

Charity registration number 516877

Company registration number 01946618 (England and Wales)

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

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<b>Trustees</b>	J Crockett (Chair) G Patel B Cysewski S Dugan S Handscomb J Hussey M Jones C Williams	(Appointed 13 December 2023)
<b>Secretary</b>	L Thomas	
<b>Charity number</b>	516877	
<b>Company number</b>	01946618	
<b>Registered office</b>	Dudley House, 2nd floor Stone Street Dudley West Midlands DY1 1NP	
<b>Auditor</b>	CK Audit No 4 Castle Court 2 Castlegate Way Dudley West Midlands DY1 4RH	

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# WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON CONTENTS

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	<b>Page</b>
Trustees' report	1 - 11
Statement of trustees' responsibilities	12
Independent auditor's report	13 - 15
Statement of financial activities	16
Balance sheet	17
Notes to the financial statements	18 - 31

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# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016).

## **Objectives and activities**

### **Our vision**

Our two-year business and development plan is aligned with the wider Citizens Advice *Transforming Together Strategy*.

### **Our 3 missions are:**

1. **Provide advice fit for the future:** Be there for people when they need us in the ways that help make the biggest impact;
2. **Close the gap:** End the disparities in access and experience for marginalised people;
3. **Take early action:** Prevent more people reaching crisis by addressing problems earlier.

Our 2 year horizons are articulations of our strategic direction and will be supported by:

- **Our purpose** – We exist to shape a society where people face far fewer problems;
- **Who we support** – Our information and advice is available to everyone. Structural inequalities lead to certain people facing disadvantages, making them more likely to need our help, and we prioritise their needs;
- **How we deliver** – Provide free, independent, confidential and impartial information and advice; Use the power of our data to advocate and target solutions to underlying root causes of issues; Learn, adapt and innovate.

### Our Strategic Priorities

Our business outcomes and performance indicators align themselves to our strategic priorities which can be found in our 2-year business plan, reviewed annually.

## **Research and Campaigns**

Research and Campaigns is a twin aim of our service. It aims to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. As a service we have a huge amount of insight and data about the problems our clients and their wider communities face. Through research and campaigns, we use this insight to:

- Help us research issues further
- Influence decision makers to change policies and practices
- Campaign to get decision makers to change policies and practices.

In 2023/24 711 evidence forms were submitted to National Citizens Advice (an increase by 126 in 22/23) on a wide range of topics from benefits, employment, debt, housing, education, consumer, legal and immigration highlighting issues affecting clients at a policy level and we engaged in a wide range of strategic and operational activities across Dudley, Wolverhampton and the wider Black Country to help influence decision makers on issues that affect our clients the most.

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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Last year, we addressed 286 discrimination issues, an increase by 65% (187 issues) on 2022/23. We learnt that:

- The highest % of discrimination cases related to Domestic abuse (41%);
- Through our Cost of Living Support hubs, the issues affecting the most vulnerable and poorest in our communities are deep seated and broad reaching;
- Inequalities continue to dominate income and health for certain communities/individuals;
- Barriers to employment for those with support needs are still prevalent and the discrimination people face in finding and sustaining meaningful volunteering and employment opportunities that help alleviate loneliness and isolation and a lift out of poverty is varied and devastating in their consequences to people's lives.

## **The year our cost of living support hubs end but the Cost of Living Crisis continues**

This report bears witness to year 2 of our cost of living support hubs, concluding in May 2024 as funding expires. Following on from the previous year, we continued to experience how our local communities were being affected by many major changes as a consequence of the cost of living crisis, resulting in a year on year increase in the need for advice in Dudley Borough and the City of Wolverhampton and in particular in the areas of employment, debt and financial capability advice, housing and welfare benefits.

Our 5 Cost of Living Support Hubs delivered the crisis support people facing this type of hardship needed, as well as offering food vouchers, government grants, gas/electricity vouchers, period products, energy information, and general emotional and mental support to people accessing our service because of these circumstances. With the conclusion of the hubs as of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024, this contributed to our organisational performance as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 where our Cost of Living Support hubs supported 11,523 contacts with 23,046 issues.

We know the Crisis is far from over, exacerbated by changes to legacy benefits moving onto Universal Credit resulting in people experiencing real time reductions in income due to this migration; we have witnessed an increase in the support required for families around income maximisation, debt management and a greater level of insecurity about previously awarded benefits being removed through the current Personal Independent Payment (PIP) award process, thus increasing anxiety and mental health issues for many in receipt of this benefit.

The same challenges we are facing as a charity persist:

- The complexity of the support needs of clients accessing our services and the increased number of advice issues per client, compared to previous periods in our charity's history means we can't meet the demand for our services;
- All areas of people's lives continue to buckle under significant pressure due to the cost of living crisis, from unaffordable housing (in both rent and mortgage sector), significant inflation beyond wage increases, reduction in access and over-subscribed statutory provision resulting in the deterioration of quality of life for many with physical and or mental health difficulties. This plays out in that our client journey is longer, more complicated and barriers to successful outcomes for clients are increasing;
- Welfare benefit gaps resulting in those most vulnerable in our communities facing poverty where choosing 'heating or eating' is a daily dilemma and how we can ensure those that need us the most get access to our services;
- And health injustice – where health inequalities are now extremely visible and the wider determinants of health are not accessible to all means people are coming to us more sick and ill than previously recognised.

As ever, we are committed to finding new ways to deliver advice to more people, as efficiently and effectively as possible, and this last year and coming year is no exception and our business plan reflects our ongoing ambitions.

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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## **Business development and partnership working**

We are proud to have been recommissioned our core contract with Wolverhampton City Council, taking effect as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 for 5 years. This contract enables us to continue to offer a core service to the residents of the City along with developing innovative and exciting opportunities through partnership working and business development in support of the Council's strategic priorities.

In addition, we secured a new service with University Hospitals Birmingham, working at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, providing intensive welfare benefits support to patients who have experienced significant physical trauma as a consequence of accidents and injuries with no criteria for possible litigation. Our caseworkers will work closely alongside clinical and UHB staff to offer a wrap-around service that enables people to re-build their lives in light of major injury.

As ever, we are proud to work collaboratively with a number of statutory, voluntary and third sector partners including (but not exhaustive) Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, the City of Wolverhampton Council, the Black Country ICB, Housing and homelessness departments, Housing associations, Food Banks, Public Health, local MP's and party councillors, National Citizens Advice, various national charities such as Macmillan, Barnardo's, Voiceability as well as local voluntary sector organisations such as those working with people experiencing substance misuse, working within the BAME communities etc.

We are grateful to new and existing business partners and to our other funders where we continued to deliver:

- Our core advice services, via our Contact centre and generalist advice services – commissioned by Dudley and Wolverhampton Councils;
- Uplift – an outreach service working in one of the most deprived areas in Wolverhampton, commissioned by the Big Lottery;
- Long term health conditions advice service — commissioned by Black Country ICB;
- Housing possession and court schemes – commissioned by the Legal Aid Agency;
- Specialist benefits caseworker service for cancer patients across the Black Country — commissioned by Macmillan;
- Money Mentor service — working with DMBC Families and Safeguarding teams to support families experiencing debt and money issues;
- Social prescribing – commissioned by WCVS to provide advice services to people referred to us from link workers within the social prescribing team;
- High Intensity User service – commissioned by DCVS, to work with people who are frequent users of A&E for issues relating to non-medical interventions/advice needs;
- Specialist debt advice service – commissioned by the Money and Pensions Service;
- Group and 1:1 Energy Advice - helping people with energy and utility advice issues — Commissioned through National Citizens Advice;
- Mobile Home Library Service – commissioned by Wolverhampton Council, supporting 200 very vulnerable, house bound residents to access library resources and our advice services;
- Pension Wise – commissioned by the Money and Pension Service to provide pension information to the over 50's with a defined contribution pension across the Black Country;

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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## **Our Values: Our 4 'C's**

Following on from the previous year, we continued with our Transformation journey, supported by *Infinity Wellness* to help us shape our future and develop as a workforce that can deliver agile, transformed advice services in a fast paced, challenging socio-economic environment. In this year, we launched our new organisation's Values, our 4 'C's:

### **Connect**

Working closely together to deliver for our community;  
Sharing what we know to help others;  
Building trusted relationships and keeping our promises.

### **Change**

Being excited to try new things, take risks & learn from our experiences;  
Identifying opportunities and suggesting improvements;  
Responding to the challenges we face with courage and optimism.

### **Compassionate**

Celebrating our uniqueness and harnessing our collective strength for good;  
Actively helping one another, whatever the problem;  
Listen and act with empathy.

### **Committed**

Showing a "We can" attitude;  
Being the best version of ourselves;  
Doing the right thing, in the right way, at the right time.

## **Premises**

In 2023-24 we continued to operate from our registered office, Dudley House in Stone Street, Dudley as well as many different community venues such as hospitals, community centres, courts and family hubs across Dudley Borough and the City of Wolverhampton. Since we sold our Wolverhampton based office due to it no longer being fit for purpose, we have worked hard to source a new office in the City. We are pleased have worked in partnership with a landlord of a city centre location and following the successful re-tender of our Wolverhampton City Council core contract we have been undertaking extensive renovations and refurbishments to the 3 storey building which will also include an information hub for clients to drop in and access. This premises is due to open to clients in January 2025.

## **Our Impact - Access to advice and guidance**

We offer advice through face to face (digital and in person), telephone and email in 9 enquiry areas, and in this financial year, we supported 17,935 people (an increase of 1,337 clients in 22/23) across Dudley and Wolverhampton and resolved 63,851 (an increase of 1,328 in 22/23) separate advice issues.

Our top five enquiry areas have been:

- Benefits (35,236 issues OR 55%)
- Financial services & capability (5048 issues OR 7.9%)
- Debt (4691 issues OR 7.3%)
- Housing (4684 issues OR 7.3%)
- Employment (1876 issues OR 2.9%)

In addition to the above, due to our cost of living support hubs, we supported a further 11,523 contacts with a further 23,046 issues.

# WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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We have continued to witness a significant increase in demand for our services to address complex advice and guidance issues often by people with complex support needs such as people with mental health issues, those experiencing homelessness and/or those experiencing in-work and out of work poverty. We continue to witness an increase in the need (in addition to our debt advice) for advice around financial capability evidenced in this reporting year where this has moved from 4<sup>th</sup> out of our top 5 advice areas in 2021/22 to 3<sup>rd</sup> place in 22/23 and then in this reporting year, to 2<sup>nd</sup> place. This reflects the increasing pressure citizens are facing around managing their money borne from areas of extreme deprivation and the health inequalities that the Covid-19 Pandemic has unearthed and is now exacerbated by the ongoing cost of living crisis.

## Achievements and performance

We have many great things to celebrate in our organisation in 2023/24. Our workforce continues to be our number one asset and without them, paid and volunteers, we would not be able to deliver the phenomenal outcomes we have achieved.

Alongside our advice and guidance impact statistics we also achieved the following:

- We achieved **£11,176,779** of income gained for the clients we supported (this includes £1,034,617 of Household support fund & £800,000 of Fuel Bank Vouchers administered through our Cost of Living Support Hubs). This is an increase of £3,593,456 on the previous year.
- Last year, we dealt with **£1,843,542** worth of debt. This is an increase of £1,038,172 on the previous year.
- Protected 821 clients being made homeless (this excludes any other family members)

## Client Satisfaction

Every year we undertake a formal review of client satisfaction and our scores from anonymous questions clients answer via SMS through Citizens Advice. 5 key questions are asked and we achieved an overall rating of 82% of clients saying they would highly recommend our services. We have seen a reduction of 2% from 22/23 where client feedback highlights the year on year demand for our services meaning some clients are not able to get through to our services when they need us. This is reflected at a national level, with Citizens Advice scoring 84% in the same reporting year. We continue to campaign to highlight the need for additional investment and commissioning of our advice services to meet this year on year increase in demand.

Some additional comments that clients or professionals have given us after receiving our service or who have engaged with us are as follows:

*"I wanted to contact you regarding my most recent call to you and how pleased I was with X's customer service. Her telephone manner is outstanding, she listened to all my needs and pointed me in the right direction to get the help I need and also managed to book me an appointment with an advisor. Because of my mental health, I can at times say too many things at once, which confuses people, but X didn't miss out on any parts of my queries, she was very patient with me, spoke clearly, explained everything I needed to know in detail, and altogether, her wonderful nature was even more so appreciated as it can be challenging to speak on the phone sometimes".*

*"Everything has been brilliant and I couldn't believe how quickly things had been sorted out. I have received my PIP-Personal Independence Payment, plus back pay".*

*"I just wanted to let you know that X was amazing at court and I am incredibly grateful for her help."*

*"I have quite a significant stammer and when I get nervous I often have to put the telephone down as I cannot cope and will often not answer telephone calls at all. You were brilliant today and helped me greatly – thank you so much".*

*"I want to pass on how grateful I am that X was patient / reassuring and how he was able to really support me to get through the telephone call. Since I was admitted to a mental health hospital following a breakdown a few years ago I have been really dependent upon my children to help me with everything and have recently started to try and take some small steps myself - one of which was calling Citizens Advice yesterday. I am so grateful for the positive experience I had with X and wanted to pass on my enormous thanks to him – it really meant a lot to me".*

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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## **Workforce Health and Wellbeing – a strategic commitment**

Our commitment to the physical and mental wellbeing of our workforce has continued to rise throughout 2023/24, with even more support being put in place for those with support needs. A high proportion of our workforce have recognised physical disabilities and many have mental health challenges and/or are neuro-diverse.

A significant example of this is in the recruitment of our cost of living support hub staff where we stipulated the employment only of those currently unemployed and with long term health conditions. We were fortunate to attract a wonderful team of 10 who had lived experience of homelessness, substance misuse, severe mental health issues. When the hubs conclude in May 2024, 6 have been identified for various promotions into our main organisation and 1 has secured an external promotion. We are proud of the feedback this team have given us in how their confidence, employability skills and professional development have increased because of our supportive, nurturing environment where their needs are recognised, understood and supported.

In 2023/24 we have continued to build on the wellbeing and mindfulness space that we have successfully fostered to ensure we can be an exceptional employer and volunteering organisation. One way this has been achieved is through the senior leadership team receiving formal mindfulness coaching for a minimum 6 months to support personal and professional development in this area to embed our culture organisation wide.

This workforce priority is underpinned by:

- The inclusion of 'Compassion' as one of our 4 organisation values launched across the organisation – extending this attribute and cultural expectation not just to clients but to one another within the workplace;
- The development work has begun on our Workforce Health and Wellbeing policy, undertaking focus groups with the support of *Infinity Wellness* to co-design our wellbeing culture;
- Our formal accreditation with the West Midlands Combined Authority *Thrive at Work* programme and Mind's *Mindful Employer* accreditation.

We have confidence to drive forward and develop our workforce wellbeing culture in 2024-25 through building on our commitments offered within our new Health and Wellbeing policy and the development of a brand new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy co-designed with our workforce to ensure we increase on the statistic within our staff satisfaction survey where 80% said they Strongly Agree/Agree on being able to "Be Me" in the workplace.

## **Our Volunteers**

We have a number of roles in this reporting period that rely on volunteers to support the delivery of outcomes required by the funder: Cost of living support hub workers, Home Library Service drivers, Self-Management Programme tutors, Reception/info hub facilitators, Advisors and Supervisors.

These roles have been pivotal in the diversification of income whilst continuing to add value to the clients that need our help. We are extremely grateful to our volunteers for their ongoing commitment.

Our volunteers are of phenomenal benefit to the local community, to our stakeholders and to clients and the positive personal benefits individual volunteers experience as a consequence of volunteering for us are numerous. In the next financial year, we will be writing and implementing a Volunteer Strategy so that we can develop even more opportunities to attract volunteers to help us achieve our ambitions across the next several years.

It is of significance to note that our Board of Trustees are also volunteers and in this last year they have continued to commit extra time outside of board meetings, giving their knowledge and expertise in abundance to support the CEO and wider Leadership Team in the development of the organisation within an increasingly complex and challenging strategic social, political and financial landscape at a local, regional and national level.

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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## **Compliance and Regulation**

### Citizens Advice Membership Agreement

As part of our performance quality framework, our most recent 3-year Leadership Assessment audit, completed over a number of days to assess 9 key areas: Governance, strategic business planning, risk management, financial management, people management, operational performance management, partnership working, research and campaigns and equality leadership was extremely successful.

We achieved green (top score) in all 9 areas meeting the competency level expected.

### Advice Quality Standard (AQS) accreditation

We hold the accredited Advice Quality Standard mark in generalist advice and are accreditation for AQS in Casework for benefits and debt with the addition of accreditation of Housing casework within this year. This is significantly important to emphasise the high level expertise in which we operate in these three high demand advice areas.

### Money Advice and Pension Service (MaPS)

Our commissioned debt service through the Money Advice and Pension Service is subject to a formal audit of the quality of our debt advice and the independent assessments of our debt casework means we are able to continue to deliver this important advice area in our organisation.

### Housing (Legal Aid)

Our commissioned housing loss prevention advice service and in court duty scheme funded through the Legal Aid Agency is subject to a formal audit of the quality of our housing advice and the independent assessments of our housing casework means we are able to continue to deliver this important advice area in the organisation for people eligible for legal aid.

### Financial Institute of Money Advisors

All our debt caseworkers are registered with the institute and we have maintained membership of this so that staff can achieve their mandatory annual continuous professional development points as debt caseworkers through ongoing learning and training.

### Financial Conduct Authority

We have submitted our Finance Conduct Authority returns and are compliant in this area relating to the debt advice we give.

## **Business Planning — Strategic Priorities for 2024-26**

Our business plan narrates a vision for our evolving organisation, continuing to capture the outcomes required to ensure sustainability, strategic relevance, and what people need to maintain and/or improve their quality of life. Example key features of our business plan are:

### **1. Our Advice ambitions**

- We will define and design what a seamless customer journey looks like and understand where we need to focus our efforts within channel, advice enquiry areas and advice levels to make it a reality;
- We will put more resource and attention into the advice areas that our data shows matter most to people, whilst building strong relationships with trusted partner/specialist organisations so that we can help people find a way forward on *all* issues.

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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**2. Our Advocacy ambitions**

- We will increase resources for research & campaigns to help us achieve local and regional advocacy priorities;
- We will work more coherently to influence MPs, elected members, and other decision-makers around our priority advocacy objectives.

**3. Our Inclusive access ambitions**

- We'll draw on our data and other research to form hypotheses about which groups of people may be finding it harder to access our services and then decide how to respond. We will identify advice trends most prevalent in those communities and dedicate bespoke resources to tackling those areas;
- We will champion our discrimination work by increasing our visibility relating to challenging and responding to actions or decisions that discriminate and build stronger connections with partners who work directly with marginalised groups.

**4. Our Organisational health ambitions**

- People and Culture - We will build on our organisation's workforce health and wellbeing agenda in partnership with key organisations to increase workforce awareness and build on personal and professional resilience and contentment. Our workforce will feel supported when times are good and bad. Our health and wellbeing commitment will be consistent;
- Finance & sustainability - We will work hard to retain local authority funding but continue to diversify and set a clear strategy for new income streams we want to secure and why,
- Environment - We will ensure we are respectful of the environment and that our actions and the way in which we run our organisation supports local, national and global environmental agendas;
- Systems & Processes (inc. technology) - We will dedicate resources to interrogating data that technology gives us in order to:
  - solve problems in experimental ways
  - develop client and staff experience
  - co-design services, systems and processes
  - achieve our performance benchmarks and maximise on our agile, hybrid working
  - automate time-consuming processes (to free up more time to increase the amount of people we can help & increase business support capacity)
  - ensure the use of technology includes those groups who we know or suspect to be at risk of digital exclusion due to a range of issues including socio-economic factors, health conditions or disability (e.g. hearing or sight impairment)

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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## **Financial review**

Total income for the year was £2,393,604 as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The characteristics of our sustained financial viability for the next financial year and beyond can be described as follows:

- Increased safeguards within our financial and human resources, taking calculated risks to drive innovation whilst sustaining core funding;
- Maintain financial stability within an increasing funding culture of deficit funding (not full cost recovery);
- Support our growth agenda through increased business development opportunities utilising non-advice front line staff;
- Reduced overheads;
- More clients have been supported across Dudley Borough, the City of Wolverhampton and the wider Black Country than the previous year.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three and six month's expenditure. The Trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks articulated in the organisation's risk appetite plan and risk management and compliance register.

The process of risk management for Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton is ongoing and regular monitoring and assessment is undertaken to identify new risks as they occur, to ensure that they are dealt with and to evaluate previously identified risks to ensure strategies are still relevant to minimise or mitigate those risks.

The 11 key risk areas that are reviewed are: Governance; Strategy and Business sustainability; Financial; Legal and Compliance (inc. H&S); Management; Workforce (inc. EDI); Operations; Stakeholder (inc. reputation); Technology; Information and data security; Premises.

A robust business continuity plan is in place to ensure the ongoing effective running of the organisation if any incidents/adverse events occur.

Our national body Citizens Advice also undertakes an annual review process with the organisation to ensure controls are in place to mitigate identified risks and to understand the overall level of risk to which the organisation is currently exposed. The current overall risk level has been assessed as low.

## **Structure, governance and management**

The Organisation is made up of a Board of Trustees who have responsibility for the overall governance of the organisation. They discharge the day to day running of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer. Underneath the CEO there is a leadership and management team, as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 made up of a Director of Services, a Director of Dudley Empowerment Partnership (DEP) and a Director of Finance, Head of Finance, Head of Business Support, Head of Services x 2 and Service Delivery Managers x 3. They are supported by a business administration support team. Our ICT is outsourced to Pedmore IT computer services who run our IT platforms.

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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The operational running of our organisation includes a business administration support team, paid and volunteer generalist and specialist advisors/ caseworkers, co-ordinators, hub workers, technical and quality supervisors, referral support assessors and contact centre assessors.

The charity is a private company (registration number 1946618) limited by guarantee and doesn't have a share capital. The company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The liability of the members of the company on winding up is limited to a maximum of £1 each. The company is also a registered charity (registration number 516877). In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member in accordance with the Memorandum of Association.

J Crockett (Chair)	
N Cheesewright	(Resigned 26 April 2023)
G Patel	
P Paul	(Resigned 20 November 2023)
B Cysewski	
S lafrati	(Resigned 24 July 2023)
S Cooper	(Resigned 10 June 2023)
S Dugan	
S Handscomb	
J Hussey	
M Jones	
S Maynard	(Resigned 2 July 2024)
C Williams	(Appointed 13 December 2023)

Resignation within the year: N Cheesewright, P Paul, S lafrati, S Cooper, S Maynard

Co-opted onto the Board within the year: Clare Williams

## **Qualifying third party indemnity provisions**

Trustee recruitment opportunities are advertised through our national body's Citizens Advice website, our local website, bespoke adverts, social media and by word of mouth. Anybody interested in becoming a trustee is invited to complete an application form which if meeting the skills requirements, will be invited to an interview. If successful, the potential trustee is invited to observe a trustee meeting and then is formally co-opted onto the board as a trustee and then formally as a Director at the next AGM. Each new trustee undertakes an induction process into the role and organisation. Each new trustee is offered a mentor who is one of the experienced trustee members.

None of the Trustees have any beneficial interest in the company. All of the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up. The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to follow the CBI's Prompt Payers Code copies are available from the CBI, Cannon Place, 78 Cannon Street, London EC4N 6HN). The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to:

- Settle the terms of payment with suppliers when agreeing the terms of each transaction,
- Ensure that suppliers are made aware of the terms of payment by inclusion of the relevant terms in contracts; and
- Pay in accordance with the company's contractual and other legal obligations.

No preference dividends were paid. The directors do not recommend payment of a final dividend. The Charity also co-operates and liaises with a number of other advisory services, local charities and Council departments on behalf of clients. Where one of the Trustees holds the position of Trustee/Director of another charity, they may be involved in discussion regarding that other charity, but not in the ultimate decision making process.

## **Auditor**

CKCA Limited were appointed as auditor to the company and a resolution proposing that they be reappointed will be put at our Annual General Meeting on 21 November 2024.

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)**  
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024***

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The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Crockett', written in a cursive style.

J Crockett (Chair)

**Trustee**

21 November 2024

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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The Trustees, who are also the directors of Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton (legal name: Wolverhampton Citizens Advice Bureaux) for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law 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 of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the 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 estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**Disclosure of information to auditor**

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

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX**

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## **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Wolverhampton Citizens Advice Bureaux (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the 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 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 contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

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

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)**

## **TO THE MEMBERS OF WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX**

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### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

### **Responsibilities of Trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the Trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the 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 charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

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

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

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

We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, in respect of irregularities whether due to fraud or error, or non compliance with laws and regulations and then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Company by discussion and enquiry with the directors and management team and our general knowledge and experience of the charity sector.

We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation, data protection, employment, and health and safety legislation;

We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management, reviewing correspondence with relevant regulators.

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)  
TO THE MEMBERS OF WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX**

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We assessed the susceptibility of the Company's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. Audit procedures performed included but were not limited to:

- Discussions with directors and management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Confirming our understanding of controls by performing a walk through test or observation and enquiry;
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Identifying and testing journal entries;
- Agreeing funding to underlying service agreements and ensuring income is recognised in the correct period;
- Agreeing classification of funding between restricted and unrestricted funds and ensuring amounts are spent for the purposes intended;
- Reviewing the allocation of direct and support costs and ensuring comparable to previous periods;
- Reviewing unusual or unexpected transactions; and
- Agreeing the financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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

**Use of our report**

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



**Mark Nicholls (Senior Statutory Auditor)**  
for and on behalf of CK Audit

21 November 2024

**Chartered Accountants**  
**Statutory Auditor**

No 4 Castle Court 2  
Castlegate Way  
Dudley  
West Midlands  
DY1 4RH

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

		Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
	Notes						
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	3	159	5,000	5,159	225	5,000	5,225
Charitable activities	4	122,256	2,220,428	2,342,684	124,859	2,439,218	2,564,077
Investments	5	45,369	-	45,369	8,008	-	8,008
Other income	6	392	-	392	21,003	-	21,003
<b>Total income</b>		<u>168,176</u>	<u>2,225,428</u>	<u>2,393,604</u>	<u>154,095</u>	<u>2,444,218</u>	<u>2,598,313</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Charitable activities	7	223,599	2,030,271	2,253,870	235,873	1,931,759	2,167,632
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u>223,599</u>	<u>2,030,271</u>	<u>2,253,870</u>	<u>235,873</u>	<u>1,931,759</u>	<u>2,167,632</u>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<u>(55,423)</u>	<u>195,157</u>	<u>139,734</u>	<u>(81,778)</u>	<u>512,459</u>	<u>430,681</u>
Transfers between funds		20,782	(20,782)	-	29,320	(29,320)	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	9	<u>(34,641)</u>	<u>174,375</u>	<u>139,734</u>	<u>(52,458)</u>	<u>483,139</u>	<u>430,681</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		<u>1,912,068</u>	<u>589,727</u>	<u>2,501,795</u>	<u>1,964,526</u>	<u>106,588</u>	<u>2,071,114</u>
<b>Fund balances at 31 March 2024</b>		<u><u>1,877,427</u></u>	<u><u>764,102</u></u>	<u><u>2,641,529</u></u>	<u><u>1,912,068</u></u>	<u><u>589,727</u></u>	<u><u>2,501,795</u></u>

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


**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
BALANCE SHEET**

**AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	13		-		262,500
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	14	135,414		281,522	
Cash at bank and in hand		3,166,832		2,640,917	
		<u>3,302,246</u>		<u>2,922,439</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	15	<u>(630,717)</u>		<u>(653,144)</u>	
Net current assets			2,671,529		2,269,295
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			2,671,529		2,531,795
<b>Provisions for liabilities</b>			<u>(30,000)</u>		<u>(30,000)</u>
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>2,641,529</u>		<u>2,501,795</u>
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds	19		764,102		589,727
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
Designated funds	21	1,511,396		1,615,821	
General unrestricted funds		366,031		25,312	
Revaluation reserve		-		270,935	
		<u>1,877,427</u>		<u>1,912,068</u>	
			<u>2,641,529</u>		<u>2,501,795</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 21 November 2024

  
J. Crockett (Chair)  
Trustee

  
S Handscomb  
Trustee

Company Registration No. 01946618

# **WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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## **1 Accounting policies**

### **Charity information**

Wolverhampton Citizens Advice Bureaux is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Dudley House, 2nd floor, Stone Street, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 1NP.

### **1.1 Accounting convention**

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

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

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

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

### **1.2 Going concern**

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

### **1.3 Income**

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

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

Income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts, VAT and other sales related taxes.

### **1.4 Expenditure**

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

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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**1 Accounting policies (Continued)**

**1.5 Tangible fixed assets**

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

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

Freehold land and buildings	2% straight line
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The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

**1.6 Impairment of fixed assets**

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

**1.7 Cash and cash equivalents**

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

**1.8 Financial instruments**

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

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

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

***Basic financial assets***

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

***Basic financial liabilities***

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

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

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

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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**1 Accounting policies (Continued)**

**1.9 Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the charity has a legal or constructive present obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the charity will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting end date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value. When a provision is measured at present value, the unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in net income/(expenditure) in the period in which it arises.

**1.10 Employee benefits**

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

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

**1.11 Retirement benefits**

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

**1.12 Fund accounting**

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

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

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

**2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements**

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

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

**Critical judgements**

**Allocation of support costs**

Determine the basis of allocation of support costs between restricted and unrestricted funds.

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements**

**(Continued)**

**Key sources of estimation uncertainty**

**Useful economic life of tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are depreciated over their useful lives taking into account residual values where appropriate. The actual lives of these assets are assessed annually and may vary depending on a number of factors. In assessing asset lives, factors such as life cycles and maintenance programmes are taken into account. Residual value assessments consider issues such as the remaining life of the asset and projected disposal values.

**3 Income from donations and legacies**

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Donations and gifts	159	5,000	5,159	225	5,000	5,225

**4 Income from charitable activities**

	2024 £	2023 £
Sale of goods	2,342,684	2,564,077
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	122,256	124,859
Restricted funds	2,220,428	2,439,218
	2,342,684	2,564,077

**5 Income from investments**

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Interest receivable	45,369	8,008

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**6 Other income**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2024 £</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</b>
Other income	392	21,003

**7 Expenditure on charitable activities**

	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
Staff costs	1,687,942	1,624,272
Premises costs	101,153	53,974
Staff and Volunteers	7,322	4,272
Office costs	57,996	72,305
Professional/consultancy fees	39,995	34,162
Other Direct Costs	826	2,036
Payments to partners and subcontractors	12,000	16,000
	<u>1,907,234</u>	<u>1,807,021</u>
Share of support costs (see note 8)	315,084	334,586
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	31,552	26,023
	<u>2,253,870</u>	<u>2,167,630</u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	223,599	235,873
Restricted funds	2,030,271	1,931,759
	<u>2,253,870</u>	<u>2,167,632</u>

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**8 Support costs allocated to activities**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£	£
Staff costs	222,013	186,169
Premises Costs	17,076	38,366
Staff and Volunteer Costs	15,133	11,857
Office Costs	60,821	98,195
Governance costs	31,593	26,023
	<u>346,636</u>	<u>360,610</u>
<b>Analysed between:</b>		
Charitable activities	<u>346,636</u>	<u>360,610</u>

**9 Net movement in funds**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£	£
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	-	12,700
Loss/(profit) on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	(12,700)
	<u>-</u>	<u>0</u>

**10 Trustees**

None of the Trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year, and a total of £28 travelling expenses were reimbursed (2023: £20).

**11 Employees**

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	Number	Number
Advice workers & support staff	71	68
Key management personnel	11	8
	<u>82</u>	<u>76</u>

**Employment costs**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,700,935	1,611,108
Social security costs	135,095	136,483
Other pension costs	73,925	62,850
	<u>1,909,955</u>	<u>1,810,441</u>

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**11 Employees** **(Continued)**

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

	<b>2024 Number</b>	<b>2023 Number</b>
£70,001 to £80,000	1	1

**Remuneration of key management personnel**

During the year key management personnel received remuneration and benefits of £455,051 (2023: £345,401)

**12 Taxation**

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

**13 Tangible fixed assets**

	<b>Freehold land and buildings £</b>
At 1 April 2023	262,500
Disposals	(262,500)
<b>Carrying amount</b>	
At 31 March 2024	-
At 31 March 2023	262,500

**14 Debtors**

	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade debtors	37,857	124,989
Other debtors	43,133	59,217
Prepayments and accrued income	54,424	97,316
	<u>135,414</u>	<u>281,522</u>

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Other taxation and social security		21,183	24,510
Deferred income	17	100,463	73,418
Trade creditors		481,360	522,673
Other creditors		3,917	3,908
Accruals		23,794	28,635
		<u>630,717</u>	<u>653,144</u>

**16 Provisions for liabilities**

	2024 £	2023 £
Dilapidations	30,000	30,000
	<u>30,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>

**Movements on provisions:**

	Dilapidations £
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	<u>30,000</u>

**17 Deferred income**

	2024 £	2023 £
Arising from Income received in advance	100,463	73,418
	<u>100,463</u>	<u>73,418</u>

**18 Retirement benefit schemes**

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Defined contribution schemes</b>		
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	73,925	62,850
	<u>73,925</u>	<u>62,850</u>

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

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**19 Restricted funds**

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

	<b>At 1 April 2023</b>	<b>Incoming resources</b>	<b>Resources expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>At 31 March 2024</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
Wolverhampton City Council (WCC)	-	272,213	(217,772)	(54,441)	-
HIU Project	-	20,296	(20,439)	143	-
Help to Claim Project	-	280,002	(280,002)	-	-
BC Macmillan	-	177,313	(216,520)	39,207	-
Dudley Money Mentor	8,710	41,910	(22,252)	-	28,368
EAP	-	23,142	(24,515)	1,373	-
Palliative Child Project	-	14,259	(14,335)	76	-
LTHC Project	-	41,795	(42,299)	504	-
MaPS	-	200,773	(189,116)	(11,657)	-
HLS Project	-	25,099	(33,980)	8,881	-
Dudley Cost of Living Hubs	106,111	166,502	(259,672)	30,000	42,941
Uplift	59,860	15,391	(30,923)	-	44,328
DEP Projects	304,584	741,241	(472,822)	(5,000)	568,003
Pension Wise	-	173,323	(173,323)	-	-
WVSA Project	-	27,169	(27,301)	132	-
DMBC Innovation Fund	35,405	-	-	-	35,405
WCC Public Health	6,713	-	-	-	6,713
Hardship Fund	2,880	-	-	-	2,880
Wolverhampton Money Max	34,991	-	-	-	34,991
St Pauls Centre	473	-	-	-	473
Social isolation fund	30,000	-	-	(30,000)	-
Donation Mille Watch - CoL Hub	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
	<u>589,727</u>	<u>2,230,428</u>	<u>(2,025,271)</u>	<u>(20,782)</u>	<u>764,102</u>

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**19 Restricted funds**

**(Continued)**

Previous year:	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Wolverhampton City Council (WCC)	-	262,950	(228,711)	(34,239)	-
HIU Project	-	18,630	(19,144)	514	-
Help to Claim Project	-	288,196	(288,196)	-	-
BC Macmillan	-	195,029	(219,014)	23,985	-
Palliative Child Project	-	12,240	(11,573)	(667)	-
LTHC Project	-	41,056	(41,641)	585	-
MaPS	-	194,043	(186,411)	(7,632)	-
HLS Project	-	25,086	(32,309)	7,223	-
Uplift	49,671	91,615	(81,426)	-	59,860
Pension Wise	-	173,729	(168,569)	(5,160)	-
WVSC Project	-	26,233	(26,199)	(34)	-
DMBC Innovation Fund	35,405	-	-	-	35,405
WCC Public Health	6,713	-	-	-	6,713
Hardship Fund	2,880	-	-	-	2,880
Wolverhampton Money Max	11,446	53,850	(30,305)	-	34,991
St Pauls Centre	473	-	-	-	473
DMBC Money Mentor	-	37,476	(28,766)	-	8,710
Dudley Cost of Living Hubs	-	175,000	(68,889)	-	106,111
DEP projects	-	778,484	(473,900)	-	304,584
Donation Mille Watch - CoL	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Social Isolation Fund	-	30,000	-	-	30,000
EAP Project	-	35,601	(21,706)	(13,895)	-
	<u>106,588</u>	<u>2,444,218</u>	<u>1,931,759</u>	<u>(29,320)</u>	<u>589,727</u>

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**19 Restricted funds**

**(Continued)**

During the year £20,782 (2022/2023 £29,320) was transferred from restricted funds to unrestricted funds to cover deficits on certain projects. The restricted funds of Uplift, Wolverhampton Money Max, DMBC Innovation fund, WCC Public Health, Hardship fund, Dudley Money Mentor, Cost of Living Hubs, DEP projects and St Pauls Centre are either ongoing projects or projects currently suspended and will be spent in line with their original purpose over an agreed timeline with funders.

More detail about the operations of all of our funded projects can be found in our annual report. The largest restricted fund income streams are summarised as below:

**Wolverhampton City Council** - A commissioned service to deliver advice and information on welfare, benefits, and housing for Wolverhampton residents. This is delivered with Age UK Wolverhampton as a subcontracted partner for part of the year.

**MaPS** - A team of specialist debt advisors, funded by the Money Advice Service, to provide money advice to clients either digitally or face to face. Clients are provided with personalised advice to maximise income, deal with their debts and manage their money effectively. The aim is to stabilise the individual's current financial situation, put in a plan to manage it in the future and empower them to deal with any future financial challenges.

**Pensionwise** - Department for Work and Pensions project subcontracted to us by National Citizens Advice to deliver free and impartial guidance to help people understand the options available to them regarding their pension. This service is delivered across the Black Country and in parts of Birmingham.

**Help to Claim** - Department for Work and Pensions funded program subcontracted to us by National Citizens Advice to offer digital support for clients to claim Universal Credit from claim to first payment.

**Macmillan** - A project commissioned by Macmillan to provide a specialist benefits caseworker service for cancer patients across the Black Country either digitally, in hospital or outreach settings.

**DEP Projects** - DMBC funded contract for Dudley residents to provide a combined information, advice, advocacy, well-being, direct payments and scrutiny service. This is delivered in collaboration with partner agencies in their area of expertise.

**Dudley Cost of Living Hubs** - DMBC funded service to provide essential advice to Dudley residents, aiming to help mitigate the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis in hub settings across the borough.

**20 Analysis of net assets between funds**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2024 £</b>	<b>Restricted funds 2024 £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>
<b>At 31 March 2024:</b>			
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,907,427	764,102	2,671,529
Provisions	(30,000)	-	(30,000)
	<u>1,877,427</u>	<u>764,102</u>	<u>2,641,529</u>
<b>Per balance sheet</b>	1,872,427	764,102	2,636,529
<b>Balance to allocate</b>	(5,000)	-	(5,000)

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**20 Analysis of net assets between funds**

**(Continued)**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</b>	<b>Restricted funds 2023 £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
<b>At 31 March 2023:</b>			
Tangible assets	262,500	-	262,500
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,679,568	589,727	2,269,295
Provisions	(30,000)	-	(30,000)
	<u>1,912,068</u>	<u>589,727</u>	<u>2,501,795</u>

**21 Designated funds**

The income funds of the charity include the following designated and general funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	<b>Balance at 1 April 2022 £</b>	<b>Transfers £</b>	<b>Balance at 1 April 2023 £</b>	<b>Resources expended £</b>	<b>Transfers £</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March 2024 £</b>
Freehold property	317,980	(317,980)	-	-	-	-
Reserves policy	800,548	98,774	899,322	-	(120,992)	778,330
Digital Development	30,000	-	30,000	-	-	30,000
Transformation	36,000	6,000	42,000	(33,454)	(8,546)	-
Volunteer co-ordinator	30,000	(30,000)	-	-	-	-
Workforce development	40,000	(30,000)	10,000	-	(10,000)	-
Health & well being	18,000	-	18,000	-	8,546	26,546
DMBC One Voluntary Sector Contract	116,000	(17,000)	99,000	(17,465)	-	81,535
Black Country Macmillan	69,650	-	69,650	-	16,018	85,668
Sale of Snowhill & Bilston	10,000	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
Recruitment Drive	94,379	(94,379)	-	-	-	-
Cost of living hubs	10,000	(10,000)	-	-	-	-
WCC Tender	181,211	(27,357)	153,854	-	(153,854)	-
Victoria Street Set up Costs	-	20,000	20,000	-	22,000	42,000
Victoria Street Running Costs	-	69,000	69,000	-	87,750	156,750
Advice Role Uplifts	-	154,995	154,995	-	(154,995)	-
Legal Aid - Housing	-	40,000	40,000	(4,962)	-	35,038
Unfunded salary posts	-	-	-	-	152,181	152,181
Young Persons Citizens Advice	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
Living wage Aspiration	-	-	-	-	83,028	83,028
Contract Contingency	-	-	-	-	20,320	20,320
	<u>1,753,768</u>	<u>(137,947)</u>	<u>1,615,821</u>	<u>(55,881)</u>	<u>(48,544)</u>	<u>1,511,396</u>

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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**21 Designated funds**

**(Continued)**

A designated fund held as a revaluation reserve relating to the freehold property of £270,935 is no longer required (2022/23 £270,935) as the property was sold on 24th April 2023.

Due to the current financial climate the Board is continuing to maintain the rate of 3.5 months operating expenses reserves policy which equates to £778,330 (2022/23 £899,322).

Designations continue to be maintained for areas of proposed spending which currently do not have funding but are seen as essential for developing the organisation; Digital development and health & wellbeing to the value of £56,546. An additional fund has been identified for research and development of a Young Persons Citizen Advice amounting to £10,000.

Premises designations have been increased as new expenditure is identified as follows: Opening and set up of new leased premises in Wolverhampton £42,000, partial unfunded running costs of new Wolverhampton premises £156,750 anticipated clearance of the previously owned property £10,000.

Recognising the need to build an internal infrastructure to grow the charity, the Board have agreed to fund from reserves, posts to support this objective. In addition, the charity is setting aside reserves to aspire to provide a competitive living wage for its employees, these total £235,209.

Designation of funds continues for three projects which in the future will not be full cost recovery, subject to supplementary funding not being able to be sourced; Black Country Macmillan, Legal Aid and DMBC One Voluntary contract amounting to £202,241.

Also a reserve has been included for 3 one year contracts to support staff salaries for 4 months, should the contracts not be renewed post March 2025 while new funding/projects are sourced equalling £20,320.

**WOLVERHAMPTON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX  
T/A CITIZENS ADVICE DUDLEY AND WOLVERHAMPTON  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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**22 Operating lease commitments**

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

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Within one year	17,591	17,591
Between two and five years	67,713	69,304
In over five years	-	16,000
	<u>85,304</u>	<u>102,895</u>

**23 Related party transactions**

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).