CAREERS Springboard WEST BERKSHIRE

Annual Report of the Trustees

From 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

Registered Charity No. 1156672

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1. Background and Trustees

Charity Name: Careers Springboard West Berkshire

Charity Number: 1156672

Careers Springboard West Berkshire (CSWB) is a volunteer-led support organisation that offers help and advice to out-of-work managers and professionals, especially older and more experienced workers. It started operating in September 2006, taking over the work of the Newbury Executive Job Club. CSWB became a registered charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) on 14th April 2014.

CSWB is a founder member of The Foundation for Job Seekers (Charity No. 1136534), a network of four job clubs in the Thames Valley.

Trustees and Officers

Under the terms of our constitution one third of our trustees retire in rotation but are eligible for re-election. Dorothy Nesbit and Ian Vickerage retired as trustees at our AGM on 16th July 2025. We thank them for their support of our activities both as trustees and volunteers over the last few years. The trustees of the Charity serving during the financial year were therefore:

Name of Trustee	Role	Date of Appointment	Next Retirement / Re-election (at AGM)
Adrian Foster-Fletcher	Chairman	23rd October 2013	2028
James Gardiner	Treasurer	27th July 2022	2028
Charles Fowler	Trustee	8th August 2017	2026
Graham Storey	Trustee	16th July 2025	2028
Bryan Davies	Trustee	16th July 2025	2028
Ian Vickerage	Trustee	25th July 2018	Retired 16th July 2025
Dorothy Nesbit	Trustee	27th July 2022	Retired 16th July 2025

Address

Although most communications with the charity is via email or phone, postal correspondence can be sent to our face-to-face meeting address which is:

c/o Broadway House
4-8 The Broadway
Northbrook Street
NEWBURY
RG14 1BA.

This is retrieved only periodically. Therefore, please use the contact details below and on our website.

Email: enquiries@careerswestberks.org.uk

Website: www.careerswestberks.org.uk

2. Structure, Governance and Management

CSWB started as an unincorporated association in September 2006. It was registered as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) on 14th April 2014. The governing document is its Constitution based on the CIO model constitution for a membership organisation. The date of the Constitution is 7th April 2014.

Trustees are elected by its members (our volunteers). One third retire in rotation at the AGM, though are eligible for re-election. Our Trustees themselves are all volunteers involved on our weekly job seeker meetings.

The trustees and volunteer members receive no remuneration, advances, credit or guarantees. The Charity employs no staff and does not own real estate. Our administration is decentralised and uses a cloud-based platform (membermojo.co.uk) through which our volunteers can update records. This resulted in a significant reduction in administration costs from its previous level.

Day-to-day oversight of the operations of the Charity takes place through regular communication via email, telephone or an on-line meeting platform.

The Charity's trustees have a risk management policy, which is reviewed annually. The ongoing risks identified and discussed at the AGM were the same as in the previous year:

- Surge in job seekers - high risk, high impact; we considered a plan to run two session a week given economic uncertainty before the start of the year; in fact we saw average class size rise to 10.4 following the April 2025 Employer National Insurance increase with a peak of 17 attendees but have managed this through a group discussion approach to TMAYs for larger sessions and so continued to offer one session per week.
- Succession planning – high risk, medium impact; we are taking action to recruit new trustees to share the administrative burden while keeping running of the charity as simple as possible.
- Lack of volunteers – medium risk, medium impact; plans to recruit former job seekers. We continue to seek new volunteers both from job seekers and elsewhere.

3. Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

From Clause 3 of our Constitution:

"The primary objective of CSWB is to the relief of unemployment for the public benefit in such ways as may be thought fit, including the provision of support, advice and assistance on job-seeking and career-change skills, primarily for managers and professionals in West Berkshire."

The main activities that CSWB undertake in pursuit of its public benefit are:

- running of weekly meetings that include workshops to help job seekers acquire and improve their job-seeking skills
- provision of help and support on a 1-to-1 basis to help job seekers succeed in their next career move
- provision of guidance material on specific job-seeking topics, including CV writing, career choices, networking, using LinkedIn to get a job, and making direct approaches to potential employers.

In delivering these services the Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. The benefit to those out of work is that our services help them re-enter the workplace, start earning and contribute to the economy sooner than they might otherwise have

done without the support and the improvement in skills received through their participation in CSWB activities.

4. Activities and Performance

Meetings held this year were all held face-to-face except for the once-per-term session on LinkedIn involving screen sharing. The following data shows the increase in job seekers in the Spring of 2025 largely attributed to government increases in employer NI, and a further increase after Christmas this year. Overall, we had 62 new joiners over the year, compared to 43 in the previous year. The data shows a clear funnel with increasing numbers of leavers into jobs for the summer term.

	Apr-Jul 2025	Sep-Dec 2025	Jan-Mar 2026
New registrations …	26	13	23
…of which Leavers into Jobs	17	6	9
… of which Leavers (other reasons)	1	1	1
… of which lapsed	4	5	1
… of which current	1*	1	14

Average age new joiners	51.4	50.6	54.2

**Based on data held in membermojo July 2026 – Data gap 3 members unaccounted for*

Our highest meeting attendance was 17 during the summer term with additional apologies received reflecting tighter employment conditions. A summary of our meetings is shown in the table below:

	Apr-Jul 2025	Sep-Dec 2025	Jan-Mar 2026
Planned Meetings	12	11	11
Nr Face-to-face	11	10	11
Nr on Zoom (LinkedIn session)	1	1	0
Average Attendance	10.4	5.8	8.7

In summary, a tight job market was reflected with increasing numbers of attendees at the start of the year but eased over the summer and autumn. The New Year again saw again an increase in new attendees reflecting perhaps a lack of business confidence following a late budget at the end of November. This seems to have eased to some extent over the summer.

In addition to our weekly sessions several volunteers have continued to provide ongoing 1-on-1 support, including reviewing CVs, LinkedIn profiles and holding individual advice sessions.

We remain concerned to maintain a sufficient cohort of volunteers of necessary experience to facilitate our meetings. As with so many volunteer organisations, we are constrained by the limited number of

those with time and interest to commit beside family and working lives. We are grateful to Bryan Davies and Jonathan Firth who joined the team during the year.

We also thank William Pitt who has upgraded our website and provides support for our website and membership tracking system.

5. Financial Review

The accounts for the financial year 2025-26 are shown in section 6 below.

Normally we receive grants from The Foundation for Job Seekers, but none were received during the financial year. We understand that this foundation is being wound-up, and a final grant is expected as a part of this process.

Our expenditure for the year was down compared to the previous year despite increased room hire cost, but with reduced other expenditure against the previous year on e.g. website improvement and insurance and the same cost as last year. Our principal cost is room hire at Broadway House. Professional indemnity insurance accounts for a significant chunk of our expenditure. This was retendered in 2023, no changes to the policy provider were made.

Our policy is to have reserves that will cover at least two years running costs. Our projected rate of expenditure is likely to continue at around £2,000 a year, so the trustees consider that reserves are currently sufficient to support our activities through the coming year. Even without a resumption of grants from the Foundation for Job Seekers, it is estimated that we could operate for at least another two years. Therefore, seeking additional sources of funds is not a priority for the trustees for the foreseeable future although the trustees are aware of various potential grant funding sources that could be approached in the future.

The Trustees believe that the financial statement gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and that appropriate accounting policies have been applied.

6. Financial Accounts

Careers Springboard West Berkshire

Balance Sheet - 31 March 2026

	Note	31 Mar 2026 £	31 Mar 2025 £
ASSETS			
Bank Account - current		10.90	49.70
Bank Account - savings		5,456.83	7,183.09
TOTAL ASSETS		5,467.73	7,232.79
LIABILITIES			
Accrued Expenditure		300.00	159.76
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year			
TOTAL LIABILITIES		300.00	159.76
NET ASSETS		5,167.73	7,073.03
CSWB FUNDS			
Unrestricted Funds - prior year		6,923.03	8,890.32
Surplus - current year		(1,905.30)	(1,967.29)
TOTAL FUNDS		5,017.73	6,923.03

Income and Expenditure - 1 April 2025 to 31st March 2026

		2025-26 £	2024-25 £
INCOME			
Grants Received		-	-
Donations		-	-
Bank Interest		48.74	74.93
Other Income		-	-
TOTAL INCOME		48.74	74.93
EXPENDITURE			
Meeting Expenses	1	1,581.30	1,469.67
Administration & Office Services	2	50.00	50.00
Stationery, Supplies & Postage		0.00	23.14
Website and Publicity	3	0.00	185.67
Insurance	4	313.74	313.74
Bank charges		9.00	0.00
		1,954.04	2,042.22
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)		(1,905.30)	(1,967.29)

ACCOUNTS APPROVED

Trustee Signature and Date **Trustee Signature and Date**

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Notes to the Accounts 2025-26

1 Room rental, Zoom subscription, consumables etc.

2 Subscription for online membership system

3 Web hosting and domain renewals

4 This is for public liability, trustees' liability and professional indemnity. It does not cover equipment.

7. Other Information

CSWB uses facilities provided by The Greenham Trust, a West Berkshire based charity that uses funds generated by rents at Greenham Business Park to support local charitable and community causes. They offer facilities to other charities at Broadway House in central Newbury at a favourable rate.

MetroBank provide a suitable on-line banking service for the charity, although they have recently introduced monthly current account bank fees. All banking in managed online with access limited to the Chairman and Treasurer.

In the past we sent a leaver's survey to job seekers who leave us, whether that is for a new job or for other reasons. We found that this information was becoming more limited and required considerable time to interpret. At the beginning of the year Dorothy Nesbit and James Gardiner undertook feedback discussions with recent jobseekers and review of emailed and oral group feedback. Overall client satisfaction and appreciation of CSWB, and the support offered by the volunteers, is very high. Clients recognise and appreciate that we are a volunteer organisation that operates on a very low budget and is free to them. We should be proud of what we offer, but at the same time take on board suggested improvements.

Specific areas for improvement cover meeting management and style, programme and content upgrade, clarity as to what CSWB can (and cannot) offer, our website and availability of material digitally, promotion of networking within our client (current and alumni) and volunteer base. Some of the feedback is new or highlights previous concerns while in other areas we have already acted, notably with website improvements.

During the year, we were well supported by our volunteers. We are grateful for their hard work and dedication to helping our job seekers. We continue to receive thanks and appreciation from job seekers whom we have helped back into work.

We believe that the current meetings programme and ongoing 1-on-1 support provides our older job seekers with the skills and resources they need to successfully re-enter the workplace and contribute their extensive experience to the vibrancy of the local and regional economy.

Further information on the activities of Careers Springboard West Berkshire can be found on our website at:

www.careerswestberks.org.uk

8. Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the Trustee's report and accounts above.

As agreed at AGM Adrian Foster-Fletcher 22nd July 2026 (hard copy signature with treasurer)

Adrian Foster-Fletcher Date
Chairman

On behalf of the trustees.