ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026

asc access social care













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Charity Registration 1186714

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A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR



Sarah Maguire, Access Social Care Chairperson.

As I reflect on the year, I am struck by both the increasing challenges facing adult social care and the determination of the people, communities and organisations working to ensure that everyone receives the care and support they have a right to. Across England, demand continues to grow while many local authorities face significant financial pressures. Too often, people are forced to fight for support that should be available as a matter of right. It is in this context that Access Social Care's work remains more important than ever.

This year, we continued to deliver against our strategy to Empower, Enforce and Challenge. Through our community work, legal services, digital innovation and systems change activity, we supported individuals to better understand and exercise their rights while also working to address the wider barriers that prevent people from accessing the support they need.

We saw significant growth in the reach of AccessAva, our free digital service, with conversations increasing by 215% during the year. Our legal team supported people across more than 560 matters, while our community programmes continued to strengthen awareness of social care rights and improve local systems through partnership and co-production. These achievements reflect the commitment and expertise of our staff, volunteers, members, partners and supporters. To complement the publication of this Annual Report, an impact report will be released later in the year to illustrate our work and outcomes in greater detail.

Alongside supporting individuals, we continued to build evidence for change. Through initiatives such as the Helplines Collaboration, our State of the Nation reporting and our ongoing Government transparency campaign, we have contributed to important national conversations about the future of social care and the accountability of the systems that support it. Our aim is not only to help people resolve problems when they arise, but to create the conditions for a fairer and more effective social care system for everyone.

I am also pleased that we have continued to strengthen the organisation itself. We secured the confidence of existing funders, welcomed new supporters, invested in our people and governance, and maintained a strong financial position that will help us build for the future. These foundations are essential if we are to continue expanding our reach and impact in the years ahead.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank our staff, volunteers, members, funders, partners and, most importantly, the people who trust us to stand alongside them in securing their rights. Your experiences, expertise and support continue to shape our work and strengthen our mission.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to our vision: a society where everyone gets the social care they need and have a right to. Following his recent appointment as Prime Minister, Andy Burnham has explicitly declared adult social care to be one of the government's top priorities. We look forward with hope to working alongside the government to create a fairer, more sustainable social care system for future generations. We know there is much more to do, but we are confident that by working together, we can continue to champion social care justice and drive lasting change.

ABOUT SOCIAL CARE

WHAT IS SOCIAL CARE

Social Care is the support people receive in their own home, a care home or in the community, to live in dignity and as independently as possible. When done right, social care should align with the Social Care Future vision, allowing us to "live in the place we call home, with the people and things we love, in communities where we look out for each other, doing the things that matter to us."

SOCIAL CARE IN ENGLAND TODAY

We all know that the social care sector is grappling with severe funding challenges, which have far-reaching consequences for those who rely on these services. Local authorities are struggling to meet legal obligations, often denying or delaying essential care.

Every day at Access Social Care, we see how financial pressures have created a culture of rationing, where disabled people, older people and unpaid carers face unnecessary barriers to getting the support they need. Too often, help is delayed until people reach crisis point, despite the Care Act being built around principles of wellbeing and prevention.

When people can't access the care they need, lives are limited, families are stretched, and inequalities deepen.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE

When local authorities fail to meet their legal duties, the justice system should provide a means to challenge these injustices. Legal aid is intended to ensure everyone can access legal support, regardless of their financial situation.

Without access to justice, the right to social care becomes meaningless. Law Society data reveals that over 70% of the population in England and Wales now live in a local authority area without a single active community care legal aid provider. Public bodies can act unlawfully without repercussions, because people cannot afford legal representation.

We believe that access to justice is vital for upholding the rule of law and protecting the rights of disabled people, older people, and carers. And when done right, we know that legal advice can play a vital role helping public bodies improve the quality and delivery of social care.

OUR VISION AND MISSION

Our Vision is that we all get the social care we need and have a right to.

Our Mission is to partner with communities to champion social care justice. Improving lives through rights education, legal advice and training, innovation and data insight.

OUR VALUES

Our values are what we stand for. They define our culture, guide decisions, and set the standard for how people interact with one another at Access Social Care, and the wider community.

Trustworthy	Recognised for excellence, we will be the best we can be in everything we do. We will be truthful, independent and outcomes focussed.
Fair	We believe in treating people with kindness and compassion in a way that is right, reasonable, and just.
Fearless	We will do what is right, not what is easy. We will bravely challenge injustice.
Inclusive	Our beneficiaries' voices will influence our thinking and decision making at all levels of our organisation. Collaborative in our thinking, we will work with others to achieve our goals.
Positive	We will be constructive and progressive in our challenge. We will optimistically and dynamically drive for change

OUR STRATEGY

Our strategy guides the work that we do. Every day, we help people understand and enforce their rights. We gather evidence from these experiences to challenge barriers and influence decision-makers, to create lasting improvements in social care. Read on to find how we work towards our vision and mission through our strategy, guided by our values.

Our Impact Priorities

We empower

Communities use the law early on to get better outcomes

We enforce

People get early legal advice and support when they need it

We drive system change

We use data to challenge, persuade and influence to improve quality, policy and practice locally and nationally

Our Enabling Priorities

We use technology

We innovate and use technology to increase efficiency and impact

We value our people

Our people strategy protects the social care law career pathway and ensures ASC is the best place to work

We generate income

Our diverse income streams grow to support increased impact

WE EMPOWER

WORKING IN COMMUNITIES



Jacky Martel, Senior Advice Co-Ordinator writes:

Our communities' work is centred on co-producing local adult social care systems that get it right first time, every time. We prioritise supporting underserved and marginalised people who face barriers to accessing care, particularly where overlapping factors such as disability, ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status create additional challenges.

This year, we delivered our work through two complementary community engagement models. Our Community Hub Model in Croydon and Gloucestershire focused on building partnerships, raising awareness of Care Act rights, delivering training, promoting AccessAva, supporting individuals to challenge decisions, and sharing insights with local authorities. In Cornwall, we are developing a Community-led Model, working with a local organisation to identify and challenge key issues and act as a catalyst for change through co-produced activities.

We supported 362 community members through casework and trained 222 people on social care rights, with 99% rating the training as good or excellent. We also delivered social care information presentations to a further 121 people. We strengthened connections with organisations supporting older people, disabled people, and carers, including engaging 307 carers and professionals through Peer Navigators.

In Croydon, our work contributed to an Ombudsman investigation that found maladministration, leading to significant policy improvements, increased transparency, and a new route for residents to challenge panel decisions affecting their care. In Gloucestershire, we established an Improving Access to Social Care Steering Group to strengthen collaboration, broker connections, support fundraising, and co-produce solutions. We also secured changes to an online referral portal that had discriminated against people with mental health issues and neurodivergent people, thereby reducing their access to support.

Despite challenges encountered during the development of the Peer Navigator programme, 17 carers have been supported to secure outcomes, such as more affordable charges and increased support for their family members.

Next year, we will deliver a Peer Navigator cohort in Greater Manchester, provide rights training in Cornwall and Greater Manchester, establish a community-led steering group in Croydon, and expand lived experience representation and insight-sharing in Gloucestershire.

ACCESSAVA, OUR FREE DIGITAL SERVICE



Finbar Mulholland, Head of Product, writes:

AccessAva is our free digital service that helps people understand their rights and take action when navigating adult social care. Available 24/7, it provides legal information, personalised guidance and practical tools that help people secure the support they are entitled to.

AccessAva provides trusted, reliable social care legal guidance by ensuring that every piece of information is written and verified by qualified specialist lawyers, rather than generated by artificial intelligence (AI). While AI helps guide users seamlessly to the right information, the legal content itself is fully reviewed by experienced legal professionals to guarantee accuracy.

In 2025/26, AccessAva experienced significant growth in reach and engagement. The number of conversations increased from 4,362 in 2024/25 to 13,736 in 2025/26 – a 215% increase. This means thousands more people were able to access trusted information and guidance about their social care rights.

A major focus during the year was raising awareness of AccessAva directly with citizens. Through targeted marketing activity, partnerships and ongoing promotion, we introduced the service to many more people who may not otherwise have known where to turn for help. This growth supports our ambition to ensure that everyone can access clear, accurate information about their social care rights when they need it. We also welcomed 9 new hosting partners during the year, including charities, support organisations and community groups. These partnerships extend the reach of AccessAva into local communities, ensuring more people can access information and guidance through organisations they already know and trust.

This growth also resulted in more people taking practical action to secure support. This year 1,290 legal letters were downloaded through AccessAva, compared with 896 in the previous year – an increase of 44%. These letters help people communicate with local authorities, explain their circumstances and assert their rights under social care law.

The increase in conversations matters for more reasons than reach alone. Every interaction helps us build a richer picture of the challenges people face when trying to access social care. As AccessAva grows, so does our ability to identify trends, understand emerging issues and generate insights that can help improve policy, practice and services. By combining data from direct citizen engagement and our network of hosting partners, we are building a deeper understanding of people's experiences of navigating the social care system. These insights help identify unmet need, highlight where systems are not working as intended and inform improvements that benefit people locally and nationally.

Alongside this growth, we continued to improve the service through user research, feedback and iterative improvements, making it easier for people to find reliable information, understand their rights and take the next step with confidence.

Experience AccessAva by visiting **https://accessava.org.uk**

WE ENFORCE

OUR MEMBERSHIP MODEL




Sarah Clarke and Camille Ivinson, Legal team Senior Solicitors

Access Social Care exists to improve the lives of people who need care and support by helping them understand and enforce their legal rights. We provide services through our membership model, which promotes our priorities to empower, enforce and challenge to achieve system change.

OUR MEMBERSHIP MODEL

We empower people with legal education, training, resources and guidance.

- Providing legal advice and representation directly to individuals who need care and support, referred to us by our member organisations or through our communities.
- We support our member organisations by providing training, resources, updates and practical guidance as well as forums for discussion, to assist them in delivering high-quality services to those they support.

We enforce legal rights through our casework delivered in house or via our pro bono partners and university clinics.

- We work directly with individuals to advance their Care Act rights and challenge unlawful behaviour by public bodies.
- We ensure more people access legal advice to solve problems early on. We know that with the right communication, targeted to the appropriate public body, we can transform outcomes to make sure people with social care needs get the support they have a right to.

We use data reporting and participation in our advisory panels to create insight that challenges.

- We spot trends from our casework and feed this to our insights and advisory teams to influence, persuade and challenge.
- We work at a local and national level to improve policy, quality and practice to achieve systems change.

LEGAL ADVICE AND CASEWORK

Through referrals from our dedicated legal advice and casework memberships, we work directly with individuals to advance their Care Act rights and challenge unlawful behaviour by public bodies.

This year, our legal team worked on over 560 matters, providing dedicated, ongoing casework directly to people with care and support needs on up to 150 cases, as well as delivering further advice and casework to individuals via our clinics and dealing with 280+ further enquiries via our member surgeries and direct member organisation referrals.

We provided legal advice and support on a wide range of community care issues including;

- Enforcing Care Act rights for individuals so that they access assessment and review
- Working to resolve personal budgets insufficient to meet an individual's needs
- Challenging reductions in local authority commissioned hours where care and support is still needed
- Assisting with access to advocacy
- Advising and supporting to raise safeguarding concerns where needed
- Working to ensure adults with a learning disability, detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act, can be discharged to community placements with adequate packages of care and support.

Here are some of the outcomes we achieved.

- Our caseworkers supported a young adult, who had been living at home and reliant on informal family care, to move into supported living. The Council had continually failed to hear both the family's request for support and the young adult's wish to move. We worked with the young adult and his family over a sustained period whilst a long term supported living opportunity was identified. We then ensured arrangements were put in place to enable the young adult to make the move.

- The legal team also supported two families following the termination of a lease at a residential care home, which required residents to move at short notice. Our involvement focused on ensuring that transitions were managed lawfully, in accordance with the relevant legal frameworks under the Care Act 2014 and Mental Capacity Act 2005 and to ensure that families of the individuals involved had appropriate support to ensure their involvement in some of these processes.

ADVISORY PANELS AND MEMBER TRAINING

The legal team at Access Social Care is a trusted source of advice in relation to adult social care law. In addition, our advisory panel provides a forum for strategic thinking and influencing and we continue to work to collate and provide data analysis and insight.

Throughout this year our member organisations have had access to our resources, updates and practical guidance in relation to community care and adult social care matters. We have also delivered training in Care Act, Mental Capacity Act and other related legal frameworks to different audiences within our membership organisations. The feedback we receive indicates how this has helped care and support staff, managers and leaders to increase their legal knowledge; giving them

confidence to promote the rights of those they support; helping them to spot when commissioners may be failing in their legal duties so they can seek further advice.

During this period, we have worked with 20 membership organisations for advice and casework, and with 8 advice only memberships.

We endeavour to provide different types of memberships, aligned with our priorities to empower, enforce and challenge

During this year we also undertook significant work to move to a new case management system. We are hopeful that our new system will help to improve efficiency in managing casework files as well as strengthen our ability to review and monitor outcomes, not just at the end of a case, but whilst it is in progress too.

PRO BONO CLINICS



Danielle Zeider, Pro-bono Manager, writes:

Approximately 50 volunteers from law firms Slaughter & May, Baker McKenzie, Fieldfisher and Orrick have worked on the Legal Rights Clinic this year. They were supported by 12 student volunteers. Together, they provided ongoing casework on 40 community care matters, including charging, direct payment cases and welfare benefit appeals. We have noticed that referrals are becoming increasingly complex, which has meant that we have not been able to take on all referrals and many of the cases that we do take are taking longer to resolve.

In one personal independence payment appeal (PIP), the client had unsuccessfully tried for several years to get PIP. With the support of our volunteers, his appeal was successful and he now receives enhanced rate mobility component and the standard rate care component as well as receiving a backdated payment of over £13,000. This will make a massive difference to his daily life and independence. In another successful case, a client's transport to her day service was reinstated so that she no longer had to rely on her elderly parents to take her there. Her mum wrote:

"*... we cannot thank you enough for all your kind support and care over the last months. You are an amazing group of people giving up so much of your precious time to help and support the most vulnerable people in our society, and we as parents are eternally grateful for that help and support*"

Our law firm partners kindly funded a project with Inside Impact to look at the way that the clinics monitor and evaluate the work that we do. We are now in the process of implementing the recommendations that came out of that piece of work.

At the beginning of 25/ 26 Fieldfisher ended their participation in the Legal Rights Clinic to focus on other areas of pro bono work. However, they still support us with one off advice and projects such as the hackathon. We are in discussions with other universities to launch a third university law clinic.

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

We have continued to work with 6 student volunteers from the University of York. We also launched a new clinic with the University of Bristol law clinic with 6 volunteers.

The student volunteers have engaged in a number of different tasks including using AccessAva to draft letters that go out to local authorities in the name of the client; creating fact sheets for clients and engaging in ongoing casework. As well as providing positive outcomes for the individuals who use the clinics, such as getting them their statutory rights to a needs assessment and carer's assessment, the clinics have increased awareness and interest in community care law amongst student volunteers, thereby contributing to our career pathway work.

CAREER PATHWAY – COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



Caroline Miles, Project Manager writes:

Our Career Pathways report published in 2022 identified a need for increased networking, peer support and training opportunities for isolated and under-resourced Community Care specialist lawyers.

Generous funding from the Legal Education Foundation from 2023 - 2026 enabled us to respond to that report by running a Working Group from which we co-produced a new practitioners association. The result was the Community Care Lawyers Group (CCLG) which was successfully launched in 2024/25. Throughout 25/26 the group became more established, with the emphasis on building a sustainable, supportive, and member-led organisation.

A small group of practitioners generously took on roles in an interim executive committee and are continuing the important and painstaking work of exploring and putting into place the most appropriate governance structure for the group.

In April 2025 the Working Group, and CCLG's excellent and hard established long-term work with the Legal Aid Agency's (LAA) Process Efficiency Team (PET) which directly addressed problems with the processing of Legal Aid applications was derailed by the LAA data breach. This disastrous and immensely impactful event understandably took all PET team agency staff into new mitigation focused roles; and the event itself created immeasurable new stresses and new cumbersome and unrecompensed workloads for practitioners. Our focus inevitably pivoted towards supporting practitioners with this.

However, it did give the group an opportunity to experience and demonstrate the benefits of its existence and to prove its worth. We were able to host discussions, gather feedback, and facilitate peer support opportunities for group members. The group also continued to provide Community Care law with an identifiable profile and representation in sector wide discussions, and to contribute information about the specific impact on their work to the representations being made to the LAA/ MOJ by the Law Society and Legal Aid Practitioner's Group (LAPG).

By the end of the 25/26 ongoing concerns remained for practitioners about the impact on their financial position, the processing and payment of legal aid applications made during the breach, and the impact of unbillable administrative work.

Our online members only Community Care Lawyers discussion forum launched in February 25 and grew steadily throughout the 25/ 26 year with 60 members signing up. The forum is being used to post a range of questions about cases, requests for information or support, job vacancies as well as training and event opportunities. Although the platform and moderation and administration time for this are not insignificant, it has been really positive to watch the development of networking, the building of relationships and the knowledge and experience sharing that is happening on the board.

For example, we identified and supported a collaboration of CCLG members to write an article for the September 2025 LAG magazine about Community Care Law for Immigration advisors which was extremely well received

The interim CCLG committee members took the lead in organising a hybrid half day pop-up event in March 26, with 50 attendees and many excellent speakers and presentations including leading KCs and solicitors and the Legal Aid Agency. The Law Society and LAPG were also represented demonstrating excellent networking and support.

We are moving into the new financial year without the benefit of LEF funding but with agreed support in place from Access Social Care and a solid basis from which the CCLG will continue to grow.

WE DRIVE SYSTEM CHANGE

Access Social Care is working towards a future where everyone gets the social care they have a right to. Our approach is to do this by collaborating with all parts of the system. We know that whilst we positively and constructively challenge public bodies through our casework, our campaigning and our community work, we can still collaborate with leaders from public bodies to drive improvements to quality, policy and practice.

Our work goes beyond individual cases to gather data that can drive systemic change through insights. In Croydon and Gloucestershire, our work has contributed to improved outcomes for people from economically underserved and minoritised communities. At the same time, it has underscored changes to policy and practice which affect the wider community.

SYSTEM CHANGE: UNLOCKING ACCOUNTABILITY

One example of this occurred in Gloucestershire, where our work improved individual outcomes and resulted in changes to policy and practice which affect the wider community.

Working with the council, we adapted the presentation of our data to inform quality improvements to council information provision and referral pathways. Our quantitative data indicated a sharp uplift in calls into helplines about safeguarding issues. Our qualitative data identified that a mandatory question on the council website referral form prevented people with non-physical needs from making a referral to adult social care, and the council's referral pathway for people with mental health conditions and/or neurodivergence was having an unintended consequence of diverting people away from a formal social care intervention. Our data prompted the council to conduct a mini audit, which raised the same concerns and as a result, the council swiftly changed the website and recommended changes to the referral pathway.

As The Casey Commission starts to gather data and evidence, it is this sort of openness and transparency that is needed to help design a social care system that is fit for purpose and meets the needs of our population.

SYSTEMS CHANGE: GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY CAMPAIGN



Hannah Hewish, Legal Manager & Insight Lead writes:

GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY LITIGATION

Our Freedom of Information litigation continued this year as three central government departments pursued appeals against the Information Commissioner decisions requiring the disclosure of information about adult social care funding decision making. The appeals were heard over three days before the First-Tier Tribunal on the 17th, 18th and 19th of November 2025. Following the hearing, the Tribunal requested further evidence from two departments and the proceedings remain ongoing. The further hearings have still not yet been scheduled.

Nevertheless, our analysis to date has identified a significant concern. Structural underfunding appears to be built directly into the system which uses historical baselines which would not reflect systemic unmet need. To support the current work on wider sector reform, we requested permission to share information that has been provided by the government in the course of the proceedings with the Casey Commission. However, our request was opposed by the government departments and refused by the Tribunal because the litigation is as yet incomplete.

The November hearings sparked national media coverage, including features by the BBC and sector press, highlighting the real-world impact of hidden funding decisions. We remain determined to progress these cases, bringing these vital decision-making processes into the light.

If the legal rights of the millions of people who depend on adult social care are to be meaningful in practice, the processes used to determine whether social care funding is sufficient must be equally meaningful, transparent and capable of scrutiny.

SYSTEMS CHANGE: State of the Nation 2025

Our latest State of the Nation report, drawing on data from our helplines collaboration, highlights the severe strain remaining on the social care sector. The 2025 data paints a sobering picture, showing that despite political shifts, the system is struggling to meet demand.

Most concerningly, our data reveals a 45.6% surge in safeguarding concerns, a devastating indicator of under-resourced services failing to protect individuals. Demand for support rose across the board, with a 7.5% increase in people receiving advice through helplines. General social care queries grew by 10.7%, while cases requiring specialist legal advice jumped by 16.6%. We also recorded a 7.3% rise in unpaid carer queries and an 8.6% increase regarding direct payments.

These findings demonstrate that rhetoric alone cannot achieve sector reform. Policy decisions risk adding immense costs without matching investment. Armed with this evidence, we continue to urge the Casey Commission to seek full access to government data. We need bold, evidence-based solutions that look beyond budgets to prioritise rights, safety, and dignity for everyone relying on social care.

SYSTEMS CHANGE: THE HELPLINES COLLABORATION



Amit Kohli, Head of Data Insights writes:

The Helplines Collaboration has established something genuinely rare in the social care sector: a shared evidence base, built on trust, that lets eight major advice organisations look at the same questions together. The findings revealed in the latest report could not have been produced by an organisation working alone. The infrastructure is now stable. Our ambition is to make it more powerful.

The most immediate priority is growth. Eight partners gives us breadth; more partners gives us signal strength. We are actively working to bring new organisations into the collaboration - expanding both the geographic reach of the dataset and the range of communities it represents. Every additional partner makes the national picture sharper and makes it harder for policymakers to treat localised data as convenient cover for inaction.

Beyond scale, we want to deepen what the collaboration does for each partner that contributes to it. At present, partners share their data and see the aggregated national output. We want to close that loop - giving each organisation a view of how their own demand patterns sit within the full dataset: where they are typical, where they diverge, and what that might mean.

We are also exploring a regular roundtable where partners can review emerging signals together, turning a data-sharing arrangement into an ongoing intelligence community for the sector.

SYSTEMS CHANGE: STATE OF THE NATION PODCAST



Kari Gerstheimer, CEO and Founder writes:

Our State of our Nation podcast has evolved into a vital platform for rights-based discussion and systemic reform. Building on previous success, we launched Series 3 in early 2026 with a focus on Global Perspectives. Prompted by the 2025 Casey Commission launch, the series explored international social care models to find lessons for UK reform.

Episodes featured insights from around the world, reframing social care as an essential investment that promotes independence and upholds human rights. Each interview was followed by a reflective 'In Conversation' episode with Andy McCabe from #SocialCareFuture, a qualified social worker who draws on social care. For this series, we introduced downloadable written transcripts to ensure accessibility.

These improvements resulted in our highest engagement to date, securing 741 downloads by March 2026. One Casey Commission member shared: "I've been absolutely bingeing the podcast… It's so good and really helpful!"

Looking ahead, the next series will centre on raising awareness of the public consultation element of the Casey Commission, ‘The Big Conversation’. We aim to broaden our reach by welcoming prominent public figures and politicians, ensuring the legal right to care remains firmly on the national agenda.

PATRONS, AMBASSADORS and ADVOCATES



Cal Fedash, Head Marketing & Communication writes:

The vital work of Access Social Care is amplified by the dedication of our patrons, ambassadors, and advocates, who donate their time, expertise, and networks to champion legal rights in social care. Over the past year, their collective efforts have significantly raised our profile and connected us with new supporters.

BUILDING OUR NETWORK OF SUPPORTERS

In October 2025, Amanda Wright-Kluger planned and hosted a special showcase event to introduce our mission to a wider audience. This evening was a resounding success, inspiring five new ambassadors to join our cause. In January 2026, this newly formed group came together to plan their collective strategy for supporting the charity. They chose to focus on the positive impact of legal advocacy, organising a celebration event titled 'Celebrating the Difference the Law Makes', which will take place in September 2026.

ELEVATING VOICES THROUGH MEDIA

Our outreach reached new heights this year thanks to creative collaboration and expert insight. Andy McCabe co-produced and starred alongside our Chief Executive, Kari Gerstheimer, in the third series of the State of the Nation podcast.

Andy brings a uniquely powerful perspective to our mission. As a co-convenor of Social Care Future, a qualified social worker, and an individual who draws on his own experience of social care, he bridges the gap between professional practice and personal insight.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

Our advocates have been instrumental in representing the charity at a grassroots level. Katie and Scott Peacock represented Access Social Care at a Community Hub event in Croydon, which was hosted by Mencap for the Casey project.

We were also delighted to welcome James Mackie from the Casey Commission to this event. This visit provided an invaluable opportunity for James to meet directly with individuals who draw on social care support, allowing him to hear firsthand accounts of navigating the current system. These conversations are vital for ensuring that future policy recommendations are grounded in the lived realities of the people they affect.

OUR ENABLING PRIORITIES

PEOPLE STRATEGY



Serena Kashim, People Director, writes:

In 2025-26, we continued to strengthen our people strategy and evolve our supporting infrastructure. As of 31st March 2025, we employed 40 people, providing the capacity and expertise to deliver our work and support Access Social Care's continued development.

This has included further embedding organisational practices as well as developing the systems, policies and frameworks that underpin a values-led employee experience.

In 2025, we reviewed our organisational structure to ensure it remains efficient, effective and sustainable. Building on this, the Executive team are working with leaders across the organisation in 2026 to translate strategic objectives into clear priorities, supporting greater focus and effective use of resources.

A key milestone this year was the repeat of our all-staff survey which ran from March 2026 and achieved an 84% response rate, providing valuable insight into how people experience Access Social Care.

Areas of strength include:

- 94% of staff believe Access Social Care's remote working structure suits them personally
- 86% of staff feel proud to work for Access Social Care
- 81% of staff would recommend Access Social Care as a good place to work
- 75% of staff feel encouraged to learn and develop their potential
- 75% of staff receive the training they need to do their job effectively

A major area of progress has been the development of our organisational principles, designed to sit across our five values and define the behaviours that support delivery of our mission. Developed through all staff workshops, surveys and iterative testing, the principles reflect existing strengths while clarifying expectations for how we work together. They were refined into clear, practical statements, tested with staff and formally approved by the Board in November 2025. A pilot with one team is underway, with learning informing wider rollout in 2026.

We have also designed a people management development programme to support more consistent management capability with rollout planned for April 2026. In parallel, we have strengthened our HR policies through equality impact assessments with our EDI group, ensuring they are inclusive and reflective of current practice.

Looking ahead, wider policy review work is underway as part of preparation for Solicitors Qualifying Mark (SQM) accreditation, supporting alignment with legal aid requirements and service quality standards. We will also continue to embed our organisational principles across teams during 2026.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS



Joanne Williams, Director of Partners & Engagement writes:

The continued support of our funders, partners and supporters enables Access Social Care to pursue our vision of a society where everyone gets the social care they need and have a right to.

During 2025/26, we strengthened the foundations for our future sustainability, securing continued support from nine existing funders while welcoming four new funding partners. These commitments reflect growing confidence in our work and the increasingly important role Access Social Care plays in promoting social care justice and access to rights.

In a challenging funding environment, we remained focused on building long-term, values-led relationships with funders and partners who share our commitment to improving outcomes for disabled people, older people and unpaid carers. This approach has enabled us not only to secure funding for current activities but also to invest in the organisational capacity, innovation and collaboration needed to achieve lasting change.

Throughout the year, philanthropic investment supported the continued growth of our legal advice and casework services, community-based programmes, digital innovation through AccessAva, and our work to generate evidence and insight for systems change. Together, these activities help individuals understand and enforce their rights while driving improvements across the wider social care system.

We also undertook a review of our income strategy to ensure Access Social Care remains financially resilient and well positioned for the future. As a result, we are adopting a more focused, relationship-led approach to fundraising and exploring new opportunities for sustainable income generation through strategic partnerships, earned income and innovative collaborations.

Fundraising Standards and Protection of the Public.

The charity undertakes a limited amount of fundraising activity directed at members of the general public. The charity's income is principally derived from trusts and foundations, grant-making bodies, membership fees and other institutional funders. Accordingly, the trustees consider the specific requirements relating to the protection of members of the public and vulnerable people in fundraising to be not applicable to the charity's fundraising activities during the year.

As our influence and reach continue to grow, so too does the opportunity to build a broader coalition of organisations and individuals who share our ambition for a fairer social care system. We are grateful to all those who invest in our work and trust us to steward their support effectively.

Looking ahead, our focus remains on building a resilient organisation capable of responding to rising demand, expanding our reach and continuing to champion the rights of people who rely on social care. We are not simply securing funding for today; we are building the foundations that will enable Access Social Care to deliver lasting impact for years to come.

FINANCIAL REPORTING



Peter Stimpson, Finance Director, writes:

GOVERNANCE

This year, Access Social Care's Board completed a governance review supported by an external consultant. The purpose of this review was to design a roadmap to ensure that Access Social Care's governance procedures and expectations aligned with best practice and designed to promote productive collaboration between Board and Executive in the charity.

The implementation of this review was completed at the end of 2025; Access Social Care now has a refreshed and updated set of documents including the Code of Conduct, Role Descriptions for Officers, a Delegation Framework (clarifying responsibilities between Board and Executive), a Dispute Resolution process and a Ways of Working approach. In addition, we agreed an annual review process for Trustee development and review.

In March 2026 we were joined by a new Trustee, Richard Humphries, who brings his extensive experience in the social care field to our Board. All our Trustees are profiled on our *people pages*, here.

New trustees are usually recruited through an open process, although Access Social Care may sometimes use agencies where specific skills cannot be filled. All trustees have a full induction including reviewing key documents and a series of meetings with key staff.

Board meetings are quarterly with an additional away day where Trustees and the Executive meet to reflect on the past year, review progress and make plans for the future.

STRUCTURE

The charity is incorporated as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) under the name Access Your Right to Care and is governed by its Constitution.

Access Social Care works in partnership with a range of other organisations at a local and national level, including being a member of the Care & Support Alliance and Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG).

MANAGEMENT

The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the overall strategic direction of the charity and for developing policies and plans to support the delivery of our charitable objectives.

Strategic decision-making such as objective setting, budget approval and setting risk appetite is done by the Board of Trustees who hold the Executive accountable for delivery. Day to day operations are delegated to the CEO and her team. The team at Access is structured to meet our strategy with our legal team focusing on casework, community work and career pathway alongside

specialist teams working on AccessAva, our data work and strategic litigation. These are supported by an administration team. A clear delegation framework is in place describing where decisions are made and how they are communicated.

The charity sets pay for key management personnel by benchmarking roles against market rates for small national charities, with exceptions made where recruitment challenges exist (e.g. legal and tech roles). Salaries are reviewed for internal equity across teams, and adjustments are made to ensure fairness in relation to responsibilities and organisational banding.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Access Social Care has ended the financial year in a strong financial position once again increasing our unrestricted free reserves. We recorded an overall deficit of £161,497; however, this was due to spending down of restricted or designated funds received in the prior year.

Whilst we have been successful in securing some long-term grant funds, we are seeking a significant increase in both the breadth of sources and total income in the next financial year as we seek to deliver for increasing numbers of people in need.

INCOME

Our total income for the year to 31 March 2026 was £2,571,407, a 9% reduction on the prior year (£2,836,436). This reduction in income is partly due to a planned reduction in the grant from the Oak Foundation from £1,500,000m to £1,300,000. In addition, we received a number of funds at the very end of the prior year which were for use in this financial year. This included £75,000 from the Legal Education Foundation and £100,000 from the Julia Rausing Trust.

We have substantially increased our membership income to £565,110 in FY25/26, a 29% increase. We expect this to increase again in the current year enabling us to increase the number of beneficiaries we can support with our expert legal casework.

EXPENDITURE - TOTAL EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure in the reporting period was £2,732,904, a significant increase from the prior year (£2,402,562). Non staff expenditure increased only very slightly – the costs of successfully marketing AccessAva were mitigated by prudent cost management elsewhere. The increase was driven by additional staff costs, particularly strengthening our legal team and our project management capabilities during the year.

GOING CONCERN

Access Social Care is still a relatively new charity yet our experience from the few years since our incorporation leaves us well-placed to manage the risk that we face. This position is supported by strong liquidity, sufficient reserves for business continuity and development plans, a good relationship with our key funders and proven ability to retain and secure new services.

In this report we have set out a review of Access Social Care's financial performance, the reserves position and principal risks and uncertainties. Notwithstanding the ongoing pressures on fundraising, our performance to date has been robust in terms of income generation and Access Social Care

has remained firmly in control of its service quality and financial performance throughout the operating period.

The 2026/27 budget has been approved by the Access Social Care Board. Our planning processes, including financial projections, take into consideration the current economic climate and its potential impact on the various sources of income and planned expenditure.

The trustees therefore have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, "Charities and Public Benefit".

Access Social Care's charitable objects are enshrined within its memorandum and articles and as such the trustees ensure that the charity's activities are carried out for the public benefit through its strategic priorities. This is done primarily through the delivery of services aimed at people with social care needs as well as those who support them. This report allows us to show how our charitable funds are spent and the impact and benefits that has on those using our services, as well as the wider impact on society

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

There was no further spending on the development of AccessAva. We are not meaningfully developing the existing version of the product now, instead we spent much of the year successfully increasing interactions and conversations with the product. The remaining value will be amortised in line with our policy.

FUNDS ANALYSIS

Reserves are maintained at a level that enables the charity to manage operational financial risks and short-term income volatility. They allow the charity to sustain service delivery, in particular legal casework support to our clients, over the long term, as well as ensuring that financial commitments can be met as they are due.

Of the charity's £2,090,500 total funds at the end of March 2025, £405,611 are restricted funds that are committed to future expenditure and not available for general purposes.

We hold £1,226,904 in two designated funds; the first (£103,404) covers the amortisation of our intangible asset, AccessAva. These funds result from prior cash expenditure on development which were not expensed at the point of purchase in the SOFA. Instead, these funds will be used to cover future amortisation costs and therefore will be released to the SOFA in future years.

The second designated fund (£1,123,500) holds the balance of our Oak Foundation funding. This funding is flexible, but it is not part of our general funds as it must be spent over a calendar year period.

Our free reserves, or General Funds, are £457,985 (FY24: £347,959). Free reserves are those unrestricted funds which are freely available to the trustees to spend on any of the charity's purposes.

RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have reviewed the Reserves policy this year due to the confirmation of long-term funding. In this new light, the existing policy had become out of date. A new policy has been devised with the following considerations:

- Secured funding sources
- Cash flow
- Fixed costs
- Ensuring our ability to effectively complete or transfer vital services in the event of loss of income

The Trustees have therefore decided to set a target for reserves this year of retaining six months of essential costs (£499,000) as well as non-negotiable costs required in restructuring. This will ensure provision for supporting services and dealing appropriately with liabilities in the event of a drop in income. This target should be held in cash to ensure that funds are liquid.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Our current free reserves provide more than 5 months of cover, the trustees alongside the Executive team will review strategies to bridge the small remaining gap in the coming year.

RISKS

Access Social Care continually reviews its risk framework, ensuring that it aligns with the organisation's strategic aims and objectives. The Board of Trustees reviews the full register annually and is provided with regular exception reporting flagging where risk scoring has changed, and additional mitigation actions being taken. Independent assurance is provided by an outsourced independent audit function from Godfrey Wilson accountants. Risk management at the operational level is managed by the Executive team, who review risks regularly both within their directorates and as a group.

Principal Risk	Background	Our Mitigation Strategy
Unsuccessful in securing sustainable income for Digital Products	We have had incredibly generous support from a wide range of grant funders, but we need to grow other income streams. particularly ones linked to our digital products such as AccessAva and our data work as these are the most commercially viable options.	We are particularly focused on income generation effort linked to our digital products such as AccessAva and our data work as these are the most commercially viable options. We are working with a number of partners to create minimum viable products that we believe will help councils and public bodies make more precise, evidence-based decisions.

Failure to retain existing members and expand provider memberships	Our membership is made up of care sector organisations. We recognise that this is an extremely challenging time for the sector with many of our members having to make difficult decisions to remain financially viable.	We have strengthened our relationship management work with our partners, and improved communication around the return on investment from our members gain. We have successfully retained existing members and been successful in attracting new organisations into our membership, evidenced by the increase in income this year. We continue to struggle with recruitment to the legal team and are trying a range of options to increase interest in our roles so that we can expand this area and support more people.
Access Social Care experiences a major IT failure or systems are compromised by external threats	The increasing frequency of cyber-attacks on organisations of all sizes has increased the likelihood of this risk and our focus on mitigation.	We are in the process of reviewing our cyber security strategy. We have secured the Cyber Essentials classification, but we will be looking to go further in threat scanning, training, incident response policies and insurance.

Access Your Right To Care

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2026

Charity number	1186714	
Registered office	86-90 Paul Street London EC2A 4NE	
Trustees	The trustees who served during the period and up to the date of this report were as follows: Tracey Gyateng Christopher Hale Jonathon Holmes Richard Humphries Joanne Land Sarah Maguire David Wood	 (appointed 9 March 2026)
Chief executive officer	Kari Gerstheimer	
Senior management team	Joanne Williams Laura Peters Serena Kashim Peter Stimpson	Director of Fundraising & Communications Director of Legal Services (resigned December 2025) People Director Finance Director
Bankers	The Co-Operative Bank Business Direct Skelmerdale WN8 6GH	
Auditors	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 2nd Floor - South One Castle Park Tower Hill Bristol BS2 0JA	

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2026

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with 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).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice 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 charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors
Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as auditors to the charity during the period and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 23 September 2026 and signed on their behalf by

Chris Hale - Trustee

Independent auditors' report

To the trustees of

Access Your Right To Care

Opinion
We have audited the financial statements of Access Your Right To Care (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2026 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and the related 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 charity's affairs as at 31 March 2026 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, 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 Charities Act 2011.

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 charity 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 the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 6 to the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

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

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

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

Other information
The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Independent auditors' report

To the trustees of

Access Your Right To Care

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the trustees

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

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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 procedures we carried out and the extent to which they are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, are detailed below:

Independent auditors' report

To the trustees of

Access Your Right To Care

(1) We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, and assessed the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Throughout the audit, we remained alert to possible indications of non-compliance.

(2) We reviewed the charity's policies and procedures in relation to:
- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations, and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risk of fraud, and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- Designing and implementing internal controls to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud.

(3) We inspected the minutes of trustee meetings.

(4) We enquired about any non-routine communication with regulators and reviewed any reports made to them.

(5) We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and assessed their compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(6) We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions or balances that may indicate a risk of material fraud or error.

(7) We assessed the risk of fraud through management override of controls and carried out procedures to address this risk. Our procedures included:
- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries;
- Assessing judgements and accounting estimates for potential bias;
- Reviewing related party transactions; and
- Testing transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. Irregularities that arise due to fraud can be even harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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

Independent auditors' report

To the trustees of

Access Your Right To Care

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees 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 charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Godfrey Wilson

Date: 23 September 2026

GODFREY WILSON LIMITED
Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
2nd Floor - South
One Castle Park
Tower Hill
Bristol
BS2 0JA

Godfrey Wilson Limited is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2026

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	**2026 Total £**	2025 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	489,290	1,451,596	**1,940,886**	2,324,356
Charitable activities	4	-	597,050	**597,050**	489,139
Investments		-	33,471	**33,471**	22,941
Total income		489,290	2,082,117	**2,571,407**	2,836,436
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		50,229	285,171	**335,400**	304,452
Charitable activities		439,950	1,957,554	**2,397,504**	2,098,110
Total expenditure	5	490,179	2,242,725	**2,732,904**	2,402,562
Net (expenditure) / income and net movement in funds	6	(889)	(160,608)	**(161,497)**	433,874
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		406,500	1,845,497	**2,251,997**	1,818,123
Total funds carried forward		**405,611**	**1,684,889**	**2,090,500**	2,251,997

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 15 to the accounts.

Access Your Right To Care

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2026

	Note	£	**2026** **£**	2025 £
Fixed assets				
Intangible fixed assets	9		**103,404**	222,528
Current assets				
Debtors	10	**229,953**		209,989
Current asset investments	11	**360,000**		-
Cash at bank and in hand		**1,754,536**		2,173,348
		2,344,489		2,383,337
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	12	**(357,393)**		(353,868)
Net current assets			**1,987,096**	2,029,469
Net assets	14		**2,090,500**	2,251,997
Funds	15			
Restricted funds			**405,611**	406,500
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds			**1,226,904**	1,497,538
General funds			**457,985**	347,959
Total charity funds			**2,090,500**	2,251,997

Approved by the trustees on 23 September 2026 and signed on their behalf by

Chris Hale - Trustee

Access Your Right To Care

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2026

	2026	2025
	£	£
Net movement in funds	**(161,497)**	433,874
Adjustments for:		
Amortisation charges	**119,124**	167,014
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	**(33,471)**	(22,941)
Increase in debtors	**(19,964)**	(27,186)
Increase in creditors	**3,525**	71,543
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	**(92,283)**	622,304
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	**33,471**	22,941
Capitalisation of intangible fixed assets	**-**	(55,354)
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	**33,471**	(32,413)
(Decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period	**(58,812)**	589,891
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	**2,173,348**	1,583,457
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	**2,114,536**	2,173,348
Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash at bank and in hand	**1,754,536**	2,173,348
Cash held in current asset investments	**360,000**	-
	2,114,536	2,173,348

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

1. Accounting policies

a) General information and basis of preparation

Access Your Right To Care is a charitable incorporated organisation registered in England and Wales. The registered office address is 86-90 Paul Street, London, EC2A 4NE.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Access Your Right To Care meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income from subscriptions received in advance is deferred until criteria for income recognition are met.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

As discussed in the trustees' report, the charity benefitted from significant pro bono support in 2025 and 2026, however these have not been recognised in the accounts on the basis that the charity would not have been able to afford these services if not provided for free.

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Interest receivable

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.

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Irrecoverable VAT is allocated as a support cost.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities based on the proportion of direct costs, as follows:

	2026	2025
Raising funds	**12%**	13%
Charitable activities	**88%**	87%

i) Intangible fixed assets

Internally generated intangible assets meeting the relevant recognition criteria are initially measured at cost. Intangible fixed assets relate to the costs incurred in developing the charity's ChatBot asset.

Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation process commences upon the completion of each sprint. The amortisation rate in use for ChatBot is 4 years straight line.

j) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

k) Cash at bank and in hand

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

1. Accounting policies (continued)

l) Current asset investments

Current asset investments consist of cash held on deposit in interest bearing accounts. Such investments are measured at their fair value.

m) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

n) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

o) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

p) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying 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 if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determining the value of additions to capitalised intangible assets and the associated amortisation policy.

2. Prior year comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	633,132	1,691,224	2,324,356
Charitable activities	-	489,139	489,139
Investments	-	22,941	22,941
Total income	633,132	2,203,304	2,836,436
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	50,229	254,223	304,452
Charitable activities	554,391	1,543,719	2,098,110
Total expenditure	604,620	1,797,942	2,402,562
Net income and net movement in funds	28,512	405,362	433,874

3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	**2026 Total £**
Oak Foundation grant	76,000	1,300,000	**1,376,000**
Trusts and foundations	413,290	98,000	**511,290**
Corporate donations	-	50,100	**50,100**
Individual donations	-	3,215	**3,215**
Gift aid	-	281	**281**
Total income from donations	**489,290**	**1,451,596**	**1,940,886**

Prior year comparative

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £
Oak Foundation grant	-	1,500,000	1,500,000
Trusts and foundations	624,880	142,500	767,380
Corporate donations	6,500	46,924	53,424
Individual donations	1,752	1,800	3,552
Total income from donations	633,132	1,691,224	2,324,356

4. Income from charitable activities

	2026 Total £	2025 Total £
Subscriptions	**565,110**	437,816
ChatBot licensing	**23,584**	45,425
Consultancy income	**865**	2,565
Training income	**7,491**	3,333
Total income from charitable activities	**597,050**	489,139

All income from charitable activities in the current and prior year was unrestricted.

5. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	**2026 Total £**
Staff costs (note 7)	221,430	1,564,405	350,136	**2,135,971**
Consultancy	46,487	212,403	20,057	**278,947**
Amortisation	-	119,124	-	**119,124**
IT and telephone costs	177	21,074	41,102	**62,353**
Other Staff Costs	5,793	34,765	19,023	**59,581**
Finance and governance	84	107	21,891	**22,082**
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	26,007	**26,007**
Office costs	1,723	16,544	2,148	**20,415**
Workshops	697	7,275	452	**8,424**
Sub-total	276,391	1,975,697	480,816	**2,732,904**
Allocation of support and governance costs	59,009	421,807	(480,816)	**-**
Total expenditure	**335,400**	**2,397,504**	**-**	**2,732,904**

Total governance costs were £11,376 (2025: £33,811).

Prior year comparative

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2025 Total £
Staff costs (note 7)	193,370	1,279,214	339,285	1,811,869
Consultancy	37,301	124,386	7,530	169,217
Amortisation	-	167,014	-	167,014
IT and telephone costs	-	55,516	39,056	94,572
Other staff costs	4,775	20,704	32,853	58,332
Finance and governance	8	318	43,884	44,210
Irrecoverable VAT	-	-	28,180	28,180
Office costs	1,233	12,232	2,345	15,810
Workshops	4,860	5,218	3,280	13,358
Sub-total	241,547	1,664,602	496,413	2,402,562
Allocation of support and governance costs	62,905	433,508	(496,413)	-
Total expenditure	304,452	2,098,110	-	2,402,562

6. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2026	2025
	£	£
Trustees' remuneration	**Nil**	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	**377**	614
Amortisation	**119,124**	167,014
Auditors' remuneration:		
▪ Statutory audit (ex VAT)	**7,900**	7,500

During the period four trustees were reimbursed for travel expenses, totalling £377 (2025: three trustees were reimbursed £614 for travel expenses).

In common with other charities of our size and nature we use our auditors to assist with the preparation of the financial statements.

7. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2026	2025
	£	£
Salaries and wages	**1,846,482**	1,588,190
Social security costs	**208,223**	155,990
Pension costs	**81,266**	67,689
	2,135,971	1,811,869

	2026	2025
Number of employees earning in the range of:	**No.**	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	**2**	3
£70,001 - £80,000	**4**	3
£80,001 - £90,000	**2**	2
£90,001 - £100,000	**2**	-
£100,001 - £110,000	**-**	1

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and Senior Management Team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the period were £467,661 (2025: £556,185).

Included in salaries and wages are redundancy and termination costs of £35,468 (2025: £25,500), including for one member of Key Management Personnel. Payments were funded in full by unrestricted reserves with no balances outstanding at the year end.

7. Staff costs and numbers (continued)

	2026	2025
	No.	No.
Average head count	**42**	40

8. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

9. Intangible assets

	ChatBot app
	£
Cost	
At 1 April 2025 and at 31 March 2026	**668,067**
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2025	445,539
Charge for the period	119,124
At 31 March 2026	**564,663**
Net book value	
At 31 March 2026	**103,404**
At 31 March 2025	222,528

Intangible fixed assets relates to the charity's ChatBot app which has now been brought into use, with development concluded as at 31 March 2025. The app will be amortised over 4 years in line with the completion date of each development stage.

10. Debtors

	2026	2025
	£	£
Trade debtors	**199,097**	185,989
Prepayments	**14,319**	12,335
Accrued income	**16,537**	11,665
	229,953	209,989

11. Current asset investments

	2026	2025
	£	£
Short term deposits	**360,000**	-

12. Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year

	2026	2025
	£	£
Trade creditors	**32,168**	37,026
Accruals	**20,794**	36,800
Other taxation and social security	**101,053**	96,343
Deferred income (see note 13)	**203,378**	183,699
	357,393	353,868

13. Deferred income

	2026	2025
	£	£
At 1 April	**183,699**	149,607
Deferred during the period	**203,378**	183,699
Released during the period	**(183,699)**	(149,607)
At 31 March	**203,378**	183,699

Deferred income relates to subscription income invoiced in advance.

14. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds	Designated funds	General funds	**Total funds**
	£	£	£	**£**
Intangible fixed assets	-	103,404	-	**103,404**
Current assets	405,611	1,123,500	815,378	**2,344,489**
Current liabilities	-	-	(357,393)	**(357,393)**
Net assets at 31 March 2026	**405,611**	**1,226,904**	**457,985**	**2,090,500**

Prior year comparative

	Restricted funds	Designated funds	General funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Intangible fixed assets	-	222,528	-	222,528
Current assets	406,500	1,275,010	701,827	2,383,337
Current liabilities	-	-	(353,868)	(353,868)
Net assets at 31 March 2025	406,500	1,497,538	347,959	2,251,997

15. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2025 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	**At 31 March 2026 £**
Restricted funds					
ATJF Community Justice Fund	122,000	104,000	(111,659)	-	**114,341**
Julia Rausing Trust	100,000	100,000	(70,000)	-	**130,000**
Public Legal Education	85,000	-	(85,000)	-	**-**
Barnwood	47,500	41,890	(47,733)	-	**41,657**
Rayne Foundation	42,000	35,000	(33,387)	-	**43,613**
FOIA	10,000	-	(10,000)	-	**-**
Disrupt	-	80,000	(80,000)	-	**-**
Oak Foundation Legal Aid	-	76,000	-	-	**76,000**
CareTech	-	50,000	(50,000)	-	**-**
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	-	2,400	(2,400)	-	**-**
Total restricted funds	406,500	489,290	(490,179)	-	**405,611**
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Oak Foundation	1,275,010	1,300,000	(1,451,510)	-	**1,123,500**
ChatBot	222,528	-	(119,124)	-	**103,404**
Total designated funds	1,497,538	1,300,000	(1,570,634)	-	**1,226,904**
General funds	347,959	782,117	(672,091)	-	**457,985**
Total unrestricted funds	1,845,497	2,082,117	(2,242,725)	-	**1,684,889**
Total funds	2,251,997	2,571,407	(2,732,904)	-	**2,090,500**

Purposes of restricted funds

ATJF Community Justice Fund

This fund is designed to support the delivery of free legal advice to marginalised people and communities across England. ASC is using the funding over 5 years to continue, expand and deepen our vital marginalised community hub work.

Julia Rausing Trust

Supports the expansion of our community care legal support.

Public Legal Education

These funds are to increase legal knowledge and legal capability and to improve the career pathway for community care law.

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

Barnwood

Our funding from Barnwood Trust enables our adult social care work in Gloucestershire.

Rayne Foundation

Funds the development of a group of Peer Navigators, carers who are experts by experience and can share their knowledge empathetically with other carers.

FOIA

Funds supporting our work in securing freedom of information requests on adult social care.

Disrupt

Supports staff costs in our Technology and Data teams.

Oak Foundation Legal Aid

Oak Foundation has provided a fund of £150k over two years to support ASC's preparation in undertaking and adoption of a legal aid contract.

CareTech

Our funding from CareTech is broadening legal information and advice available on our free online chatbot.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Supports the development of AccessAva and our data platform.

Purposes of designated funds

Oak Foundation

This fund is designated for the purpose of supporting Access Social Care’s career pathway strategy as well as providing for core administrative costs.

ChatBot

The designated ChatBot fund represents the net book value of the intangible asset and is maintained as a distinct fund to separate it from the charity's general funds.

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior year comparative	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds					
Public Legal Education	103,618	130,500	(149,118)	-	85,000
ATJF Community Justice Fund	100,000	104,000	(82,000)	-	122,000
Fidelity Fund	50,058	-	(50,058)	-	-
Barings	43,530	-	(43,530)	-	-
Barnwood	39,497	55,380	(47,377)	-	47,500
Rayne foundation	32,091	35,000	(25,091)	-	42,000
Rangoonwala Foundation	6,412	-	(6,412)	-	-
Wellbeing	2,580	-	(2,580)	-	-
Disrupt	119	80,000	(80,119)	-	-
CareTech	83	50,000	(50,083)	-	-
Julia Rausing Trust	-	100,000	-	-	100,000
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	-	65,000	(65,000)	-	-
FOIA	-	13,252	(3,252)	-	10,000
Total restricted funds	377,988	633,132	(604,620)	-	406,500
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
ChatBot	843,976	1,500,000	(1,068,966)		1,275,010
Oak Foundation	334,188	-	(167,014)	55,354	222,528
Total designated funds	1,178,164	1,500,000	(1,235,980)	55,354	1,497,538
General funds	261,971	703,304	(561,962)	(55,354)	347,959
Total unrestricted funds	1,440,135	2,203,304	(1,797,942)	-	1,845,497
Total funds	1,818,123	2,836,436	(2,402,562)	-	2,251,997

16. Related party transactions

In the prior year Sarah Maguire, a trustee, was the CEO of Choice Support. During the prior year the charity received contract income of £34,600. There were no amounts outstanding at the end of the year.

Joanne Land, a trustee, is the CEO of Avenues Group. During the year the charity invoiced for contract income of £17,506, of which £8,753 was outstanding at the year end (2025: invoiced £18,698, of which £8,400 was outstanding at the year end).

Additionally, Joanne Land is also a trustee of the VODG group. During the year the charity paid for £992 (2025: £1,707) to attend VODG conferences. There were no amounts outstanding at the year end.

All transactions were carried out at arms length under standard business terms.

One trustee donated £1,141 to the charity during the year (2025: £550). No amounts were outstanding at the year end.

One trustee received a £20 gift voucher in recognition of service as Chair on stepping down during the year. No trustee remuneration was paid.