading role in coordinating the activities, including agreeing the theme for the day, decorations, catering, and the activities on offer.

The Grand Opening took place on Thursday 22 June. The building was officially opened by six young people- three from each charity - representing the themes of HISTORY, TOGETHERNESS, HOME and FUTURE.

The event was attended by over **150** children and young people, sector professionals, decision makers, and supporters.

VOYPIC30 – 30th Birthday Celebrations

In October 2023, VOYPIC celebrated its 30th birthday. An online campaign shared stories from those currently involved with the organisation, alongside those who have been involved over the past 30 years.

On 20 October we hosted the VOYPIC30 Conference at Ulster University, showcasing some of the key milestones for the organisation over the past 30 years, telling the story of care experience in Northern Ireland from the early 90s to the present day. The conference was co-designed with a group of VOYPIC Young Reps, and all presentations and activities were co-delivered by them.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIEINCE

To improve VOYPIC's long term sustainability, resilience and capacity we secured funding through the Dormant Accounts Fund NI to develop the leadership team's capacity, increase and diversify our income, and strengthen governance arrangements.

A governance health check was completed with Board members in May and June 2023, using the Code of Good Governance self-assessment framework. Following the self-assessment an action plan was developed highlighting key actions for the year.

The leadership team undertook development training to ensure team effectiveness. The training focused communication, efficient utilisation of resources, building long term relationships, social and psychological safety to ensure space for crucial conversations, roles and responsibilities, accountability, and change awareness and readiness.

During the year we implemented a new management information system and developed impact data measurements and collection processes. This will improve our reporting to funders, potential supporters and donors, and generate better public awareness of our work with children and young people with a lived experience of care.

Financial review

VOYPIC strives to meet all targets and objectives agreed with its funders, with all expenditure being monitored and benchmarked against budgets.

The Board of Directors consider that the unrestricted funds of the charity have sufficient resources and assets available which are adequate to fulfill their obligations.

At 31 March 2024 the balance of unrestricted reserves was £407,218 (2023 - £428,612), of which £19,296 (2023 - £113,858) has been designated by the Board at the year end.

Restricted funds are restricted for the purpose specified in letters of offer provided by the funding bodies. At 31 March 2024 the balance of restricted funds totaled £1,044,751 (2023 - £1,082,200).

Reserves policy:

The Board aims to maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds at a level which equates to approximately three months of unrestricted charitable expenditure. Currently we hold the equivalent of 3.5 months expenditure. The Board of Directors monitor and review the reserves policy on an annual basis.

The Board considers that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, VOYPIC will be able to continue its activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors has decided that VOYPIC should hold financial reserves because:

1. VOYPIC has no long-term funding sources and is entirely dependent for income from year to year on short term grants and donor funding, which is inevitably subject to fluctuation.
2. VOYPIC requires protection against, and the ability to continue operating, despite fluctuation in income or events threatening to the organisation.
3. VOYPIC requires the ability to continue to employ workers and continue our projects in between periods of grant funding.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors considers it prudent that unrestricted reserves should be sufficient to:

- avoid the necessity of realising fixed assets held for the charity's use and
- cover three months of direct and indirect expenditure.

Going Concern: The charity's funding streams have remained constant during the year 2023-2024. With a projected shortfall for the year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 of £56,036. The Board recognises the low level of risk. However, they take an active approach in seeking to mitigate any risk to the charity's future. A fundraising plan is in place to address any potential shortfalls, and scenario planning continues.

The Board has considered the secured funding in place for the next few years, which enables the board to forward plan and be proactive about their funding in the future.

The directors are satisfied that the charity's financial sustainability of services to care experienced children and young people in the financial year 2024-2025.

The directors aim to increase fundraising activities and to generate additional income by ways of increased training and consultancy work.

After making enquiries, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

At 31 March 2024, the charity had cash in bank of £417,484, with unrestricted funds of £407,218 at the year end, £19,296 of which have been designated for use in the year ending 31 March 2025.

In summary, based on the funding in place for 2024/2025 the directors have a reasonable expectation that the organisation has adequate resources to continue its operational activity. Along with written representations from the Board and the reserves of the charity. We do not believe there to be a concern over the operation of VOYPIC in the foreseeable future.

Risk review

The Board has a risk management strategy which comprises:

- An annual review of principle risks;
- The establishment of policies, systems & procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available funds and cash flow.

Structure, governance and management

The company is a company limited by guarantee, registered with Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and a registered charity for taxation purposes. It is run by a Board of Directors, no more than twelve and no less than five in total.

The directors who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr P McClenaghan - Chair	
Ms F Nicol	(Resigned 13 December 2023)
Mr C Nicol - Treasurer	
Mrs M McCallin	
Ms M Kennedy - Vice Chair	
Ms E Doherty	
Dr P McCafferty	
Ms S Campbell	(Appointed 3 January 2024)
Dr R McCooey	(Appointed 5 January 2024)
Mr H Robinson	(Appointed 3 January 2024)
Ms E Ibrahim - Young Peoples' representative	(Appointed 16 May 2024)
Ms J Dowell - Young Peoples' representative	(Appointed 1 June 2024)

The Board of Directors has the power at any time to fill any vacancy on the board by co-option. At the Annual General Meeting directors are appointed by election. The Board of Directors meet on a monthly basis. New board members may be sought through open advertising. The interview panel is made up of young people and current board members. When appointed, board members complete a full induction into the charity and receive a welcome pack which includes a brief history of the charity, a copy of the last three years annual accounts, annual reports and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee; 'What you need to know and Public Benefit running a charity.'

None of the directors has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the directors are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

Key Management Personnel Remuneration

The Board of Directors and the Chief Executive comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling the charity and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis. All Board members give of their time freely and no remuneration was paid in the year. Board members are required to disclose all relevant conflict of interests and register them at each monthly board meeting and in accordance with the Trust's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises.

Employee involvement

The charity's policy is to consult and discuss with employees any matters likely to affect their interests. Information of matters of concern is given through staff briefings which seek to achieve a common awareness on the part of all employees of the financial and economic factors affecting charity's performance.

Disabled persons

Applications for employment are fully considered, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the applicant concerned. In the event of members of staff becoming disabled, every effort is made to ensure that their employment within the company continues and that the appropriate training is arranged. It is the policy of the company that the training, career development and promotion of disabled persons should as far as possible, be identical to that of other employees.

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors, who also act as trustees for the charitable activities of Voice of Young People in Care, are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

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 2019 (FRS 102);

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that GMcG Lisburn be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the directors has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption.

The directors' report was authorised and approved by the Board of Directors.

.....

Mr P McClenaghan - Chair

Director

Date: 10/12/2024

GMcG
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Voice of Young People In Care (the 'company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the statement of financial position, the statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

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Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' 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.
- the directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

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Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the statement of directors' responsibilities, the directors 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 directors 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 directors are responsible for assessing the 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 directors either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and assessing potential risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliances with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- The nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance, including the charitable company's remuneration policies for directors, bonus levels and performance targets, if any;
- Results of our enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- Any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the charitable company's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
    - Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instance of non-compliance;
    - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
    - The internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- The matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in income recognition. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the charitable company operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Companies Act 2006, and local tax legislation.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty.

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Audit response to risks identified

Our procedures to respond to the risks identified included the following:

- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- Enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with tax authorities; and
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. In addition, as with any audit, there remains a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as they may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

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

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Use of our report

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

Susan Dunlop

Mrs Susan Dunlop FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of GMcG Lisburn

10 December 2024

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Century House
40 Crescent Business Park
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VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	36,486	-	36,486	18,809	-	18,809
Charitable activities	4	-	1,149,361	1,149,361	-	2,096,421	2,096,421
Investments	5	15,879	-	15,879	1,405	-	1,405
Total income		52,365	1,149,361	1,201,726	20,214	2,096,421	2,116,635
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	8	73,759	1,186,810	1,260,569	7,096	1,424,295	1,431,391
Total resources expended		73,759	1,186,810	1,260,569	7,096	1,424,295	1,431,391
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(21,394)	(37,449)	(58,843)	13,118	672,126	685,244
Net (expenditure)/income for the year/ Net movement in funds		(21,394)	(37,449)	(58,843)	13,118	672,126	685,244
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		428,612	1,082,200	1,510,812	415,494	410,074	825,568
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		407,218	1,044,751	1,451,969	428,612	1,082,200	1,510,812

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	14		1,053,422		1,141,950
Investments	15		1		1
			1,053,423		1,141,951
Current assets					
Debtors	16	191,623		192,809	
Cash at bank and in hand		417,484		442,828	
		609,107		635,637	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(100,168)		(185,908)	
Net current assets			508,939		449,729
Total assets less current liabilities			1,562,362		1,591,680
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		(110,393)		(80,868)
Net assets excluding pension liability			1,451,969		1,510,812
Net assets			1,451,969		1,510,812
The funds of the company					
Restricted income funds	21		1,044,751		1,082,200
Unrestricted funds			407,218		428,612
			1,451,969		1,510,812

The financial statements were approved by the directors on 10/12/24 and signed on their behalf by:

Mr P McClenaghan - Chair
Director

Ms M Kennedy - Vice Chair
Director

Company registration number NI030526 (Northern Ireland)

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	29		3,402		(142,492)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(70,710)		(327,917)	
Investment income received		15,879		1,405	
Net cash used in investing activities			(54,831)		(326,512)
Financing activities					
Proceeds from borrowings		35,000		-	
Repayment of borrowings		(4,393)		(5,093)	
Net cash generated from/(used in) financing activities			30,607		(5,093)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(20,822)		(474,097)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			434,076		908,173
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			413,254		434,076
Relating to:					
Cash at bank and in hand			417,484		442,828
Bank overdrafts included in creditors payable within one year			(4,230)		(8,752)

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Voice of Young People In Care is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in Northern Ireland. The registered office and principal place of business is 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast, BT1 2LU.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The company is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated funds comprise funds which have been set aside at the discretion of the directors for specific purposes. The purposes and uses of the designated funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the company has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

The charity receives grants in respect of the provision of specified services, projects and activities. Income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement after any performance conditions have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. If entitlement is not met then these amounts are deferred.

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

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.5 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under one of the following headings: Costs of raising funds, Expenditure on charitable activities and Other expenditure.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, depreciation costs and administrative payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at the office. Office costs, depreciation costs, governance costs and payroll costs are allocated to charitable activities based on useage. The allocation of the support costs is analysed in note 9.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Land & buildings	2% Straight line
Leasehold improvements	25% Straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% Straight line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are stated at cost.

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.9 Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ and Section 12 ‘Other Financial Instruments Issues’ of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the company's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

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

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the company's accounting policies, the directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements (Continued)

Key sources of estimation uncertainty

Fixed assets

The annual depreciation charge on fixed assets depends primarily on the estimated lives of each type of asset and estimates of residual values. The directors regularly review these assets lives and change them as necessary to reflect current thinking on remaining lives in light of prospective economic utilisation and physical condition of the assets concerned. Changes in assets lives can have a significant impact on depreciation charges for the period. Detail of the useful lives is included in the accounting policies.

Restricted and unrestricted funds

Judgements are made in relation to allocation of income and expenditure to restricted and unrestricted funds. The directors consider it appropriate to allocate these funds based on interpretation of donations received.

Support costs

Judgements are made in relation to the allocation of support costs of the charity to its charitable activities. The directors consider it appropriate to allocate these costs based on the allocation of grant funding to the charitable activities in the year.

Deferred and accrued income

Income is deferred or accrued based on when the directors believe the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations and gifts	36,486	13,206
Unrestricted grants	**-**	5,603
	36,486	18,809
Donations and gifts		
Other income	27,586	8,786
Training	8,900	4,420
	36,486	13,206

4 Income from charitable activities

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Building Project	Total	Total
	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Grants receivable for charitable activities (see note 6)	657,101	345,652	142,640	3,968	1,149,361	2,096,421
Analysis by fund						
Restricted funds	657,101	345,652	142,640	3,968	1,149,361	2,096,421

Previous year:	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Building Project	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Grants receivable for charitable activities (see note 6)	636,715	347,990	141,705	970,011	2,096,421
Analysis by fund					
Restricted funds	636,715	347,990	141,705	970,011	2,096,421

5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023
	£	£
Rental income	4,556	-
Interest receivable	11,323	1,405
	15,879	1,405

6 Grants receivable for charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Atlantic Philanthropies	-	150,000
Belfast City Council	1,500	3,377
BHSCT	58,999	56,999
Building grant received (DFC, DOH, DFE)	-	472,611
Children in Need	-	24,197
Community Foundation	-	11,332
Department for Communities	-	5,256
DOH	-	53,114
DOH Care Day	5,000	5,000
DOH Core Funding	20,590	41,179
Erasmus+	-	8,375
Esmee Fairbairn	82,000	12,000
Everun	-	10,000
Garfield Weston	-	140,000
Include Youth	8,103	8,520
Include Youth - Building	3,967	-
National Lottery Community Fund	130,555	170,436
Dormant Accounts Fund NI	85,800	-
NHSCT	-	14,374
NI Guardian Ad Litem Agency	5,940	-
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	8,750	-
Secure Care Project	4,300	-
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 1	562,502	562,502
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 3	171,355	149,749
The Clothworkers Foundation	-	37,400
Tudor Trust	-	110,000
Ulster Garden Villiage	-	50,000
	1,149,361	2,096,421

7 Description of charitable activities

The charity continues to remain focused on its main charitable objectives of; Advocacy, participation, policy voice, training and education. These charitable objectives are described in more detail below:

Advocacy and Awareness-raising
We raise awareness of the rights of children and young people, their views and experiences living in and leaving care, and their priorities for change.

Making Connections and Capacity Building
We connect young people with a lived experience of care with their peers. We host regular groups, participation forums and activities that build self-confidence, personal, social and life skills, whilst making new connections and friends.

Independent Advocacy and Advice Service
We support young people to exercise their rights by providing assistance to; participate in decision making processes, express their views and concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Youth Participation and Coproduction
We help children and young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. We create a culture of listening that enables children and young people to influence the world around them. Our programmes equip and prepare young people to take part in co-production activities.

Influencing Change through Policy Advocacy
We use our specialist knowledge and insight into the views and experiences of children, young people, we work in partnership with them to influence the development of legislation, policy and practice.

8 Charitable activities

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Training & Education	Building Project	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	571,750	252,237	84,561	-	-	908,548	834,640
Depreciation and impairment	2,150	1,301	12,505	280	25,483	41,719	31,156
Staff subsistence and travel	19,471	10,107	1,737	-	-	31,315	29,799
Project activities	7,655	42,812	1,596	672	-	52,735	59,656
Designated expenditure	8,480	8,479	8,479	8,479	-	33,917	12,048
Building project costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,900
	609,506	314,936	108,878	9,431	25,483	1,068,234	988,199
Grant funding for building project	-	-	-	-	-	-	226,301
Share of support costs (see note 9)	96,693	67,828	20,914	-	-	185,435	210,291
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	3,738	3,162	-	-	-	6,900	6,600
	709,937	385,926	129,792	9,431	25,483	1,260,569	1,431,391

8 **Charitable activities (Continued)**

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Training & Education	Building Project	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Analysis by fund							
Unrestricted funds	10,089	44,153	10,086	9,431	-	73,759	
Restricted funds	699,848	341,773	119,706	-	25,483	1,186,810	
	709,937	385,926	129,792	9,431	25,483	1,260,569	
For the year ended 31 March 2023							
Unrestricted funds	1,154	1,152	1,653	3,137	-		7,096
Restricted funds	630,844	367,136	154,234	-	272,081		1,424,295
	631,998	368,288	155,887	3,137	272,081		1,431,391

9 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2024	2023	Basis of allocation
	£	£	£	£	
Rent and rates	17,686	-	17,686	39,462	Useage
Insurance	11,484	-	11,484	9,540	Useage
Heat and light	10,949	-	10,949	12,370	Useage
Maintenance	17,346	-	17,346	16,833	Useage
Recruitment	7,273	-	7,273	3,058	Useage
Staff training	20,421	-	20,421	14,016	Useage
Other staff costs	14,950	-	14,950	11,464	Useage
Print, post & stationery	9,295	-	9,295	14,959	Useage
Telephone	9,847	-	9,847	9,353	Useage
IT support	10,038	-	10,038	12,657	Useage
Bank charges	154	-	154	143	Useage
Subscriptions	1,410	-	1,410	1,049	Useage
Hosting and PR	10,611	-	10,611	23,800	Useage
Corporate services	26,608	-	26,608	29,304	Useage
Sundry office expenses	17,363	-	17,363	12,283	Useage
Audit and accountancy fees	-	6,900	6,900	6,600	Governance
	185,435	6,900	192,335	216,891	
Analysed between					
Charitable activities	185,435	6,900	192,335	216,891	

10 Net movement in funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	6,900	6,600
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	41,515	31,156
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	204	-

11 Directors

None of the directors (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the company during the year.

During the year a company, of which Ms E Doherty is a director, made a donation to the charitable company of £10,000 (2023 - £nil).

12 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
	23	23

Employment costs	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	795,931	717,990
Social security costs	67,146	74,787
Other pension costs	45,471	41,863
	908,548	834,640

The charity considers its key management personnel to comprise of the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive, the Children's Services Manager, Resource Manager and the Engagement Manager. The total employment benefits including employer pension contributions of the key management personnel were £178,543 (2023 - £188,300).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Land & buildings	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2023	1,175,126	23,780	32,069	1,230,975
Additions	(94,340)	-	47,531	(46,809)
Disposals	-	-	(2,435)	(2,435)
At 31 March 2024	1,080,786	23,780	77,165	1,181,731
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2023	52,606	23,780	12,639	89,025
Depreciation charged in the year	21,616	-	19,899	41,515
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	-	(2,231)	(2,231)
At 31 March 2024	74,222	23,780	30,307	128,309
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2024	1,006,564	-	46,858	1,053,422
At 31 March 2023	1,122,520	-	19,430	1,141,950

Freehold land and buildings represents the charity's share of the purchase and redevelopment costs of a property that is owned jointly with another charity.

15 Fixed asset investments

	Unlisted investments
	£
Cost or valuation	
At 1 April 2023 & 31 March 2024	1
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	1
At 31 March 2023	1

The charity holds 50% of the issued share capital in a joint venture company Vi-able Corporate Services Limited (Vi-able).

16 Debtors

	2024	2023
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	182,155	183,115
Prepayments	9,468	9,694
	191,623	192,809

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Bank overdrafts	19	4,230	8,752
Other borrowings	19	6,174	5,092
Trade creditors		51,681	-
Other creditors		1,536	3,824
Accruals		36,547	168,240
		100,168	185,908

18 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

		2024 £	2023 £
Borrowings	19	110,393	80,868

19 Loans and overdrafts

	2024 £	2023 £
Bank overdrafts	4,230	8,752
Other borrowings	116,567	85,960
	120,797	94,712
Payable within one year	10,404	13,844
Payable after one year	110,393	80,868
Amounts included above which fall due after five years:		
Payable by instalments	82,372	60,499

20 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes	2024 £	2023 £
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	45,471	41,863

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund.

21 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

		Movement in funds			Movement in funds		
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Building project (miscellaneous funders)	216,074	970,011	(271,703)	914,382	3,967	(25,483)	892,866
Belfast City Council	-	3,377	(3,377)	-	1,500	(1,500)	-
BHSCT	4,724	56,999	(56,994)	4,729	58,999	(58,337)	5,391
Children in Need - Next Steps	881	24,197	(25,078)	-	-	-	-
Community Foundation	3,893	7,832	(9,685)	2,040	-	(2,040)	-
DOH Core Funding	2,615	41,179	(41,179)	2,615	20,590	(23,205)	-
DOH TSP training	450	-	-	450	-	(450)	-
Erasmus+	2,449	8,375	(7,885)	2,939	-	(1,688)	1,251
Esmee Fairbairn	1,123	12,000	(950)	12,173	82,000	(68,596)	25,577
Secure Research Care Project	5,431	-	(875)	4,556	4,300	(2,668)	6,188
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 1	94,014	562,502	(575,109)	81,407	562,502	(629,743)	14,166
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 3	9,567	202,863	(195,223)	17,207	171,356	(180,420)	8,143
National Lottery Community Fund	22,979	170,436	(182,679)	10,736	130,555	(140,920)	371
Dormant Accounts Fund NI	-	-	-	-	85,800	(23,061)	62,739
NIGALA	1,519	-	-	1,519	-	-	1,519
NIGALA Forums		-	-	-	5,940	-	5,940
Paul Hamlyn	133	-	(133)	-	8,750	(1,290)	7,460
Act For Change	42,368	-	(34,657)	7,711	-	(7,711)	-
NHSCT Pilot	-	14,374	-	14,374	-	(2,809)	11,565
Other Restricted Funds	1,854	22,276	(18,768)	5,362	13,102	(16,889)	1,575
	410,074	2,096,421	(1,424,295)	1,082,200	1,149,361	(1,186,810)	1,044,751

21 Restricted funds (Continued)

BUILDING PROJECT
To enable the purchase of new premises at 100 Great Patrick Street and to support the ongoing renovation project of same.

This includes funding received from Everun for solar panels and The Clothworkers Foundation for equipment and fittings for sensory room.

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
This was a summer community grant which provided funding for young people's summer activities.

BHSCT
A direct advocacy service to children and young people accommodated in Beechcroft.

CHILDREN IN NEED - NEXT STEPS
To work in partnership with young people and engage with children in care on the impact of Covid and design standards for participation.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
To deliver a coaching, mentoring support and a bursary to support young people aged 16-25 who are in or have left care.

DOH
Contributions toward the cost of Care Day.

DOH CORE FUNDING
To enhance our policy advocacy work and ensure children and young people are central to the development of legislation, policy and practice.

DOH TSP Training
Training support programme for voluntary and community sector.

ERASMUS+
The project aims to support young children's participation in child welfare/protection services by strengthening professional collaboration with children aged 12 years and under.

ESMEE FAIRBAIRN
To deliver and develop a corporate parenting training programme, co-designed with and delivered by care experienced young people to agencies supporting them, to reduce barriers and inequalities faced by children in care and care leavers.

SECURE RESEARCH CARE PROJECT
To facilitate a study to investigate good practice in secure care.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE GROUP (SPPG)
The provision of advocacy services for looked after children, aged 10 – 17 and care experienced young people aged 18-21 years across Northern Ireland. Support for education, training and employment needs of looked after and care experienced young people across Northern Ireland. Recruitment and ongoing support of a young people's reference group for the review of children's social service.

21 Restricted funds (Continued)

NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND

'See me, Hear me' project will provide advocacy, coaching and community mentors for vulnerable young people who have left care. The programme also provides opportunities for children and young people to take part in lead on social action projects.

DORMANT ACCOUNTS FUND NI
To fund Ready Steady Resilient, to improve VOYPIC's long term sustainability, resilience, and capacity.

NIGALA
To support annual conference.

NIGALA FORUMS
To provide a participation forum programme.

PAUL HAMLYN - 5 NATIONS ONE VOICE (5NIV)
Funding to support 5 nations CEO meetings.

ACT FOR CHANGE
Paul Hamlyn & Esmee Fairbairn matched by # iwilll fund to support 'Shake it Off' programme which tackles stigma in care and social justice.

NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST (NHSCT) PILOT
To provide independent advocacy support to young people who were involved in child protection case conferences.

OTHER RESTRICTED FUNDS
Included in Other Restricted Funds are the following:

Include Youth
Reimbursement of expenses related to share premises in Ballymena & Derry.

Care Day

DFC Job Start
Job Start scheme which provides jobs for young people at risk of long-term unemployment.

Community Foundation Young Reps
Funding awards towards training costs for Young Reps Forum.

22 Designated funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Activities - Booted and Suited	789	-	-	-	789	-	(150)	(639)	-
Youth Activities	9,477	5,000	(4,016)	6,507	16,968	-	(2,470)	(14,498)	-
Youth Activities Southern Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,500	2,500
Workplace Co-ordinator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,796	14,796
MIS	47,782	-	-	(47,782)	-	-	-	-	-
Youth Activities Western Area	310	-	-	-	310	-	-	(310)	-
Moving and dilapidation costs	12,120	-	(7,960)	20,615	24,775	-	(24,775)	-	-
Regional dilapidation costs	-	-	-	10,000	10,000	-	-	(8,000)	2,000
Mortgage 100 GPS (12 months)	-	-	-	11,016	11,016	-	-	(11,016)	-
100 GPS Project Build	50,000	-	-	-	50,000	-	(50,000)	-	-
	120,478	5,000	(11,976)	356	113,858	-	(77,395)	(17,167)	19,296

The VOYPIC Board of Directors at the end of the financial year 2024 agreed to designate £19,296 from unrestricted reserves to cover the following.

- £2,500 donations designated to youth activities in the Southern Area.
- £14,796 to cover 100 GPS workplace coordinator.
- £2,000 regional dilapidation costs increased for regional offices.

23 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	25,167	1,028,255	1,053,422	26,286	1,115,664	1,141,950
Investments	1	-	1	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	382,050	126,889	508,939	483,193	(33,464)	449,729
Long term liabilities	-	(110,393)	(110,393)	(80,868)	-	(80,868)
	407,218	1,044,751	1,451,969	428,612	1,082,200	1,510,812

24 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities

A contingent liability exists to repay grants received in relation to capital building costs should certain conditions not be fulfilled by the charity. In this regard charges have been registered by The Department for Communities who partly financed the building works.

A legal charge dated 15 December 2022 in favour of The Department of Communities is held over the property at 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast, BT1 2LH. This charge is in respect of funding received for the development of the property.

25 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

At the reporting end date the company had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Within one year	1,766	41,671
Between two and five years	3,091	21,175
	4,857	62,846

26 Share capital

The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of the members is limited to £1 per member.

27 Contingent Liability

A legal charge dated 15 December 2022 in favour of The Department of Communities is held over the property at 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast, BT1 2LH.

This charge is in respect of funding received for the development of the property.

28 Related party transactions

(i) Control

The charity was under the control of the Board of Directors throughout the year.

(ii) Vi-able Corporate Services Limited

The charity holds 50% of the issued share capital in a joint venture company Vi-able Corporate Services Limited (Vi-able).

During the year Vi-able charged the charity £41,673 (2023 - £32,351) for the provision of corporate services. During the year Vi-able occupied offices at 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast a property jointly owned by the charity and Include Youth, with rent and service charges receivable by the charity of £4,556 (2023 - £nil).

At the year end there was a debtor balance owing from Vi-able Corporate Services Limited of £13,933 (2023- £10,517).

29 Cash generated from operations

	2024	2023
	£	£
(Deficit)/surpus for the year	(58,843)	685,244
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(15,879)	(1,405)
Donated assets	-	(472,611)
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	204	-
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	41,515	31,156
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	1,186	(90,350)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	35,219	(4,526)
(Decrease) in deferred income	-	(290,000)
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	3,402	(142,492)

30 Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1 April 2023	Cash flows	Acquisitions and disposals	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	442,828	(25,344)	-	417,484
Bank overdrafts	(8,752)	4,522	-	(4,230)
	434,076	(20,822)	-	413,254
Loans falling due within one year	(5,092)	33,918	(35,000)	(6,174)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(80,868)	(29,525)	-	(110,393)
	348,116	(16,429)	(35,000)	296,687

Voice of Young People in Care

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105019

Annual report

Voice of Young People in Care [VOYPIC]
100 Great Patrick Street
Belfast
BT1 2LU

Company Limited by Guarantee **NI030526**
Charity Registration Number **NIC105019**

Administration Details
Karen Stirling [karen.stirling@voypic.org]
Public email: info@voypic.org
Telephone Number: 02890244888

Director's report 2023-2024

Objectives and activities

Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) was established for exclusively charitable purposes; namely to ensure that the general welfare and interests of care experienced children and young people are advanced. The Directors have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the company should undertake.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Created in 1993 by a group of young people in care and professionals, VOYPIC is the charity for children and young people with a lived-in experience of care in Northern Ireland. We promote the rights and voice of children in care and care leavers.

The current strategic plan focusses on four key strategic aims:

1. Empowering children and young people
2. Innovating practice through participation and co-production
3. Creating change through policy advocacy
4. Organisational growth and stability

Our Mission: Working together with children and young adults for a better care experience and life after care.

Our Vision: Every child in care in Northern Ireland feels safe, valued and loved. Every young person leaving care does so with dignity and respect, and thrives into adulthood.

OUR WORK:

Advocacy and Awareness-raising: We raise awareness of the rights of children and young people, their views and experiences living in and leaving care, and their priorities for change.

Making Connections and Capacity Building: We connect young people with a lived experience of care with their peers. We host regular groups, participation forums and activities that build self-confidence, personal, social and life skills, whilst making new connections and friends.

Independent Advocacy and Advice Service: We support young people to exercise their rights by assisting them to; participate in decision making processes, express their views and concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Youth Participation and Coproduction: We help children and young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. We create a culture of listening that enables children and

young people to influence the world around them. Our programmes equip and prepare young people to take part in co-production activities.

Influencing Change through Policy Advocacy: We use our specialist knowledge and insight into the views and experiences of children and young people. We work in partnership with them to influence the development of legislation, policy and practice.

OUR VALUES:

VOYPIC's work is underpinned by five core values which not only inform what we do but also how we do it.

Relationship Based. We are driven by the needs and aspirations of children and young people. We listen, learn, and work in partnership with them to ensure their voice is heard. We are dedicated to empowering young people so that they reach their potential in whatever they choose to do.

Commitment. We are committed, passionate and enthusiastic champions for change. We are persistent and determined in promoting the voice and defending the rights of children and young people in leaving care and into adulthood.

Social Justice. We work to a strong moral code rooted in ideals of social justice. We challenge the oppression and discrimination faced by children and young people in care and seek to reduce the stigma they face in their daily lives.

Respect for Rights. We respect the rights of children and young people and are prepared to challenge other to do the same.

Solution Focused. We are positive about the future. We are proud of what we do and what we have achieved. We face problems with a solution-oriented mentality, and we encourage our staff, stakeholders and young people themselves to be problem solvers.

2023-2024 Organisational Overview

From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 our staff team consisted of **23** members.

During the year we supported **621** children and young people; **554** were supported directly through our services with **67** children and young people attending VOYPIC events and activities.

416 Children and young people received support through our regional independent advocacy service for children in care and care leavers.
14 Children and young people received advocacy support through Speak Up programme.

19 Young adults received individual advocacy support through the See Me Hear Me programme.
21 Children and young people received one to one support and coaching.
88 Children and young people took part in social action programmes.
120 Children and young people took part in participation forums.
63 Children and young people participated in policy consultations.
17 Young people undertook a leadership role.
58 Young people were supported through our independent advocacy service at Beechcroft.
159 Children and young people attended activity days.
139 Members of MyVOYPIC scheme.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1. EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY SUPPORT:

Regional independent advocacy service for children in care and care leavers

- **416** children and young people received advocacy support
- **335** advocacy cases were closed during the year
- **82%** of closed advocacy cases were fully resolved, an increase of **4%** from previous year
- **13.5%** of closed cases were partially resolved
- **2.5%** of casework closed unresolved, a decrease of **3.5%** from previous year.

Impact of Advocacy Support

- **94%** of young people felt listened to because of the advocacy support they receive
- **91%** of young people stated they would use the advocacy service again
- **68%** of young people whose cases had been resolved reported that their rights were protected through our advocacy support
- **60%** of young people felt they were able to influence decision making with the help of their advocate.

Advocacy in Secure Care

In 2023-2024 VOYPIC supported **46** young people at **65** presentations to the Regional Multi Agency Panel for Admission to Secure Care. Advocates support young people to share their wishes and feelings to the panel about any safety concerns, and how they can keep themselves safe. **90%** of all young people offered advocacy support for panel accepted help. Young people continued to avail of advocacy support for care and exit planning whilst placed in secure care.

Advocacy Workshops

26 advocacy workshops were delivered to **284** young people living in foster families and young people leaving care across Northern Ireland. Theses workshops are designed to educate children and young people about their rights and entitlements whilst in care. The workshops explore a range of issues; support for leaving care, review meetings, accommodation, play, and identity.

Advocacy in Beechcroft Child & Adolescent Mental Health Unit

Beechcroft Child & Adolescent Mental Health Unit provides specialist care to young people from across Northern Ireland. VOYPIC provides a dedicated advocate located in the hospital on behalf of the BHSCT.

We supported **58** individuals through **62** pieces of advocacy case work. We helped young people share their views, participate in Patient Forums, and take part in consultations on issues such as administering IV nutrition and mealtimes.

Speak up Pilot

This year we piloted advocacy support for young people in Northern Health & Social Care Trust area to participate in child protection case conferences. The pilot is assessing the effectiveness of advocacy to support young people's meaningful involvement in child protection processes. During the year we supported **14** young people in case conferences.

Advocacy for Young Adults

Often, the need for help and support does not end when a young person moves on from leaving and aftercare services. With support from The National Lottery Community Fund, we have been able to support **19** young adults, aged 21+, who no longer have access to statutory support services, to resolve **30** different issues.

PARTICIPATION SERVICES:

SEE ME HEAR ME programme

Through this programme VOYPIC facilitated the development of three peer support groups for young care leavers. Thirty-three young people took part in the groups throughout the year. Peer support groups provide a space and environment for care leavers to meet with their peers and create and sustain social networks within their communities.

88 young people took part in social action projects. These projects give young people an opportunity to use their lived experience to affect change in their community. Examples of social action projects undertaken this year include:

- Guerilla chalk street art and urban gardening, in partnership with Ulster University, Belfast
- Production and distribution of health and hygiene packs
- Creation and publication of a storybook about coming into care
- Development of a 'Pizza Advice'- a pizza box advice centre
- Delivery of second 'Care 2 Swap' – a social clothes swap event
- Organising and running a Halloween Haunted House for young people in care.

Participation Forums

We facilitated weekly participation forums in each of the five HSCTs, involving **120** children and young people. Our participation forums help young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. They provide a safe space for young people to have their say and engage directly with decision makers on matters important to them.

STRATEGIC AIM 2. INNOVATING THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

Young Reps

Young Reps are the youth leaders of VOYPIC. They represent and advocate on behalf of young people in and leaving care and advise the VOYPIC Board of Directors and the VOYPIC Leadership Team on how to deliver the Strategic Plan. There are currently 17 VOYPIC Young Reps, including two *ex-officio* members of the VOYPIC Board of Directors.

During the year the Young Reps took part in a team-building residential and undertook training for their new role. For example, they received Media Training with Bespoke Communications, to develop their skills and confidence to use traditional and social media to communicate their key messages on life in care.

Young Reps coordinated and helped deliver VOYPIC's 30 birthday activities in October 2023 and contributed to the annual Care Day working group and the Care Day Awards Ceremony in February 2024.

Ulster University Partnership

We worked with young leaders to co-design a series of workshops for students in Ulster University, focused on improving student's understanding of care and issues impacting children and young people. Workshops were delivered in both the Belfast and Magee campus.

UNICEF Partnership

We continued to work in partnership with the Derry & Strabane District Council, the Western Health and Social Care Trust, and other voluntary and community organisations to promote Derry as a 'Child Friendly City'. We supported young people to take part in several workshops

and online training sessions throughout the year, to promote young people's rights across the DSDC area.

STRATEGIC AIM 3. CREATING CHANGE

Care Day 24 'Celebrating and Connecting the Care Experienced Community'

Care Day 24 was held on Friday 16 February. In the lead up to the big day the Young Reps hosted a coffee morning for 'VOYPIC Alumni', that is young people who participated in VOYPIC's programmes in the past. This reunion was attended by over 30 former service users, who took the opportunity to reconnect and have a tour of the new building at 100 Great Patrick Street.

During Care Day 24, everyone was encouraged to put their 'Hands Up for Care Day'. Once again, many individuals and organisations across Northern Ireland, around the UK and Ireland, and further afield, got involved in the activity, by writing #CareDay24 on their hand and sharing a selfie on social media. This provided a great opportunity to 'celebrate and connect the care experienced community' globally on Care Day.

On the morning of Care Day, VOYPIC hosted a 'Family Fun Day' in New Life City Church, Belfast. This event was attended by more than 50 care experienced families, all enjoying games, craft activities, a petting farm, and giant inflatables.

The flagship event for Care Day 24 was the first annual Care Day Awards. Between Christmas and the start of February, anyone could nominate a care experienced young person for a Care Day Award, in a range of categories. Sixty-five nominations were received across the categories, and the judges met in early February to select the winners.

The awards were presented at a special ceremony on the event of Care Day, in the Great Hall of Queen's University, Belfast. The event was hosted by BBC reporter, Mark Simpson. The event was a resounding success, with many commenting on the celebratory, positive nature of the ceremony, and praising the stories of those recognised with an award.

Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services

The Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services was published on Wednesday 21 June 2023.

Throughout the period of the review, VOYPIC supported a group of young people with experience of the services covered by the review to act as the Experts by Experience (EBE) Reference Group to the Review. Young people were involved in the launch event, including speaking about the experiences of the EBE Reference Group, and taking part in media interviews.

VOYPIC supported young people to participate in the public consultation on the recommendations of the Review, and the Department of Health's proposals for delivery on the recommendations. In March, a group of young people from the EBE Reference Group and VOYPIC Young Reps attended a meeting of the Health Committee at Stormont where the Review was being considered.

PSNI-NICCY Project

VOYPIC supported three young people to take part in a programme of activities coordinated by NICCY and the PSNI. This included young people being part of the launch of the PSNI Youth Engagement Strategy, as well as participating in a steering group to develop a new structure for youth engagement with policing in Northern Ireland.

UNCRC Reporting

In spring 2023, VOYPIC supported four young people to travel to Geneva, to present to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as part of the UK delegation to the Committee. On return, the young people worked with peers from partner organisations to plan and host a briefing session for a larger group of young people, informing them of the engagement. They also helped deliver a session for professionals, including duty bearers, in the autumn.

All-Party Group on Youth Participation

VOYPIC has taken up membership of the All-Party Working Group on Youth Participation, chaired by Colin McGrath MLA and facilitated by the Northern Ireland Youth Forum (NIYF). A member of the VOYPIC staff team, alongside at least one young person from the organisation, has attended each meeting since the APG was established in October 2023.

Five Nations, One Voice network: (5N1V)

The Network continues to meet to develop relationships and shared learning across the five charities. During the year staff from across the network came together for Knowledge Exchange session based on shared interests and priority areas of work.

STRATEGIC AIM 4. GROWTH AND STABILITY

Grand Opening of 100GPS

Following years of planning and development VOYPIC was delighted to move into their new premises at 100 Great Patrick Street in November 2022, alongside Include Youth and Viable Corporate Services.

To mark this achievement a planning group, made up of young people and staff from VOYPIC and Include Youth, came together to develop plans for a grand opening. Young people took a

leading role in coordinating the activities, including agreeing the theme for the day, decorations, catering, and the activities on offer.

The Grand Opening took place on Thursday 22 June. The building was officially opened by six young people- three from each charity - representing the themes of HISTORY, TOGETHERNESS, HOME and FUTURE.

The event was attended by over **150** children and young people, sector professionals, decision makers, and supporters.

VOYPIC30 – 30th Birthday Celebrations

In October 2023, VOYPIC celebrated its 30th birthday. An online campaign shared stories from those currently involved with the organisation, alongside those who have been involved over the past 30 years.

On 20 October we hosted the VOYPIC30 Conference at Ulster University, showcasing some of the key milestones for the organisation over the past 30 years, telling the story of care experience in Northern Ireland from the early 90s to the present day. The conference was co-designed with a group of VOYPIC Young Reps, and all presentations and activities were co-delivered by them.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIEINCE

To improve VOYPIC's long term sustainability, resilience and capacity we secured funding through the Dormant Accounts Fund NI to develop the leadership team's capacity, increase and diversify our income, and strengthen governance arrangements.

A governance health check was completed with Board members in May and June 2023, using the Code of Good Governance self-assessment framework. Following the self-assessment an action plan was developed highlighting key actions for the year.

The leadership team undertook development training to ensure team effectiveness. The training focused communication, efficient utilisation of resources, building long term relationships, social and psychological safety to ensure space for crucial conversations, roles and responsibilities, accountability, and change awareness and readiness.

During the year we implemented a new management information system and developed impact data measurements and collection processes. This will improve our reporting to funders, potential supporters and donors, and generate better public awareness of our work with children and young people with a lived experience of care.

Financial Review: VOYPIC strives to meet all targets and objectives agreed with its funders, with all expenditure monitored and benchmarked against budgets.

The Board of Directors consider that the unrestricted funds of the charity have sufficient resources and assets available which are adequate to fulfil their obligations.

At 31 March 2024 the balance of unrestricted reserves was £407,218 (2023 – £415,494) of which £19,296 (2023- £113,853) has been designated by the Board at the year end.

Restricted funds are restricted for the purpose as specified in letters of offer provided by the funding bodies. At 31 March 2024 the balances of restricted funds totalled £1,044,751 (2023-£1,082,200).

Reserves policy: The Board aims to maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds at a level which equates to approximately three months of unrestricted charitable expenditure. Currently we hold the equivalent of 3.5 months expenditure. The Board of Directors monitor and review the reserves policy on an annual basis.
The Board considers that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, VOYPIC will be able to continue its activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors has decided that VOYPIC should hold financial reserves because:

1. VOYPIC has no long-term funding sources and is entirely dependent for income from year to year on short term grants and donor funding, which is inevitably subject to fluctuation.
2. VOYPIC requires protection against, and the ability to continue operating, despite fluctuation in income or events threatening to the organisation.
3. VOYPIC requires the ability to continue to employ workers and continue our projects in between periods of grant funding.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors considers it prudent that unrestricted reserves should be sufficient to "avoid the necessity of realising fixed assets held for the charity's use" and to "cover three months of direct and indirect expenses".

Going Concern: The charity's funding streams have remained constant during the years 2023-2023. With a projected shortfall for the year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 of £56,036. The Board recognises the low level of risk. However, they take an active approach in seeking to mitigate any risk to the charity's future. A fundraising plan is in place to address any potential shortfalls, and scenario planning continues.

The Board has considered the secured funding in place for the next few years, which enables the board to forward plan and be proactive about their funding in the future.

The Directors are satisfied that the charity's financial sustainability of services to care experienced children and young people in the financial year 2024 – 2025.

The Directors aim to increase fundraising activities and to generate additional income by ways of increased training and consultancy work.

After making enquiries, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the Company has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

At 31 March 2024, the charity had cash in bank of £417,484, with unrestricted funds of £407,218 at the year end, £19.296 of which have been designated for use in the year ending 31 March 2025.

In summary, based on the funding in place for 2024/2025 the directors have a reasonable expectation that the organisation has adequate resources to continue its operational activity. Along with written representations from the Board and the reserves of the charity. We do not believe there to be a concern over the operation of VOYPIC Limited in the foreseeable future.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors considers it prudent that unrestricted reserves should be sufficient to "avoid the necessity of realising fixed assets held for the charity's use" and to "cover three months of direct and indirect expenses.

Risk Review: The Board has a risk management strategy which comprises:

- An annual review of principle risks
- The establishment of policies, systems & procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review, and.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage potential impact on charity should those risks materialise.

The key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available funds and cash flow.

Structure, Governance & Management

The Board of Directors and the Chief Executive comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling the charity and running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis.

The company is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity for taxation purposes. It is run by a Board of Directors, no more than twelve and no less than five in total.
None of the directors have any beneficial interest in the company.
The Directors who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr. P McClenaghan – Chairperson
Ms. F Nicol – (Resigned 31 December 2023)
Mr. C Nicol - Treasurer
Ms. M. McCallan
Ms. M Kennedy Vice Chair
Ms. E. Doherty
Dr. P. McCafferty
Ms. R McCooey – (Appointed 3 January 2024)
Ms. E Ibrahim – Young People's Representative (Appointed 16 May 2024)
Ms. J Dowell – Young People's Representative (Appointed 1 June 2024)

The Board of Directors has the power at any time to fill any vacancy on the board by co-option. At the Annual General Meeting directors are appointed by election. The Board of Directors meet on a monthly basis. New Board members may be sought through open advertising. The interview panel is made up of young people and current Board members. When appointed, Board members complete a full induction into the charity and receive a welcome pack which includes a brief history of the charity, a copy of the last three years annual accounts, annual reports and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee; 'What you need to know and Public Benefit running of a charity.

None of the directors has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the directors are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of winding up.

Key Management Personnel Remuneration
The Board of Directors and the Chief Executive comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling the charity and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis. All Board members give of their time freely and no remuneration was paid in the year. Board members are required to disclose all relevant conflict of interests and register them at each monthly board meeting and in accordance with the Trust's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises.

Employee involvement
The charity's policy is to consult and discuss with employees any matters likely to affect their interests. Information on matters of concern is given through staff briefings which

seek to achieve a common awareness on the part of all employees of the financial and economic factors affecting the charity's performance.

Disabled persons
Applications for employment are fully considered, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the applicant concerned. In the event of members of staff becoming disabled, every effort is made to ensure that their employment within the company continues and that the appropriate training is arranged. It is the policy of the company that the training, career development and promotion of disabled persons should as far as possible, be identical to that of other employees.

Statement of Directors Responsibilities
The Directors are responsible for preparing the Directors Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and the United Kingdom Accounting Standards [United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice].

Company Law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair account of the affairs of the company, the incoming resources, and the application of resources.

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 2015 [FRS 102]
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements and.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose, with reasonable accuracy, the financial position of the 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

AUDITOR
In accordance with the company's article, a resolution proposing the GMcG Lisburn be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption.

Disclosure of information to the auditor

Each of the Directors has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware that is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

Signed: _____ Date: 10/12/25

[Peter McClenaghan - Chair]

Voice of Young People in Care

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105019

Annual return

GMcG
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Voice of Young People In Care (the 'company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the statement of financial position, the statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

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Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' 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.
- the directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

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Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the statement of directors' responsibilities, the directors 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 directors 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 directors are responsible for assessing the 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 directors either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and assessing potential risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliances with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- The nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance, including the charitable company's remuneration policies for directors, bonus levels and performance targets, if any;
- Results of our enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- Any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the charitable company's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
    - Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instance of non-compliance;
    - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
    - The internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- The matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in income recognition. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the charitable company operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Companies Act 2006, and local tax legislation.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty.

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Audit response to risks identified

Our procedures to respond to the risks identified included the following:

- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- Enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with tax authorities; and
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. In addition, as with any audit, there remains a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as they may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

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

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Use of our report

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

Susan Dunlop

Mrs Susan Dunlop FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of GMcG Lisburn

10 December 2024

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Century House
40 Crescent Business Park
Lisburn
BT28 2GN

Voice of Young People in Care

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105019

Accounts

Charity registration number NIC 105019

Company registration number NI030526 (Northern Ireland)

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Directors	Mr P McClenaghan - Chair	
	Ms F Nicol	
	Mr C Nicol - Treasurer	
	Mrs M McCallin	
	Miss M Kennedy	
	Ms E Doherty	(Appointed 14 December 2022)
	Dr P McCafferty	(Appointed 3 December 2022)
Secretary	Mrs A Toal	
Charity number	NIC 105019	
Company number	NI030526	
Registered office	100 Great Patrick Street Belfast BT1 2LU	
Auditor	GMcG Lisburn Century House 40 Crescent Business Park Lisburn BT28 2GN	
Bankers	Danske Bank Forestside Shopping Centre Upper Galwally Belfast BT8 6FX	
Solicitors	Scullion & Green 50 St Patricks Avenue Downpatrick Co Down BT30 6DW	

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

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VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The directors present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the company's Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities
Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) was established for exclusively charitable purposes; namely to ensure that the general welfare and interests of care experienced children and young people are advanced.

Mission, Vision, and Values
Created in 1993 by a group of young people in care and professionals, VOYPIC is the charity for children and young people with a lived-in experience of care in Northern Ireland. We promote the rights and voice of children in care and care leavers.

The current strategic plan focuses on four key strategic aims:

1. Empowering children and young people
2. Innovating practice through participation and co-production
3. Creating change
4. Organisational growth and stability

Our Mission: Working together with children and young adults for a better care experience and life after care.

Our Vision: Every child in care in Northern Ireland feels safe, valued and loved. Every young person leaving care does so with dignity and respect, and thrives into adulthood.

OUR WORK:
Advocacy and Awareness-raising
We raise awareness of the rights of children and young people, their views and experiences living in and leaving care, and their priorities for change.

Making Connections and Capacity Building
We connect young people with a lived experience of care with their peers. We host regular groups, participation forums and activities that build self-confidence, personal, social and life skills, whilst making new connections and friends.

Independent Advocacy and Advice Service
We support young people to exercise their rights by providing assistance to; participate in decision making processes, express their views and concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Youth Participation and Co-production
We help children and young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. We create a culture of listening that enables children and young people to influence the world around them. Our programmes equip and prepare young people to take part in co-production activities.

Influencing Change through Policy Advocacy
We use our specialist knowledge and insight into the views and experiences of children and young people; we work in partnership with them to influence the development of legislation, policy and practice.

OUR VALUES:
VOYPIC's work is underpinned by five core values which not only inform what we do but also how we do it.

Relationship Based: We are driven by the needs and aspirations of children and young people. We listen, learn, and work in partnership with them to ensure their voice is heard. We are dedicated to empowering young people so that they reach their potential in whatever they choose to do.

Commitment: We are committed, passionate and enthusiastic champions for change. We are persistent and determined in promoting the voice and defending the rights of children and young people in leaving care.

Social Justice: We work to a strong moral code rooted in ideals of social justice. We challenge the oppression and discrimination faced by children and young people in care and seek to reduce the stigma they face in their daily lives.

Respect for Rights: We respect the rights of children and young people and are prepared to challenge others to do the same.

Solution Focused: We are positive about the future. We are proud of what we do and what we have achieved. We face problems with a solution-oriented mentality, and we encourage our staff, stakeholders and young people themselves to be problem solvers.

The directors have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the company should undertake.

Achievements and performance
This year VOYPIC's participation and independent advocacy services supported **544 children and young people.**

How did we support them?

353 children and young people living in and leaving care received advocacy support.

13 children and young people received one-to-one support and coaching.

64 children and young people took part in social action programmes.

30 young people took part in peer support groups.

114 children and young people took part in participation forums.

18 young people took part in our youth leadership programme and Young Reps Forum

61 children and young people used our independent advocacy service at Beechcroft.

27 care experienced young adults received advocacy support.

Who else did we reach?

300 people attended our care day fun day events.

127 children and young people were members of MyVOYPIC.

100 young people took part in policy consultations.

34 young people attended the activity days.

26 children and young people were members of the Experts by Experience Reference Group, supporting the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services

We coordinated and submitted nine responses to policy consultations:

- UK Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (Children's Law Centre)
- SBNI Strategic Plan (Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland)
- Protocol for HSCTs/PSNI Interface (PSNI/HSCB)
- Publication of RQIA Inspection Reports on Children's Homes (RQIA)
- Custodial Arrangements for Children (DoJ)
- Raising the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (DoJ)
- Amendments to Independent Guardian Service (DoH)
- Support for Care Leavers (DoH)
- Foster Placement and Foster Agency Regulations (DoH)

EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY SERVICES

VOYPIC provides independent advocacy services for a range of children and young people. These services support children and young people living in care or receiving leaving and after care services; care experienced young people aged 16+ who no longer receive help from social services; and children and young people placed in Beechcroft.

1. INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY SUPPORT: for children and young people living in care or receiving leaving and after care services.

This service is commissioned by the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG). Throughout the year we supported 353 children and young people in 396 advocacy cases, with 654 support needs.

The top three reasons for referrals to this service were:

1. Where they live (placement),
2. Rights and entitlement,
3. Family Time (contact).

The service also hosted:

- 312 visiting advocacy session in children's homes
- 24 activity days, attended by 235 children and young people.
- 22 advocacy workshops, attended by 282 young people on a range of issues.

2. INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY SUPPORT IN BEECHCROFT

Beechcroft Child and Adolescent Mental Health Hospital provides specialist care to young people from across Northern Ireland. VOYPIC provides a dedicated advocate located in the hospital on behalf of BHSCT.

The advocate supported 61 individuals through 71 pieces of case work.

3. INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY SUPPORT FOR CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG ADULTS

This service is supported by the National Lottery Community Fund. 27 young adults received help from an advocate through this programme.

This service is supported by the National Lottery Community Fund. 27 young adults between the age of 21-25 received help from an advocate through this programme.

The vast majority (22) of the young adults self-referred for advocacy support, with again the majority living either independently (22) or in a form of adult supported accommodation (3). Two young people reached out for support from Hydebank Wood.

There was a total of 51 support needs for the young adults, which covered a wide range of issues and. topics, though the highest number of requests were in relation to ongoing support as their pathway plan ended (12) and in relation to their living arrangements (10). Other supports included information about their rights and entitlements, training and employment, access to other support services, access to files and seeking asylum.

VOYPIC's Participation Services:

VOYPIC's participative programmes were supported by the National Lottery Community Fund, Community Foundation NI, and the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG).

VOYPIC connects children and young people with a lived experience of care. We host regular groups, participation forums, programmes and activities that help young people develop their self-confidence, personal and social skills, whilst making new connections and friends. Our participative practice helps young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. VOYPIC provides a space for young people to have their say, engage directly with decision makers, and influence legislation, guidance, policy, and practice on issues important to them.

This year we supported 239 children and young people in our participation programmes, through:

- Activity days
- Personal development programmes and capacity building
- Coaching
- Participation in regional and local forums
- Peers support groups
- Social Action Projects

Move on Up Bursary and Befriending Scheme: Supported by the Community Foundation NI we distributed £18, 000 of bursaries to 37 young people. 15 young people received support from a mentor.

INNOVATING THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

Separated by Geography, Connected by Care Experience

In partnership with Queens University, Belfast, and the University of Cape Town, VOYPIC supported a group of young people to take part in the 'Separated by Geography, Connected by Care Experience' project. Care leavers from Northern Ireland and South Africa came together online, throughout the year, to share their experiences and explore the similarities and differences in the care systems in their respective countries.

Empowering Care Experienced Parents: A Good Practice Charter and Supporting Resources.
Following the adaption in Wales and Scotland of the 'Good Practice Charter' developed by Cardiff University and Cascade (Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre) to empower care experienced parents, the University was keen to directly from young parents in Northern Ireland. The purpose of the charter is to strengthen support for young parents living in and leaving care. The Charter considers the range of support that should be available to young people before and after they become parents. Five care experience parents from Northern Ireland shared their views and experiences of parenthood. They also gave feedback on the charter and agreed that it should also be adapted by local HSCTs. The team from the University and Cascade have adapted the resources for NI and have agreed to present their research findings and the Charter to all five HSCTS.

Participation forums: VOYPIC facilitates weekly participation forums in each of the five HSCTS. 127 children and young people took part in 187 participation forums.

TRIUMPH: VOYPIC has supported young people to participate in the Youth Advisory Group of a UK-wide project exploring approaches to improving young people's mental health. TRIUMPH – the Transdisciplinary Research for the Improvement of Youth Mental Public Health – brings together young people, practitioners, and policy makers, with academics from across clinical, social sciences, arts and humanities, design, and computer science disciplines, working together to find new ways to improve mental health and wellbeing.

The project culminated in a conference in Edinburgh in October, which was co-designed by the Youth Advisory Group. The event was delivered by the young people, and attracted interest from academics, policy makes and practitioners from across the UK. 5 young people supported to attend THE TRIUMPH Youth Conference.

Participation in Decision Making:
In the run-up to the Northern Ireland Assembly Elections in May, young people met with candidates from the main parties at events in Belfast, Ballymena and Derry-Londonderry. These events- *'Candidate Conversations with the Care Experienced Community'*- provided an opportunity for young people to meet with candidates, learn more about their stance on issues, and set out their priorities for action should the candidate be elected. Feedback from the young people was very positive, with 90% saying they felt the candidates listened to them. On 21 June, young people hosted an event in Stormont- *'Midsummer Tea Party Meet & Greet'*. This event brought together young people with experience of care from across Northern Ireland, to informally meet with new and returning MLAs, to discuss issues important to them, and call for action in the new Assembly.

World Social Work Day

VOYPIC took part in a range of conferences and events to mark World Social Workday in March. A member of the Experts by Experience Reference Group delivered a presentation to an event organised by BASW at Stormont, sharing her experiences and insights as a young people engaging in a co-production activity. She highlighted the need for young people's voices to be at the centre of such projects, and encouraged attendees to explore more how they deliver true co-production.

Two members of the VOYPIC team took part in the Belfast Local Engagement Partnership co-production café in March. This café-style event, with participants moving from table to table, and hearing from different organisations, allowed us to share our experience and learning on how to best support young people to engage in co-production activities. Themes of sharing power over decision making, and ensuring strong parameters from the outset, we identified as key areas for discussion.

Administrative Data Research – ADRNI/QUB/UU
VOYPIC has been working with colleagues in Queen's University and Ulster University, as part of the ADR partnership, to explore young people's involvement in informing administrative data research. Six young people have formed a core group for the project and have participated in workshops with staff from QUB and UU in November and March. It is hoped that the project will be able to offer an internship to one of the young people over the summer months.

CREATING CHANGE

Care Day 17 February 2023

Care Day 23 took place on Friday 17 February. Following two years of scaled back Care Day activities, necessary because of the Covid-19 pandemic, Care Day 23 saw a return to a large scale, regional event. Over the course of the day, we host two Fun Day events in Belfast, with participants coming from all over Northern Ireland. The Fun Day events attracted almost 300 participants.

We also resumed our annual 'Care Day Breakfast with the Mayor' activities this year. Young people from the Southeastern, Western and Northern areas met with the Mayors of Ards and North Down (Cllr Karen Douglas), Derry City and Strabane (Cllr Sandra Duffy) and the Deputy Mayor of Mid and East Antrim (Ald Beth Adger) respectively. The focus of these events was to raise awareness of children in care, and for the first citizen of each area to celebrate the care experienced community.

Belfast City Hall was illuminated in CARE DAY colours the evening before Care Day. Three young people from VOYPIC visited the City Hall gardens to see the illuminations.

Our social media campaign asked people to put their 'Hands Up For Care Day'. The VOYPIC accounts across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were flooded with images of politicians, policy makers, senior civil servants, partner organisations, member of the public, and care experienced young people taking part in the activity.

TRACING THE REVIEW

In November 2022, VOYPIC, alongside the Children's Law Centre, Queen's University Belfast, Centre for Children's Rights, Include Youth, and NIACRO jointly called on support for raising the age of criminal responsibility in Northern Ireland to 16 years of age.

At the jointly hosted event 'Stop Criminalising Our Children', in Riddle Hall, Belfast, attendees heard from a range of experts on the issues and received a briefing paper, with evidence and best practice on youth justice issues, to guide potential respondents to the Department of Justice NI's consultation on whether the age of criminal responsibility should be raised in Northern Ireland.

The Panda Project: Promoting the voice of young children in child protection decision making:
This European Project aims to promote the participation of young children (aged 12 years and under) in decision making in child protection and welfare services.

Project objectives:

- Help to create the collaborative conditions for the participatory social work with young children.
- Increase the competence of social workers/ professionals.
- Support the implementation of a participatory approach to social work.
- Provide trainers with post-qualification training to teach new tools and methods.

Following study visits to Norway and Belgium last year, VOYPIC and QUB hosted a study visit in Belfast in October 2022. The visit provided participants with an overview of social work in the context of Northern Ireland. Joe Duffy (QUB) gave an input to the group on social work in contested spaces. Young people from VOYPIC, and Catherin O Kane from SEHSCT gave an overview of young people's involvement in service and policy development. During a visit to Stormont, Colm Gildernew, former Chair of the Health Committee, provided an input on user involvement in policy and legislative development and Judge McCaffery provided an overview of court processes. The study visit also included a session a presentation on participative practice in early years, and a session with Laura Lundy (QUB) on her model of participation.

The reach-website hosts all information about the outputs and products from the PANDA project, https://reacch.eu

Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services:

The Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services was announced by the Minister for Health in December 2021, and commenced its work in early 2022. VOYPIC was tasked with supporting the Review to hear the voice of children and young people with lived experience of the services being considered.

Through a competitive selection process, a group of 23 young people, aged 14-25 years old, formed an Experts by Experience Reference Group to the Review. Over the year, this group met regularly to consider key questions posed by the Review Chair, Prof Ray Jones, and the Advisory Panel. A different two members of the group represented their peers at meetings of the Advisory Panel, and the whole group met regularly with Prof Jones and the panel to discuss key issues, concerns and potential solutions.

Additionally, VOYPIC organised a series of workshops to support the inclusion of a wider pool of voices in the Review process. The Review will be launched in June 2023.

Five Nations, One Voice network (5N1V)
VOYPIC continues to work with partners in the 5N1V alliance. This year, the leadership of Become, EPIC, Voices From Care, VOYPIC, and Who Cares? Scotland met face to face on two occasions: August 2022 in London and November 2022 in Cardiff. These meetings provided the opportunity to recommit to the alliance following a change in leadership at three of the charities and to agree strategic objectives. In January 223 Alicia Toal was nominated as Chair of the Five Nations, One Voice network. A programme for the year ahead has been agreed which will include a series of knowledge exchange events.

Changing The Language of Care
The A-Z of Care in Our Words was published to coincide with World Book Day (2 March). This resource aims to change the way we talk to, and about, children and young people with lived experience of care. The resource, which is available on the VOYPIC website, seeks to take readers on a journey of the language young people hear from the professionals in their lives, and refocus discussions to put that young person at the centre of the conversation. For example, rather than describing a child as being 'in foster care', the resource suggests we talk about a child 'living with foster carers'. The resource not only makes this call, and calls like this, but goes on to explain the young people's rationale for these new terms. https://www.voypic.org/languageofcare/

GROWTH AND STABILITY

Building Project Belfast: Construction work on the new premises in Belfast completed in October 2022. VOYPIC, Include Youth, and Viable Corporate Services moved into their new home in November 2022. This partnership project has been years in the making and has transformed the former warehouse into a bespoke youth, community, and administrative hub for the three organizations. The benefits of the new space can be seen already, improving service delivery to young people and increasing opportunities for partnership working due to the co-location.

Fundraising & Donations

Just Giving: £636.95
Amazon: £41.08
Boys Model: £150
Version 1 Community First: £1,000
Cohen: £1,000
Home Bargains: £2,000
Hibernians Florida: £1,199
Everun: £10,000

Financial review

VOYPIC strives to meet all targets and objectives agreed with its funders, with all expenditure being monitored and benchmarked against budgets.

The Board of Directors consider that the unrestricted funds of the charity have sufficient resources and assets available which are adequate to fulfill their obligations.

At 31 March 2023 the balance of unrestricted reserves was £428,612 (2022 - £415,494), of which £113,858 (2022 - £120,478) has been designated by the Board at the year end.

Restricted funds are restricted for the purpose specified in letters of offer provided by the funding bodies. At 31 March 2023 the balance of restricted funds totaled £1,082,200 (2022 - £410,074).

Reserves policy:

The Board aims to maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds at a level which equates to approximately three months of unrestricted charitable expenditure. Currently we hold the equivalent of 3.5 months expenditure. The Board of Directors monitor and review the reserves policy on an annual basis.

The Board considers that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, VOYPIC will be able to continue its activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors has decided that VOYPIC should hold financial reserves because:

1. VOYPIC has no long-term funding sources and is entirely dependent for income from year to year on short term grants and donor funding, which is inevitably subject to fluctuation.
4. VOYPIC requires protection against, and the ability to continue operating, despite fluctuation in income or events threatening to the organisation.
5. VOYPIC requires the ability to continue to employ workers and continue our projects in between periods of grant funding.

The VOYPIC Board of Directors considers it prudent that unrestricted reserves should be sufficient to:

- avoid the necessity of realising fixed assets held for the charity's use and
- cover three months of direct and indirect expenditure.

Going Concern: The charity's funding streams have remained constant during the year 2022-2023. With a projected shortfall for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 of £96,870. The Board recognises the low level of risk. However, they take an active approach in seeking to mitigate any risk to the charity's future. A fundraising plan is in place to address any potential shortfalls, and scenario planning continues.

The Board has considered the secured funding in place for the next few years, which enables the board to forward plan and be proactive about their funding in the future. The Directors are satisfied that the charity's financial sustainability of services to care experienced children and young people in the financial year 2022 – 2023.

The Directors aim to increase fundraising activities and to generate additional income by ways of increased training and consultancy work.

After making enquiries, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

At 31 March 2023, the charity had cash in bank of £442,828, with unrestricted funds of £428,612 at the year end, £113,858 of which have been designated for use in the year ending 31 March 2023.

In summary, based on the funding in place for 2023/2024 the directors have a reasonable expectation that the organisation has adequate resources to continue its operational activity. Along with written representations from the Board and the reserves of the charity. We do not believe there to be a concern over the operation of VOYPIC Limited in the foreseeable future.

Risk review

The Board has a risk management strategy which comprises:

- An annual review of principle risks;
- The establishment of policies, systems & procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available funds and cash flow.

Structure, governance and management

The company is a company limited by guarantee, registered with Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and a registered charity for taxation purposes. It is run by a Board of Directors, no more than twelve and no less than five in total.

The directors who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr M Thompson	(Resigned 30 November 2022)
Ms R McCooey	(Resigned 1 October 2022)
Mr P McClenaghan - Chair	
Ms F Nicol	
Mr C Nicol - Treasurer	
Mr A McClenaghan	(Resigned 30 November 2022)
Mr R McChesney - Co-Vice Chair youth representative	(Resigned 18 January 2023)
Mrs M McCallin	
Miss M Kennedy	
Ms E Doherty	(Appointed 14 December 2022)
Dr P McCafferty	(Appointed 3 December 2022)

The Board of Directors has the power at any time to fill any vacancy on the board by co-option. At the Annual General Meeting directors are appointed by election. The Board of Directors meet on a monthly basis. New board members may be sought by open advertising. The interview panel is made up of young people and current board members. When appointed, board members complete a full induction into the charity and receive a welcome pack which includes a brief history of the charity, a copy of the last three years annual accounts, annual reports and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee; 'What you need to know and Public Benefit running a charity.'

None of the directors has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the directors are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

Key Management Personnel Remuneration

The Board of Directors and the Chief Executive comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling the charity and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis. All Board members give of their time freely and no remuneration was paid in the year. Board members are required to disclose all relevant conflict of interests and register them at each monthly board meeting and in accordance with the Trust's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises.

Employee involvement

The charity's policy is to consult and discuss with employees any matters likely to affect their interests. Information of matters of concern is given through staff briefings which seek to achieve a common awareness on the part of all employees of the financial and economic factors affecting charity's performance.

Disabled persons

Applications for employment are fully considered, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the applicant concerned. In the event of members of staff becoming disabled, every effort is made to ensure that their employment within the company continues and that the appropriate training is arranged. It is the policy of the company that the training, career development and promotion of disabled persons should as far as possible, be identical to that of other employees.

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors, who also act as trustees for the charitable activities of Voice of Young People in Care, are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

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 2019 (FRS 102);

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that GMcG Lisburn be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the directors has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption.

The directors' report was authorised and approved by the Board of Directors.

.....

Mr P McClenaghan - Chair

Director

Date: 13/12/23

GMcG
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Opinion

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

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 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) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

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Chartered Accountants Ireland

TIAG

Chartered Accountants | Registered Auditors | Chartered Tax Advisors | Forensic Accountants | Corporate Finance Advisors

GMcG is a trading name of GMcG Group Limited. Reg No: NI059660. List of Directors available at registered office

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Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' 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.
- the directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

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Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the statement of directors' responsibilities, the directors 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 directors 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 directors are responsible for assessing the 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 directors either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and assessing potential risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliances with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- The nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance, including the charitable company's remuneration policies for directors, bonus levels and performance targets, if any;
- Results of our enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- Any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the charitable company's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
    - Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instance of non-compliance;
    - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
    - The internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- The matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in income recognition. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the charitable company operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Companies Act 2006, and local tax legislation.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty.

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Audit response to risks identified

Our procedures to respond to the risks identified included the following:

- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- Enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with tax authorities; and
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. In addition, as with any audit, there remains a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as they may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

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

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VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Use of our report

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

Susan Dunlop

Mrs Susan Dunlop FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of GMcG Lisburn

13th December 2023

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

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VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	3	18,809	-	18,809	19,196	-	19,196
Charitable activities	4	-	2,096,421	2,096,421	-	1,089,590	1,089,590
Investments	5	1,405	-	1,405	83	-	83
Other income	6	-	-	-	1,793	-	1,793
Total income		20,214	2,096,421	2,116,635	21,072	1,089,590	1,110,662
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	9	7,096	1,424,295	1,431,391	23,522	1,150,968	1,174,490
Total resources expended		7,096	1,424,295	1,431,391	23,522	1,150,968	1,174,490
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		13,118	672,126	685,244	(2,450)	(61,378)	(63,828)
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	2,642	(2,642)	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		13,118	672,126	685,244	192	(64,020)	(63,828)
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		415,494	410,074	825,568	415,302	474,094	889,396
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		428,612	1,082,200	1,510,812	415,494	410,074	825,568

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	14		1,141,950		255,059
Investments	15		1		1
			1,141,951		255,060
Current assets					
Debtors	16	192,809		102,459	
Cash at bank and in hand		442,828		916,234	
		635,637		1,018,693	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(185,908)		(362,021)	
Net current assets			449,729		656,672
Total assets less current liabilities			1,591,680		911,732
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		(80,868)		(86,164)
Net assets			1,510,812		825,568
Income funds					
Restricted funds	22		1,082,200		410,074
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	23	113,858		120,478	
General unrestricted funds		314,754		295,016	
			428,612		415,494
			1,510,812		825,568

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the board of Directors and authorised for issue on 13/12/23 and are signed on its behalf by:

.....
Mr P McClenaghan - Chair
Trustee

.....
Mr G Nicol - Treasurer
Trustee

Company Registration No. NI030526

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash absorbed by operations	**29**		(142,492)		(9,037)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(327,917)		(1,941)	
Proceeds on disposal of tangible fixed assets		-		1,798	
Investment income received		1,405		83	
Net cash used in investing activities			(326,512)		(60)
Financing activities					
Repayment of borrowings		(5,093)		(4,888)	
Net cash used in financing activities			(5,093)		(4,888)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(474,097)		(13,985)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			908,173		922,158
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			434,076		908,173
Relating to:					
Cash at bank and in hand			442,828		916,234
Bank overdrafts included in creditors payable within one year			(8,752)		(8,061)

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Voice of Young People In Care is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in Northern Ireland. The registered office and principal place of business is 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast, BT1 2LU.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The company is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated funds comprise funds which have been set aside at the discretion of the directors for specific purposes. The purposes and uses of the designated funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the company has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

The charity receives grants in respect of the provision of specified services, projects and activities. Income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement after any performance conditions have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. If entitlement is not met then these amounts are deferred.

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

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.5 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under one of the following headings: Costs of raising funds, Expenditure on charitable activities and Other expenditure.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, depreciation costs and administrative payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at the office. Office costs, depreciation costs, governance costs and payroll costs are allocated to charitable activities based on useage. The allocation of the support costs is analysed in note 9.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Land & buildings	2% Straight line
Leasehold improvements	25% Straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% Straight line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are stated at cost.

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.9 Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the company's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

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

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the company's accounting policies, the directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements (Continued)

Key sources of estimation uncertainty

Fixed assets
The annual depreciation charge on fixed assets depends primarily on the estimated lives of each type of asset and estimates of residual values. The directors regularly review these assets lives and change them as necessary to reflect current thinking on remaining lives in light of prospective economic utilisation and physical condition of the assets concerned. Changes in assets lives can have a significant impact on depreciation charges for the period. Detail of the useful lives is included in the accounting policies.

Restricted and unrestricted funds
Judgements are made in relation to allocation of income and expenditure to restricted and unrestricted funds. The directors consider it appropriate to allocate these funds based on interpretation of donations received.

Support costs
Judgements are made in relation to the allocation of support costs of the charity to its charitable activities. The directors consider it appropriate to allocate these costs based on the allocation of grant funding to the charitable activities in the year.

Deferred and accrued income
Income is deferred or accrued based on when the directors believe the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations and gifts	13,206	19,196
Unrestricted grants	5,603	-
	18,809	19,196

Donations and gifts		
Other income	8,786	8,455
Training	4,420	4,128
Refunds	-	6,613
	13,206	19,196

4 Charitable activities

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Building Project	Total 2023	Total 2022
	2023	2023	2023	2023		
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Grants receivable for charitable activities (see note 7)	636,715	347,990	141,705	970,011	2,096,421	1,089,590

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Training and Education	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Grants receivable for charitable activities (see note 7)	659,395	324,954	95,241	10,000	1,089,590

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2023	2022
	£	£
Interest receivable	1,405	83

6 Other income

	Total Unrestricted funds	
	2023	2022
	£	£
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	1,793

7 Grants receivable for charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Act for Change	-	370
Atlantic Philanthropies	150,000	-
Belfast City Council	3,377	-
BHSCT	56,999	54,666
Building grant received (DFC, DOH, DFE)	472,611	-
Children in Need	24,197	30,000
Community Foundation	11,332	-
Department for Communities	5,256	-
DOH	53,114	10,000
DOH Care Day	5,000	4,000
DOH Core Funding	41,179	41,179
DOH TSP training	-	9,000
Erasmus+	8,375	-
Esmee Fairbairn	12,000	750
Everun	10,000	-
Garfield Weston	140,000	-
Include Youth	8,520	1,492
National Lottery Community Fund	170,436	157,934
NHSCT	14,374	3,000
Public Health Agency	-	3,774
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 1	562,502	613,676
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 3	149,749	159,749
The Clothworkers Foundation	37,400	-
Tudor Trust	110,000	-
Ulster Garden Villiage	50,000	-
	2,096,421	1,089,590

8 Description of charitable activities

The charity continues to remain focused on its main charitable objectives of ; Advocacy, participation, policy voice, training and education. These charitable objectives are described in more detail below:

Advocacy and Awareness-raising
We raise awareness of the rights of children and young people, their views and experiences living in and leaving care, and their priorities for change.

Making Connections and Capacity Building
We connect young people with a lived experience of care with their peers. We host regular groups, participation forums and activities that build self-confidence, personal, social and life skills, whilst making new connections and friends.

Independent Advocacy and Advice Service
We support young people to exercise their rights by providing assistance to; participate in decision making processes, express their views and concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Youth Participation and Coproduction
We help children and young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change. We create a culture of listening that enables children and young people to influence the world around them. Our programmes equip and prepare young people to take part in co-production activities.

Influencing Change through Policy Advocacy
We use our specialist knowledge and insight into the views and experiences of children, young people, we work in partnership with them to influence the development of legislation, policy and practice.

9 Charitable activities

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Training & Education	Building Project	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	492,499	257,240	84,901	-	-	834,640	882,287
Depreciation and impairment	2,330	1,334	2,387	418	24,687	31,156	15,810
Staff subsistence and travel	16,688	5,724	7,357	30	-	29,799	26,306
Project activities	1,366	36,838	21,775	(323)	-	59,656	49,140
Designated expenditure	3,012	3,012	3,012	3,012	-	12,048	11,557
Building project costs	-	-	-	-	20,900	20,900	-
	515,895	304,148	119,432	3,137	45,587	988,199	985,100
Grant funding for building project	-	-	-	-	226,301	226,301	-
Share of support costs (see note 10)	112,666	61,726	35,706	-	193	210,291	182,994
Share of governance costs (see note 10)	3,437	2,414	749	-	-	6,600	6,396
	631,998	368,288	155,887	3,137	272,081	1,431,391	1,174,490

9 **Charitable activities (Continued)**

	Advocacy	Participation	Policy Voice	Training & Education	Building Project	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Analysis by fund							
Unrestricted funds	1,154	1,152	1,653	3,137	-	7,096	
Restricted funds	630,844	367,136	154,234	-	272,081	1,424,295	
	631,998	368,288	155,887	3,137	272,081	1,431,391	
For the year ended 31 March 2022							
Unrestricted funds	5,882	5,881	5,881	5,878	-		23,522
Restricted funds	617,284	324,266	192,470	11,599	5,349		1,150,968
	623,166	330,147	198,351	17,477	5,349		1,174,490

10 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	2022	Basis of allocation
	£	£	£	£	
Rent and rates	39,462	-	39,462	46,799	Useage
Insurance	9,540	-	9,540	7,681	Useage
Heat and light	12,370	-	12,370	7,154	Useage
Maintenance	16,833	-	16,833	8,056	Useage
Recruitment	3,058	-	3,058	2,763	Useage
Staff training	14,016	-	14,016	17,440	Useage
Other staff costs	11,464	-	11,464	17,024	Useage
Print, post & stationery	14,959	-	14,959	8,772	Useage
Telephone	9,353	-	9,353	11,210	Useage
IT support	12,657	-	12,657	7,655	Useage
Bank charges	143	-	143	113	Useage
Subscriptions	1,049	-	1,049	1,794	Useage
Hosting and PR	23,800	-	23,800	10,311	Useage
Corporate services	29,304	-	29,304	25,028	Useage
Sundry office expenses	12,283	-	12,283	11,194	Useage
Audit and accountancy fees	-	6,600	6,600	6,396	Governance
	210,291	6,600	216,891	189,390	
Analysed between					
Charitable activities	210,291	6,600	216,891	189,390	

Governance costs includes payments to the auditors of £6,600 (2022 - £6,396) for audit and accountancy fees.

11 Directors

None of the directors (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the company during the year.

12 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
	23	25

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	717,990	764,629
Social security costs	74,787	73,124
Other pension costs	41,863	44,534
	834,640	882,287

The charity considers its key management personnel to comprise of the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive, the Child Services Manager, Resource Manager and the Engagement Manager. The total employment benefits including employer pension contributions of the key management personnel were £188,300 (2022 - £137,583).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxationof Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Land & buildings	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2022	278,956	23,780	28,850	331,586
Additions	896,170	-	21,877	918,047
Disposals	-	-	(18,658)	(18,658)
At 31 March 2023	1,175,126	23,780	32,069	1,230,975
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2022	31,454	23,780	21,293	76,527
Depreciation charged in the year	21,152	-	10,004	31,156
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	-	(18,658)	(18,658)
At 31 March 2023	52,606	23,780	12,639	89,025
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2023	1,122,520	-	19,430	1,141,950
At 31 March 2022	247,502	-	7,557	255,059

15 Fixed asset investments

	Unlisted investments
	£
Cost or valuation	
At 1 April 2022 & 31 March 2023	1
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	1
At 31 March 2022	1

16 Debtors

	2023	2022
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	183,115	90,576
Prepayments	9,694	11,883
	192,809	102,459

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Bank overdrafts	19	8,752	8,061
Other borrowings		5,092	4,889
Deferred income	20	-	290,000
Other creditors		3,824	838
Accruals		168,240	58,233
		185,908	362,021

18 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Borrowings	80,868	86,164

19 Loans and overdrafts

	2023 £	2022 £
Bank overdrafts	8,752	8,061
Other loans	85,960	91,053
	94,712	99,114
Payable within one year	13,844	12,950
Payable after one year	80,868	86,164
Amounts included above which fall due after five years:		
Payable by instalments	60,499	65,591

20 Deferred income

	2023 £	2022 £
Deferred income	-	290,000

Included in deferred income is £nil (2022 - £290,000) this related to monies received for refurbishment costs of the Great Patrick Street property.

21 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund.

The charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes was £41,863 (2022 - £44,534).

22 Restricted funds

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

	Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Building project (miscellaneous funders)	221,383	-	(5,309)	-	216,074	970,011	(271,703)	914,382
Belfast City Council	-	-	-	-	-	3,377	(3,377)	-
Big Lottery Fund	-	-	(364)	364	-	-	-	-
BHSCT	4,749	54,666	(54,691)	-	4,724	56,999	(56,994)	4,729
Children in Need	265	-	(270)	5	-	-	-	-
Children in Need - Next Steps	7,696	30,000	(36,810)	(5)	881	24,197	(25,078)	-
Community Foundation	28,000	-	(24,107)	-	3,893	7,832	(9,685)	2,040
DOH	4,363	10,000	(14,684)	321	-	-	-	-
DOH Core Funding	12,863	41,179	(51,427)	-	2,615	41,179	(41,179)	2,615
DOH TSP training	-	9,000	(8,550)	-	450			450
Erasmus+	7,348	-	(4,899)	-	2,449	8,375	(7,885)	2,939
Esmee Fairbairn	50,589	750	(50,216)	-	1,123	12,000	(950)	12,173
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 1	44,025	600,232	(550,243)	-	94,014	562,502	(575,109)	81,407
Strategic Planning and Performance Group Lot 3	3,446	173,194	(167,073)	-	9,567	202,863	(195,223)	17,207
National Lottery Community Fund	-	157,934	(134,591)	(364)	22,979	170,436	(182,679)	10,736
NIGALA	1,519	-	-	-	1,519	-	-	1,519
Paul Hamlyn	373	-	(240)	-	133	-	(133)	-
Act For Change	81,665	370	(39,667)	-	42,368	-	(34,657)	7,711
WHSCT	2,999	-	-	(2,999)	-	-	-	-
NHSCT Pilot	-	-	-	-	-	14,374	-	14,374
Other Restricted Funds	2,811	12,265	(7,827)	36	7,285	22,276	(19,643)	9,918
	474,094	1,089,590	(1,150,968)	(2,642)	410,074	2,096,421	(1,424,295)	1,082,200

22 Restricted funds (Continued)

BUILDING PROJECT
To enable the purchase of new premises at 100 Great Patrick Street and to support the ongoing renovation project of same.

This includes funding received from Everun for solar panels and The Clothworkers Foundation for equipment and fittings for sensory room.

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
This was a summer community grant which provided funding for young people's summer activities.

BIG LOTTERY FUND
To improve the life chances of care experienced children across Northern Ireland through an enhanced Participation Service.

BHSCT
A direct advocacy service to children and young people accommodated in Beechcroft. This includes a mechanism by which the voice of children in BHSCT utilizing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) at Tier 3 are heard.

CHILDREN IN NEED
Funds a Development Worker to coordinate the Participation Project that works exclusively with children and young people in care in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

CHILDREN IN NEED - NEXT STEPS
To work in partnership with young people and engage with children in care on the impact of Covid and design standards for participation.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
To deliver a coaching, mentoring support and a bursary to support young people aged 16-25 who are in or have left care.

DOH
Contributions toward the cost of Care Day.

DOH CORE FUNDING
To enhance our policy advocacy work and ensure children and young people are central to the development of legislation, policy and practice.

DOH TSP Training
Training support programme for voluntary and community sector.

22 **Restricted funds (Continued)**

ERASMUS+
The project aims to support young children's participation in child welfare/protection services by strengthening professional collaboration with children aged 12 years and under.

ESMEE FAIRBAIRN
To deliver and develop a corporate parenting training programme, co-designed with and delivered by care experienced young people to agencies supporting them, to reduce barriers and inequalities faced by children in care and care leavers.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE GROUP (SPPG)
The provision of advocacy services for looked after children, aged 10 – 17 and care experienced young people aged 18-21 years across Northern Ireland. Support for education, training and employment needs of looked after and care experienced young people across Northern Ireland. Recruitment and ongoing support of a young people's reference group for the review of children's social service.

NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND

'See me, Hear me' project will provide advocacy, coaching and community mentors for vulnerable young people who have left care. The programme also provides opportunities for children and young people to take part in lead on social action projects.

NIGALA
To support annual conference.

PAUL HAMLYN
Speak up, Speak out programme - pilot, implement and develop a new practice methodology and infrastructure to support the development of young leaders through the creation of a youth leadership strategy.

ACT FOR CHANGE
Paul Hamlyn & Esmee Fairbairn matched by # iwilll fund to support 'Shake it Off' programme which tackles stigma in care and social justice.

WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST (WHSCT)
Funding to enable VOYPIC to provide advocacy and one to one support services to young people using Child and Adolescent Health Services (CAMHS).

22 Restricted funds (Continued)

NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST (NHSCT) PILOT
To provide independent advocacy support to young people who were involved in child protection case conferences.

OTHER RESTRICTED FUNDS
Included in Other Restricted Funds are the following:

INCLUDE YOUTH
Reimbursement of expenses related to share premises in Ballymena & Derry.

Care Day

HSCB SECURE CARE PROJECT
To facilitate a study to investigate good practice in secure care.

DFC Job Start
Job Start scheme which provides jobs for young people at risk of long-term unemployment.

Community Foundation Young Reps
Funding awards towards training costs for Young Reps Forum.

23 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

					Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Activities - Booted and Suited	789	-	-	789	-	-	-	789
Youth Activities	9,895	(418)	-	9,477	5,000	(4,016)	6,507	16,968
Birthday Bank	1,289	(1,245)	(44)	-	-	-	-	-
Participation Programme Development	17,782	-	(17,782)	-	-	-	-	-
MIS	30,000	-	17,782	47,782	-	-	(47,782)	-
Staff Salaries	15,389	(7,923)	(7,466)	-	-	-	-	-
Premises Maintenance	2,000	-	(2,000)	-	-	-	-	-
Care Day	4,674	(4,684)	10	-	-	-	-	-
Youth Activities Western Area	750	(440)	-	310	-	-	-	310
Moving and dilapidation costs	4,674	(2,000)	9,446	12,120	-	(7,960)	20,615	24,775
Regional dilapidation costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
Mortgage 100 GPS	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,016	11,016
100 GPS Project Build	50,000	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
	137,242	(16,710)	(54)	120,478	5,000	(11,976)	356	113,858

23 Designated funds (Continued)

The VOYPIC Board of Directors at the end of the financial year 2023 agreed to designate £113,858 from unrestricted reserves to cover the following.

- £789 carried forward to hardship fund for care leavers.
- £16,968 increased fundraising & donations received to be designated to youth activities
- £310 carried forward from donations, designated to youth activities in the Western Area.
- £34,775 to be designated toward moving and dilapidation costs for Belfast office and for regional offices.
- £11,016 designated for mortgage costs of 100 Great Patrick Street.
- £50,000 for capital build programme for Great Patrick Street.

In the prior year, £47,782 was designated for new MIS system and this has been released.

24 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	26,286	1,115,664	1,141,950	26,951	228,108	255,059
Investments	1	-	1	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	483,193	(33,464)	449,729	474,706	181,966	656,672
Long term liabilities	(80,868)	-	(80,868)	(86,164)	-	(86,164)
	428,612	1,082,200	1,510,812	415,494	410,074	825,568

25 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities

A contingent liability exists to repay grants received in relation to capital building costs should certain conditions not be fulfilled by the charity. In this regard charges have been registered by The Department for Communities who partly financed the building works.

26 Share capital

The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of the members is limited to £1 per member.

27 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the company had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Within one year	41,671	33,977
Between two and five years	21,175	292
	62,846	34,269

28 Related party transactions

(i) Control

The charity was under the control of the Board of Directors throughout the year.

(ii) Vi-able Corporate Services Limited

The charity holds 50% of the issued share capital in a joint venture company Vi-able Corporate Services Limited (Vi-able).

During the year Vi-able charged the charity £32,351 (2022 - £27,592) for the provision of corporate services. At the year end there was a debtor balance owing from Vi-able Corporate Services Limited of £10,517 (2022- £10,517) for services paid but not yet provided to the charity.

Vi-able occupied offices rent free at 100 Great Patrick Street, Belfast a property jointly owned by VOYPIC and Include Youth.

29 Cash generated from operations

	2023	2022
	£	£
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	685,244	(63,828)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(1,405)	(83)
Donated assets	(472,611)	-
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	(1,794)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	31,156	15,811
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase) in debtors	(90,350)	(10,893)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(4,526)	6,750
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income	(290,000)	45,000
Cash absorbed by operations	(142,492)	(9,037)

30 Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1 April 2022	Cash flows	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	916,234	(473,406)	442,828
Bank overdrafts	(8,061)	(691)	(8,752)
	908,173	(474,097)	434,076
Loans falling due within one year	(4,889)	(203)	(5,092)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(86,164)	5,296	(80,868)
	817,120	(469,004)	348,116

Voice of Young People in Care

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105019

Annual report

VOYPIC

VOICE OF
YOUNG PEOPLE
IN CARE



ANNUAL REPORT
2022 - 2023

Welcome

On behalf of the Board of Directors I am delighted to share with you this year's annual report for the financial year ending April 2023.

The past year has been one of innovation and celebration.

In October 2022 construction work on our new headquarters building 100GPS finished and the staff team moved into our new home in November 2022. This was a fantastic reward for our team given the immense effort applied to the construction project while they continued to deliver high quality services for young people.

Completion of this fantastic facility after years of effort is a reason for huge celebration. 100GPS provides our young people with bespoke youth spaces, our staff with a high-quality working environment, and provides the organisation with greater security and additional revenue raising opportunities.

100GPS is a fantastic collaborative project between Include Youth, VOYPIC and VIable Corporate Services and we continue to foster the partnership between the organisations while retaining VOYPIC's distinct identity as the charity for children and young people with a lived experience of care in Northern Ireland.

As the cost-of-living has crisis deepened it has exacerbated many of the challenges faced by children and young people in care. However, it has not deterred our young people from immersing themselves in innovative projects with the desire to drive positive change on behalf of their peers.

This includes participation in the European PANDA project promoting the involvement of young children in welfare decision-making, publication of "A-Z of Care in Our Words" to change the language of care, and involvement in the Experts by Experience Reference Group to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services.



Despite the bleak economic outlook VOYPIC as an organisation, and the young people we work with to create change, can look forward with justified confidence based on our achievements this year.

- Peter McClenaghan, Chair

Message from the Chief Executive

Welcome to VOYPIC's Annual Report for 2022-23. I am proud to present an overview of the great work delivered by the staff, volunteers, children and young people of VOYPIC this past year. The circumstances in which we have operated have been challenging.

The ongoing impact of the Covid Pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis, and rising energy prices, have had a significant impact on children and families. The political vacuum and precarious financial and funding situation has harmed the voluntary and community sector and exacerbated workforce issues across statutory Children's Services.

The VOYPIC team has worked hard to protect the individual rights of young people, widen peer support networks, and build the capacity of children and young people to engage directly with decision makers.

This report sets out our achievements this year; the scope of our advocacy work, social action projects, campaigns, and the many ways in which we brought care experienced children and young people together to connect and support each other.

Thank you to the incredible team of staff and volunteers for your hard work, dedication and creativity throughout the year!

- Alicia Toal, Chief Executive



VOYPIC's participation and independent advocacy services supported 544 children and young people.



234 Male

309 Female

353 children and young people received advocacy support

114 children and young people took part in participation forums

64 children and young people took part in social action programmes

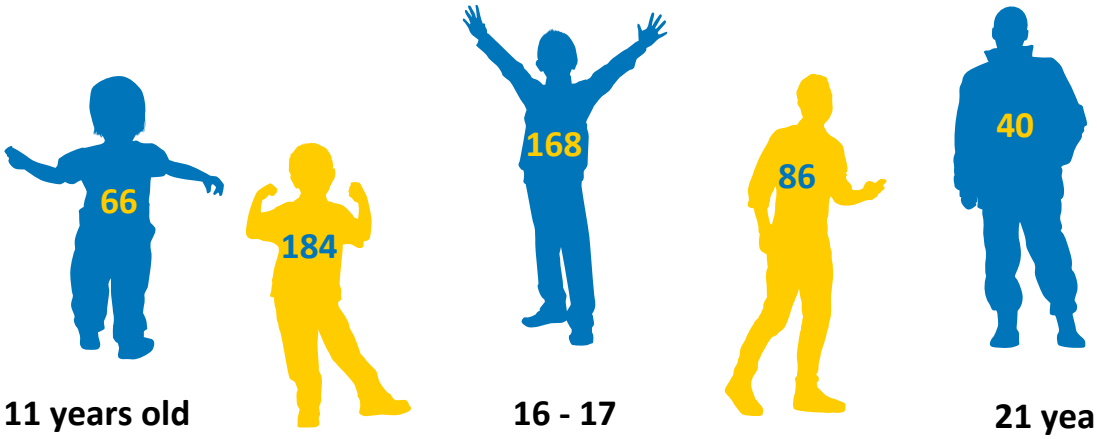
61 children and young people used our independent advocacy service at Beechcroft

30 young people took part in peer support groups

27 young care experienced adults received advocacy support

18 young people took part in our youth leadership programme and Young Reps Forum

13 children and young people received one-to-one support and coaching



11 years old or under

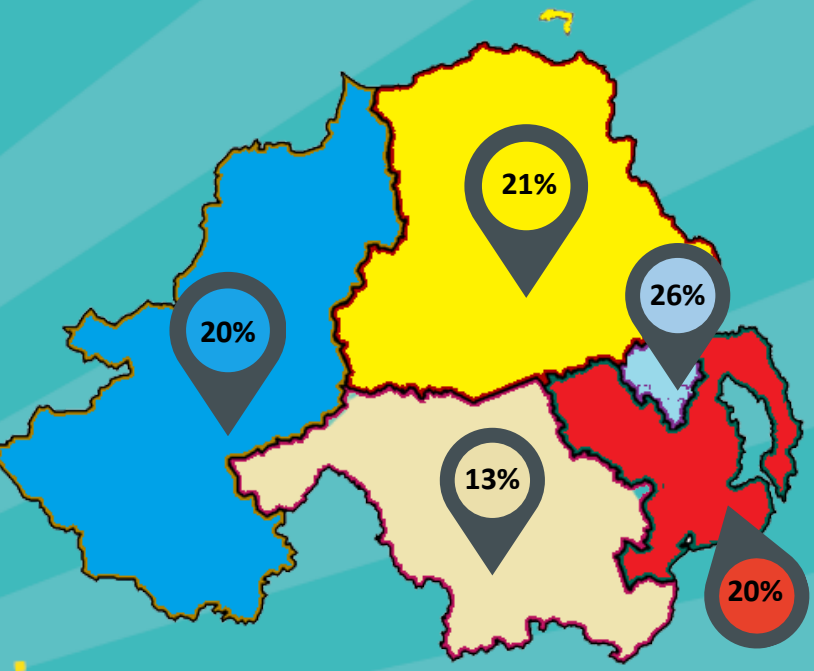
12 - 15 years old

16 - 17 years old

18 - 20 years old

21 years old or over

Where do they live?



32 young people lived in supported accommodation

12 young people were in Lakewood Secure Care Centre

147 children and young people lived with foster families

11 young people were homeless

100 children and young people lived in children's' homes

5 young people were living independently

75 children and young people were living with extended family

4 young people were in Woodlands Centre

65 young people were in a hospital setting

2 young people were in Hydebank Wood

40 were living at home with a parent

1 young person was living outside Northern Ireland

Who else did we reach?



26 children and young people were members of the Experts by Experience Reference Group, supporting the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services



34 children and young people attended activity days



127 children and young people were members of MyVOYPIC



100 children and young people took part in policy consultations



300 children and young people attended our CARE DAY fun day events

We coordinated and submitted nine responses to policy consultations:

- UK Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (Children's Law Centre)
- SBNI Strategic Plan (Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland)
- Protocol for HSCTs/PSNI Interface (PSNI/HSCB)
- Publication of RQIA Inspection Reports on Children's Homes (RQIA)
- Custodial Arrangements for Children (DoJ)
- Raising the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (DoJ)
- Amendments to Independent Guardian Service (DoH)
- Support for Care Leavers (DoH)
- Foster Placement and Foster Agency Regulations (DoH)

Independent Advocacy Support

VOYPIC provides independent advocacy services for a range of children and young people. These services support children and young people living in care or receiving leaving and after care services; care experienced young people aged 16+ who no longer receive help from social services; and children and young people placed in Beechcroft.

For children and young people living in care or receiving leaving and after care services

353 children and young people

396 advocacy cases

654 support needs.

312 visiting advocacy sessions.

24 activity days with 235 children and young people

22 advocacy workshops with 282 young people

Department of Health | An Roinn Sláinte / Männystrie O Poustie

The top three reasons for referrals

1. **Where they live (placement)**
2. **Rights and entitlements**
3. **Family Time (contact)**

Advocacy Support for Living Arrangements

152 children and young people sought support about their living arrangements.

- "I am happy living with my foster carer and this is now my forever home."
- "I am back living with my mummy. I get to see my daddy and my grandparents."
- "I did not want to be in a children's home and wanted to live with my mummy. I have got to move home with her and my brother. I am also going to school."
- "I wanted to live with my granny and felt no one was listening to me. I attended my meetings and it was agreed my granny would be assessed for me to move in with her."

Advocacy Support and Rights and Entitlements

118 children and young people sought support to secure their statutory rights and entitlements.

- "I'm now able to have my friend over that I wasn't allowed before."
- "Swimming Lessons being found, maths tutor being sorted, Family Holiday being looked in to with my passport issues being resolved, and got a laptop from the Trust."
- "I have a social worker now, I didn't use to have one."
- "After speaking with my advocate I learnt what I was entitled to at university and I was able to get £1000 bursary and get a laptop."

Independent Advocacy Support

Advocacy Support for Family Time

152 children and young people sought support about their living arrangements.

- "I feel everything went ok, I feel people listened to me and I see my Mummy more."
- "I get to be with Granny and Granda for Christmas. I chose how many times I see mummy."
- "I was able to say who I didn't want to see in my family."
- "I am now able to have more contact with mum".

Advocacy Support in Lakewood Regional Secure Centre

VOYPIC Advocates support young people being presented at the Regional Multi Agency Panel for Admission to secure care. 66 young people were supported to represent their views to the Regional Multi Agency Panel for Admission to Secure Care. people sought support to secure their statutory rights and entitlements.

- "I didn't want to go to secure and I wanted someone to speak to my social worker and attend a meeting to discuss if I still met criteria to go or not. VOYPIC attended the meeting and explained how I was feeling, I did join in on zoom as well and was able to say how I felt."

For care experienced young adults

27 young adults aged 21-25 supported with

- Accommodation
- Rights and entitlements
- Training and employment
- Access to support services
- Access to files
- Attending case conferences

COMMUNITY FUND

61 young people supported by an INDEPENDENT Advocate in BEECHCROFT Child and Adolescent Mental Health Hospital

HSC Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

For young people in Beechcroft Child and Adolescent Mental Health Hospital

Independent Advocacy Support

Young people's views on Advocacy Support

71% said they got the help and support they needed from their advocate

69% said they were satisfied with the support provided by VOYPIC

79% said they would use the VOYPIC Advocacy Service again

6% reported their case was unresolved

13% reported their case was partially resolved



81% reported their case was fully resolved, an increase of 4% from last year

Young People's Views on Resolution

- "I decided after 2 meetings I didn't want support anymore, as I've too much going on in my life… I know that VOYPIC is there for me whenever I need it."
- "I wanted contact with my son but was not in a place to progress the case."
- "I didn't get into the school I wanted but I know why."

Advocacy Outcomes & Impact

50% of young people influenced decision making

41% of young people challenged a decision

28% supported to access information

77% of young people reported their rights were protected

44% said they have a better quality of life

23% said they have more access to their social worker or other support

VOYPIC's Participation Services

234 children and young people took part in our participation programmes, through:

* Regional and local participation forums
* Peer support groups
* Social Action Projects

Young People's Skills Development


Building Better Relationships 72%


Coping with Stress 46%


Listening 69%


Decision Making 50%


Leadership 42%


Speaking Up 64%


Keeping Calm 42%


Motivation 39%


Understanding Thing Better 58%


Problem Solving 34%

- "Very helpful, taught me a lot about the care system and I made friends."
- "It helped me meet more people and learn more stuff about care"
- "Loved Stormont and talking to the MLA's"
- "I get lots of opportunities to speak to decision makers"

Peer Support Groups

Peer support groups in Belfast, Derry, and Ballymena supported 64 young people aged 16-25 years. These groups provide a safe place to connect with peers and discuss matters important to them.

- "Like being with other people who have also been in care and are now living on their own."
- "We meet up and talk about what is going on for us."
- "You get to meet more people in similar situations as you, so you feel less alone."

VOYPIC's participative programmes were supported by the National Lottery Community Fund, Community Foundation NI, and the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG).

1

Empowering Children and Young People

This year, 64 young people at VOYPIC completed nine Social Action Projects. The young people worked together, to explore issues around them, and develop actions to make a difference.

Safety Key Chains

Young women in Belfast designed and made personal safety kits, to give out to young women with experience of care. The kits, accompanied by safety advice, were advertised on VOYPIC's social media channels. The group was were really excited to pass these on to other young women, hopefully helping them to feel safer when out and about!





Its Christmas Time, think Article 9 Campaign

Young people from the Ballymena area launched a region NI wide campaign calling for all Christmas Family Time visits to be arranged by mid-December.

As young people in care, we have the right (UNCRC, Art 9) to see our families, so long as that's what we want, and it's safe for us to be there. It's important that we know in advance where we will be spending Christmas, who we will be spending it with, how we will get there, and how long we will be there for.

Care to Swap

In December a group of young people organised a clothes swap shop- Care to Swap- bringing together their peers in an attempt to de-stigmatise the use of pre-loved clothing. Money raised from the event was then used to purchase backpacks from Ten Foundations, a charity supporting vulnerable children, families and communities in the Philippines, which were then donated to young people in care. The group hopes they can be used to transport personal items, when a young person moves home.





Good Relations Award

In February, the Belfast group behind 'Care to Swap' was named as Runner-Up in the Youth Award category at the Good Relations Awards, organised by the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC). The award recognised the young people's project supporting a diverse community of care experienced young people from across the greater Belfast area.
www.voypic.org/goodrelationsaward/

Moving On Up Bursary and Befriending Scheme

We distributed £18,000 in bursaries to 37 young care leavers this year on behalf of the Hobson Fund and Community Foundation NI. Thirteen young people also received mentoring support through the scheme.

Help for Young People New To Northern Ireland

We helped design a guide to living in Northern Ireland for young people who might arrive here to seek asylum. The guide provides young people with information on their rights whilst claiming asylum and their rights and entitlements in care.





2

Innovating Through Participation and Co-Producation

VOYPIC Young Reps

Young Reps are the youth leaders of VOYPIC and advise the Board and leadership team on the implementation of our Strategic Plan. They represent and advocate on behalf of young people living in and leaving care.

Young Reps were appointed in December at the VOYPIC AGM. Some of the group came together in March to plan their first Residential together this Easter.



PANDA Panda Project: Promoting the voice of young children in child protection decision making

PANDA
Reacch
Resources for Engaging and Collaborating with Children

Working with colleagues from across Europe, this exciting project aims to promote the participation of young children (aged 12 years and under) in decision making in child protection and welfare services.
With our colleagues in Queen's University Belfast, we welcomed the project partners to Belfast for a study visit in October.

The visit provided participants with an overview of social work in the context of Northern Ireland, including hearing about social work in contested spaces. Young people from VOYPIC, and Catherin O'Kane from SEHSCT gave an overview of young people's involvement in service and policy development. During a visit to Stormont, Colm Gildernew MLA, former Chair of the Health Committee, provided an input on user involvement in policy and legislative development and Judge McCaffery provided an overview of court processes. The study visit also included a session a presentation on participative practice in early years, and a session with Laura Lundy (QUB) on her model of participation.

The Reach website hosts all information about the outputs and products from the PANDA project, https://reacch.eu/

Innovating Through Participation and Co-Producation

Experts by Experience (EBE) Reference Group to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services

The Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services commenced in early 2022. VOYPIC was tasked with supporting the Review to hear the voice of children and young people with lived experience of the services being considered.

26 young people participated in the EBE Reference Group

Over the year, this group met regularly to consider key questions posed by the Review Chair, Prof Ray Jones, and the Advisory Panel. Two members of the group represented their peers at meetings of the Advisory Panel, and the whole group met regularly with Prof Jones and the panel to discuss key issues, concerns and potential solutions.











World Social Work Day

An VOYPIC Expert by Experience delivered a presentation to an event organised by BASW at Stormont, sharing her experiences and insights as a young people engaging in a co-production activity. She highlighted the need for young people's voices to be at the centre of such projects, and encouraged attendees to explore more how they deliver true co-production.

3

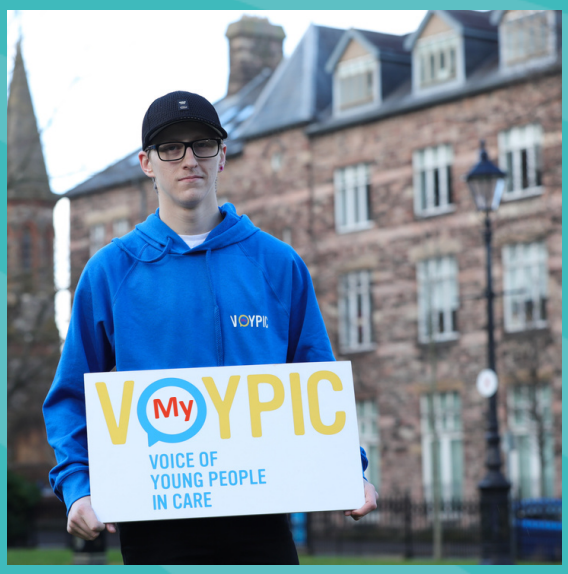
Creating Change

Changing The Language of Care

The Language of Care resource was published to coincide with World Book Day, 2 March 2023. This resource aims to change the way we talk to, and about, children and young people with lived experience of care. The resource, designed by young people, takes readers on a journey of the language young people hear from the professionals in their lives, and refocuses discussions to put the young person at the centre of the conversation. For example, young people no longer want to be referred to as a LAC child, as this has very negative connotations.



The resource also sets examples of alternative words and phrases and the young people's rationale for these new terms. www.voypic.org/languageofcare/



MyVOYPIC - Membership Scheme

We continued to grow the membership of MyVOYPIC, open to any young person in Northern Ireland up to 25 years of age with a lived experience of care. The scheme provides a safe space for young people to connect and share their experiences, access information, influence decision-making, and hear about opportunities offered by VOYPIC and our partners across the sector.

To become a member of MyVOYPIC and find out more about the membership scheme, go to www.myvoypic.org

Creating Change

Independent Review of Children's Social Care - Workshops

We coordinated a series of workshops for young people to share their experiences, views and ideas on the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services.

In July, Prof. Jones and Marie Roulston met with a group of younger care experienced children (under 14), to hear about their experiences of children's social care.

In August, VOYPIC ran a full day of workshops with Prof Jones, including sessions with Care Experienced Young Parents, Care Experienced Young People (14+) and Care Experienced Adults (26+).



These workshops provided the wider care experienced community to share their thoughts on the Review, and highlight issues that the panel should consider.



In partnership with Action for Children and Barnardo's, we held a workshop for young carers who provide care for a family member, to talk about the unique ways they experience children's social care services, what challenges they face, and how this can be improved.

United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child: Meeting the Committee

Following the submission of NGO reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, VOYPIC along with the Childrens Law Centre (CLC) and Include Youth were invited to give evidence at the Committee hearing in Geneva.

Abbie and Brandan worked with young people from Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England to prepare an input for the Committee, as part of their periodic review of the UNCRC in the UK. The group had lots of preparation meetings, both locally and online with other nations, before travelling to the UN in Geneva in February.

This was an amazing experience for Abbie, Brandan and all the young people who took part in the session. The Committee will consider the evidence and present their concluding observations in May.





Candidate Conversations with the Care Experienced Community

In the run-up to the Northern Ireland Assembly Elections in May, young people met with candidates from the main parties at events in Belfast, Ballymena and Derry-Londonderry.

These events- 'Candidate Conversations with the Care Experienced Community'- provided an opportunity for young people to meet with candidates, learn more about their stance on issues, and set out their priorities for action should the candidate be elected.







Midsummer Tea Party Meet & Greet at Stormont

On 21 June, young people hosted the 'Midsummer Tea Party Meet & Greet'. This event brought together young people with experience of care from across Northern Ireland, to informally meet with new and returning MLAs, to discuss issues important to them, and call for action in the new Assembly. The event was attended by ten MLAs, as well as party staff representatives, from across the five main parties, including the Health Minister, the Justice Minister and the former Chair and Deputy Chair of the Health Committee. Young people from across Northern Ireland took part in the event, hosting informal roundtable discussion sessions with the politicians, as well as showcasing key areas of VOYPIC's work.







All the young people attending (100%) said they felt listened to by the politicians during this event, and 94.4% said they felt more informed about the politicians and their policies.

Creating Change

TRIUMPH - Youth Advisory Group

We supported three young people to participate in the Youth Advisory Group of a UK-wide project exploring approaches to improving young people's mental health. TRIUMPH – the Transdisciplinary Research for the Improvement of Youth Mental Public Health – brings together young people and experts in the field, working together to find new ways to improve mental health and wellbeing.



The project culminated in a conference in Edinburgh in October, which was co-designed by the Youth Advisory Group. The event was delivered by the young people, and attracted interest from academics, policy makers and practitioners from across the UK.

In addition to the YAG members, we supported five young people to travel to Edinburgh for the conference.



Administrative Data Research Group

Six young people from VOYPIC have been working with colleagues in Queen's University and Ulster University, as part of our partnership with the Administrative Data Research Centre (ADRC). They participated in a series of workshops, working with researchers to explore high level data about the mental health outcomes for care experienced people. Together, the team are using the data to find out what risks young people face leaving care, and how they can be better supported.

Care Leavers, Covid-19 and Transition from Care (CCTC) Conference

Martha and Paul attended the Care Leavers, Covid-19 and Transition from Care (CCTC) Conference in Luton in May. They spent the day talking with over 100 colleagues from across the UK and Ireland who support young people in and leaving care, exploring how we support care leavers to transition into adulthood in the post-Covid world.

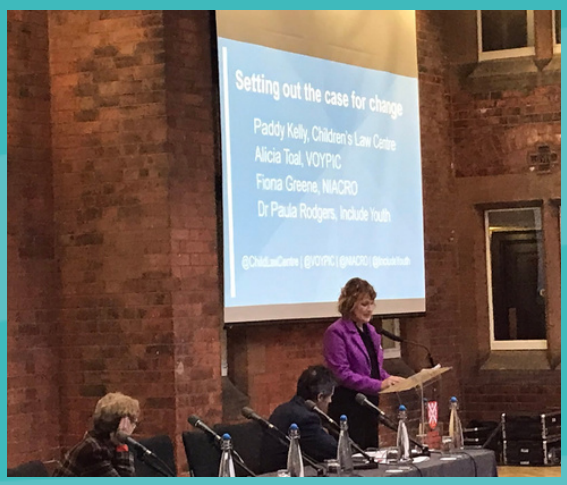


Creating Change

10 Reasons Why Ten Is Too Young : Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility Conference

In November 2022, VOYPIC, alongside the Children's Law Centre, Queen's University Belfast, Centre for Children's Rights, Include Youth, and NIACRO jointly called on support for raising the age of criminal responsibility in Northern Ireland to 16 years of age.

At the jointly hosted event 'Stop Criminalising Our Children', in Riddle Hall, Belfast, attendees heard from a range of experts on the issues and received a briefing paper, with evidence and best practice on youth justice issues, to guide potential respondents to the Department of Justice consultation on whether the age of criminal responsibility should be raised in Northern Ireland.



Care Day 23

Care Day 23 took place on Friday 17 February. Following two years of scaled back Care Day activities, necessary because of the Covid-19 pandemic, Care Day 23 saw a return to a large scale, regional event. Over the course of the day, we host two Fun Day events in Belfast, with participants coming from all over Northern Ireland. The Fun Day events attracted almost 300 participants.

















Creating Change



We also resumed our annual 'Care Day Breakfast with the Mayor' activities. Young people from the South Eastern, Western and Northern areas met with the Mayors of Ards and North Down (Cllr Karen Douglas), Derry City and Strabane (Cllr Sandra Duffy) and the Deputy Mayor of Mid and East Antrim (Ald Beth Adger) respectively. And Belfast City Hall was illuminated in Care Day colours!









On social media we asked people to put their 'Hands Up For Care Day'. The VOYPIC channels across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were flooded with images of politicians, policy makers, senior civil servants, partner organisations, member of the public, and care experienced young people taking part in the activity





Our friends at the play, REMOVED, got in on the action, despite being on a European tour. They helped spread the Care Day message in Paris and The Hague!



Back in Belfast, young people were joined by Instagram stars 'Inside Number Sixteen', 'Bored of Lunch' and 'Belfast Undercover Chef' for a CARE DAY Cookery Class in 100GPS! They prepared a delicious meal to share in celebration of Care Day. And the guys even left some new cookware as a housewarming gift!



4

Growth and Stability

Our New Home -
Redevelopment of 100 Great Patrick Street



Construction work on our new Head Quarters in Belfast completed in October 2022. Alongside our friends in Include Youth and VIable Corporate Services, we moved into our new home in November 2022. After many years of planning and hard work, we have transformed the former warehouse at 100 Great Patrick Street into a bespoke youth, community, and administrative hub for the three organisations.



In October we welcomed Robin Swann MLA (Minister for Health), Deirdre Hargey MLA (Minister for Communities) and Gordon Lyons MLA (Minister for the Economy) to the building.



In November we were delighted to welcome Pudsey Bear and the team from Children in Need, who used 'The Lounge' space in 100GPS as their studio for the Northern Ireland highlights programme of the annual televised appeal.



In December we hosted a special Christmas mince pie morning for over 100 of our friends and colleagues across the sector, giving them a sneak peek of our fantastic new home. We were delighted to welcome Lord Mayor of Belfast, Cllr Tina Black, to the event.

Growth & Stability

Young people from VOYPIC and Include Youth are busy preparing for the Grand Opening, scheduled for June.



Team VOYPIC

We recognise the importance of stopping to reflect on what we have achieved, and look ahead to what we are going to achieve. In January, the whole VOYPIC team spent two days in the countryside, doing just that.

We spent time reviewing our strategic plan, sharing practice across the organisation, and planning for the year ahead, making sure we are doing what we can to work together with children and young people for a better experience of care and life after care.







Staying Social

VOYPIC continues to use our social media channels to spread positive messages about children and young people with lived experience of care in Northern Ireland.

On Facebook, we had a reach of 41,842 (an increase of 88.3% on last year)

On Instagram, we had a reach of 3,192 (an increase of 64.3% on last year)

On Twitter, we made 218,000 impressions, and gained 288 new followers

Financial Year

We would like to acknowledge and thank all our funders and donors who have supported VOYPIC throughout this last year. Without this support it would not be possible to deliver such a range of services and support to care experienced children and young people.

Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG)

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust

The National Lottery Community Fund

Children in Need

Community Foundation

Department of Health

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Erasmus + Programme of the European Union

Belfast City Council

Northern Health & Social Care Trust

Donations received from Amazon Smile, Home Bargains, Community First Initiative, Cohen & Co, The Ancient Order of Hibernians Florida, Everun, and Belfast Boys Model School.

Total Income: £1,146,624

Income

£22,276 Other Restricted Funds

£170,436 National Lottery Community Fund

£3,377 Belfast City Council

£20, 214 Unrestricted Income

£56,999 Belfast HSCT

£41,179 Department of Health

£12,000 Esmee Fairbairn

£24,197 Children in Need

£14,374 Northern HSCT

£8,375 EU Erasmus +

£7,832 Community Foundation NI

£765,365 SPPG

Total Income £1,146,624

Expenditure

£78,205 Property Costs

£74, 618 Office Costs

£59, 704 Corporate Services

£59, 656 Youth Activities

£863,178 Staff Costs

Total expenditure £1,184,190

£48, 829 Other Costs

Staff List

Alicia Toal

Angela Adair

Alex Cowan

Aine Mulholland

Aoife Clarke

Brenda Kilpatrick

Briege O'Connor

Caoimhe Coyle

Caroline Hunter

Christina Howarth

Christina Watson

Deirdre McMahon

Donna O'Kane

Eanna McKnight

Erin McKeavney

Fiona Nolan

Geraldine McGuigan

Grace Conroy

Iain Black

Jennifer Wright

Jo Irvine

Joleen Kane

Karen Stirling

Katie Taggart

Lee Kane

Margaret Guy

Nicola McCreedy

Nyree Mulholland

Paul McCafferty

Seamus Kealey

Trevor McDaid

I learnt that I could talk to anyone, my foster carers, or my social workers and many more. But I think I would prefer to talk to the VOYPIC staff.
I have been a VOYPIC member for many years and I have connected with each of the staff differently and they're all so helpful.

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www.voypic.org

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland
NIC105019. Company Limited by Guarantee NI30526.

Voice of Young People in Care

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105019

Annual return

GMcG
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Opinion

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

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 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) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

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Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' 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.
- the directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

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VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the statement of directors' responsibilities, the directors 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 directors 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 directors are responsible for assessing the 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 directors either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and assessing potential risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliances with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- The nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance, including the charitable company's remuneration policies for directors, bonus levels and performance targets, if any;
- Results of our enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- Any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the charitable company's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
    - Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instance of non-compliance;
    - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
    - The internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- The matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in income recognition. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the charitable company operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Companies Act 2006, and local tax legislation.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty.

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Audit response to risks identified

Our procedures to respond to the risks identified included the following:

- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- Enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with tax authorities; and
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. In addition, as with any audit, there remains a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as they may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

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

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GMcG is a trading name of GMcG Group Limited. Reg No: NI059660. List of Directors available at registered office

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VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Use of our report

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

Susan Dunlop

Mrs Susan Dunlop FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of GMcG Lisburn

13th December 2023

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

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