

**COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 02578918**  
**CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1045841**

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Unaudited Financial Statements**  
**31 March 2023**

**CARSTON**

Chartered accountants  
1st Floor, Tudor House  
16 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9LJ

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Financial Statements**  
**Year ended 31 March 2023**

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**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)**  
**Year ended 31 March 2023**

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

### **Chair's report**

Looking back over my five years as Chair of Wales Council of the Blind, we, like many charities, have faced a number of challenges including uncertainty around funding. The pandemic offered new opportunities with WCB playing a crucial role in bringing the sector together. This strengthened our role as an umbrella body and, in no small part, helped us to secure three years Welsh Government funding. It is with enormous pleasure that we can report on the first year of this funding period and that we were able to continue to expand on our work centred on three areas as previously conducted in 2021-22: information services, network support, and service improvement.

1. Information services: WCB is recognised as the best organisation to serve as a single point of access for the sector. This work is aided by Perspectif, which has been overhauled with several new features added. Perspectif shall be used as a tool to aid Low Vision Service Wales practitioner in making suggestions to patients to support and services within their community. We hope that this will see more people referred directly to the broad range of services provided by our members.

2. Network support: As an umbrella body, we have a responsibility to bring the sector together through various forums. Many of these are managed by WCB including the Wales Vision Forum, a forum comprising of local, regional, specialist and national organisations representing people with sight loss in Wales.

3. Service Improvement: We have been actively seeking solutions to the workforce crisis of too few Vision Rehabilitation Specialists across Wales. We have written and presented a training needs analysis to Welsh Government and, over the next year, will explore how this work could be taken forward through Wales' Regional Partnership Boards. WCB has a long history of supporting vision rehabilitation and have been appointed secretary of the Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum (WROF).

We are pleased to report an increase in the number of trainee and practising vision rehabilitation specialists over the past year but with almost half of the profession set to retire in the next ten years it is even more important that funding is secured so that future generations of blind and partially sighted people will be able to receive this critical service wherever they live in Wales.

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Over the past year we have continued to look at ways of reducing our expenditure. We have successfully downsized our office space and staff have adopted a hybrid working policy. The trustees are grateful to our staff and volunteers for all their work, and it is a real privilege to see first-hand the collaboration amongst our members. We continue to provide our core information services by providing a wealth of information to professionals and people with sight loss through Sylw, social media and Perspectif. I am particularly proud of the support we offer smaller local societies and hope that their membership will increase as a result of our project with LVSU.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow trustees for their work and support during this time.

Janice Powers  
Chairperson

**Wales Council of the Blind****Company Limited by Guarantee****Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*****Year ended 31 March 2023****Reference and administrative details****Registered charity name** Wales Council of the Blind**Charity registration number** 1045841**Company registration number** 2578918**Principal office and registered office**  
Hastings House  
Fitzalan Place  
Unit 3.1  
Cardiff  
CF24 0BL**The trustees**Mr Peter Curtis  
Mr Brian Mawby  
Mrs Miriam Wright  
Ms J Powers  
Ms J Thomas  
Mr B J Hobart  
Dr R Stiff**Company secretary** Owen J Williams**Independent examiner** Farzana Ahmed FCCA  
1st Floor, Tudor House  
16 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
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**Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**Objectives and activities**

Wales Council of the Blind's charitable objects are "to promote the welfare of blind and partially sighted persons, and the prevention of blindness".

Wales Council of the Blind (WCB) is the independent umbrella agency for vision impairment in Wales representing blind and partially sighted people and the clubs and societies who support them. Our independence enables us to act as an impartial observer, advocate, intermediary and evaluator for this complex, diverse group of organisations and services. In carrying out our charitable objectives, services to people with sight loss are improved.

We gather the opinions and views of people with sight loss through groups and consultation. We put their voice at the centre of what we do, reporting on their views to the people who are responsible for the services that help them. We also act as an agency to direct people to these services, giving them impartial advice and choice.

The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Our work over the last year has focussed on three strategic priorities:

- 1) Information services
- 2) Network support
- 3) Service improvement

WCB upholds the following principles throughout our work:

- Beneficiaries first
- Integrity
- Openness
- Honesty
- Accountability
- Trust

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**Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**Achievements and performance**

**1) Information services.**

Wales Vision Forum, a forum comprising of local, regional and national sight loss charities, recognises us as the best organisation to serve as a single point of access for the sector. Similarly, Low Vision Service Wales (LVSW) will be working with us in this vein because they recognise us as the independent organisation best placed to appropriately signpost patients to services and support.

**The new CVI patient leaflet.**

WCB is listed as the single point of access to information about services within the Certificate of Vision Impairment (Wales) CVI(W). This was a decision arrived at through agreement from the Wales Vision Forum. We believe that the sector is keen to have an impartial organisation offering signposting services for patients in receipt of a CVI.

**Perspectif information portal**

Perspectif has been overhauled by our developer to bring the code in line with current software versions. The new features are:

- searching by keyword from the home page;
- an events calendar linked to service and provider records;
- an option to create specialist site users (e.g. LVSW practitioners);
- a reporting function for named groups of users (such as LVSW; practitioners, Eye Care Liaison Officers (ECLOs), etc.);
- a postcode-based distance indicator;
- a filtering facility for the events page;
- a word search for the Library.

The Perspectif Library is now functioning well and shall become the central repository in Wales for information on sight loss and support. It shall include leaflets, reports, newsletters and the like which shall be stored on the WCB server.

Registered users can create folders which function like shopping baskets. You can add and remove services, service providers, glossary terms, events, and library items. These folders can be opened up into a single web page that is unformatted, enabling accessible versions to be produced easily.

We are now able to provide data on signposting for the benefit of our member organisations in order to highlight gaps in services and information about services. We hope it shall also demonstrate our impartiality.

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**Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**Replacing the service offered by the Wales Eye Care Service (WECS) website.**

Since the taking down of the WECS site, Perspectif is the only online up-to-date register of LVSW and Eye Health Examination Wales (EHEW) practitioners. An updating arrangement with LVSW is working well: we are informed via email of any changes required and can implement the changes usually within the hour. We are seeking a similar relationship with the EHEW service.

We have had inquiries from Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (VRSs) / ROVIs, ECLOs and Wales Vision Forum members about the unavailability of the WECS online service to find practitioners and we have been able to direct them to Perspectif as the only resource available currently. Since the site also offers information on other kinds of support, it fulfils an important role for professionals when advising and signposting service users to wider support, as well as WECS support. It is also a source of contacts to obtain support from VRSs (ROVIs) and ECLOs.

**Low Vision Service Wales.**

Perspectif shall be used as a tool to aid the LVSW practitioner in making suggestions to patients regarding support and services within their communities; a critical part of their role. It is a reinforcement of the signposting element of the assessment.

(There will be no concerns regarding GDPR as at no point will any personal patient data be shared via the portal. Only the practitioner will retain the patient's personal data. WCB will make no contact with the patient unless, of course, the patient chooses to contact us.)

To aid this process we hope that all LVSW practitioners shall be registered as users and communications shall go out to them with a guide to using the site.

Working with LVSW we have developed and provided a training package to assist optometrists with getting the best from Perspectif.

LVSW sees Perspectif as an educational tool for its practitioners. In the next 2 years, we shall evaluate this service through a research programme. This research shall require independent funding. Therefore, an outcome alongside those given below shall be to secure funding for this research.

**Perspectif Bulletin**

Our Perspectif Bulletin shall become an ad-hoc publication to show recent additions and changes to the portal along with featured services. This will keep optometrists up-to-date and keep them aware of the portal as a useful part of their LVSW assessments.

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**Year ended 31 March 2023**

### **Keywords**

We have updated all records, along with some rationalisation of categories. The updating is an ongoing process. We have also added keywords into each record to aid searches.

### **Events calendar**

The events calendar shows the patient or user a list of forthcoming activities, clubs, conferences and so on. These will eventually be linked to our Sylw bulletin under the events heading.

### **Rehabilitation officers (VRs) and ECLOS**

We are also aiming to get all Eye Clinic Liaison Officers and Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (ROVIs) registered as users. This shall form an important piece of work in April 2023. The aim - similar to that of the LVSW practitioners - is to encourage officers to use Perspectif as a tool for signposting patients and clients.

### **Monitoring**

The overhaul of the site has given us additional functionality to see the pattern of recommendations across Wales. This shall help us to identify gaps in knowledge and gaps in services.

### **Other developments**

In Bridgend, the Sensory Loss Professionals Group are working with us to ensure all services in their area are listed on Perspectif. Bridgend's Community Cluster Navigator and Social Prescriber within Bridgend District Nursing will also use Perspectif to signpost people to local services such as BridgeVis.

The database is the best source of information on the Third Sector support for VI people across Wales and we have been funded by **Thomas Pocklington Trust** (TPT) to map the services to identify gaps in provision. In order to make the report more useful to TPT we shall include categories of services defined by TPT and Visionary as part of a UK-wide survey. This won't affect the existing categories we adopted in Perspectif from the outset, but it will be an opportunity for Perspectif to be used as part of a UK survey and it shall demonstrate the flexibility of the database to be applied in other ways.

**Website [www.wcb-ccd.org.uk](http://www.wcb-ccd.org.uk):** This has been overhauled, bringing its code up to date and to align it with Perspectif. It has been made more accessible via smartphones following user feedback. This site is the focal point of our information provision and hosts, or provides access to, the following media:

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#### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 March 2023

**Sylw:** Sylw is WCB's online news feed. It also takes the form of a weekly bulletin distributed via email. It is also produced in alternative formats monthly and distributed by post. Sylw is distributed to a total readership of 5,027. This includes alternative formats (465). We also distribute to all eye clinics.

**Roundup:** a quarterly magazine that provides a space for a fuller exploration of themes from the perspective of sight loss. Sent via email, post and available online.

**Social Media:** we shall continue to use our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts to promote the work of the sector.

WCB has 1945 twitter followers; 366 Facebook; 274 Instagram

**Accessible media:** Wales Council of the Blind produces its materials, and that of member organisations, in accessible formats - notably large print and audio.

Over the past year we sent out newsletters and papers for:

- Visual Impairment Merthyr Tydfil
- Visual Impairment Breconshire
- Radnorshire Association for the Blind
- Ceredigion Association for the Blind
- Sight Life
- Macular Society (Wales)

## 2) Network support.

Wales Council of the Blind has a responsibility to bring the sector together through various forums. Many of these are managed by WCB.

### Wales Vision Forum.

WCB chairs and provides secretariat for the Wales Vision Forum (WVF). The purpose of the Forum is for national, local and specialist organisations representing people with sight loss to come together to share, discuss and outline work programmes and priorities to enhance joint working and reduce duplication to maximise our collective reach and impact.

The Forum is a platform for sharing information, sharing good practice and expertise, consulting and identifying opportunities to support service and campaign planning.

The group focuses on the work of relevant work-streams. Task and finish groups are established for specific areas of work.

The Forum meets monthly.

## Wales Council of the Blind

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#### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 March 2023

WVF has set up a specific T&F group on Optometry Reform with forum members sitting on each of the key groups. Our director sits on Clinical 1. This group is looking at the establishment of the CVI in Primary Care. We continue to hold Rehabilitation T&F groups.

#### **Visionary.**

WCB represents Visionary's members in Wales. Visionary is the UK umbrella organisation for local societies serving people with sight loss. WCB is the representative for Wales on Visionary's Members' Consultative Group (MCG). This is an opportunity to extend the reach of the voice of local societies into the UK agenda.

WCB's Director is currently Chair of Visionary and has been for the past 4 years.

Visionary have changed the frequency of the MCG meetings to quarterly. Our Engagement Officer continues to feed information to our Visionary members, as well as receive feedback through WVF. We will look to hold quarterly Visionary meetings with local societies specifically next year. The focus will be on referral pathways.

#### **Other networks.**

Wales Council of the Blind ensures that the voice of people with sight loss in Wales is represented in various networks. We sit on a number of networks including:

- Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum;
- Wales Disability Reference Group;
- The Group on Vision has not been reformed in this session;
- Cross Party Group on Disability. WCB provides notetaking for the CPGD. The group met 5 times last year and discussed a range of themes including cost of living, transport, welfare reform, habilitation services and the work of the Disability Rights Taskforce;
- Disability Equality Forum;
- Low Vision Service Wales Advisory Group: our Director, in his capacity as Chair, sits on the Wales Eye Care Service Joint Committee;
- Hywel Dda Eyecare Collaboration Group;
- Welsh Government's Loneliness and Social Isolation Group;
- All-Wales Sensory Loss Information and Communication Group. (Currently inactive);
- Disability Rights Taskforce;
- Disability Rights Taskforce - Independent Living: Social Care Working Group and health and well-being;
- Optometry Reform Clinical 1;
- SENCOM Partnership Board that looks at service improvement for children and young people in education across Gwent.

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**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**WCB Membership.**

In addition to ordinary membership support we shall work on the following areas.

**Supporting local organisations.** Our Engagement Officer sits on a number of local societies and provides a combination of secretarial support, newsletters, accessible media, and governance.

The Communications Officer will improve the online presence of two member organisations: BridgeVis and Carmarthenshire Area Blind Society. We are covering Carmarthenshire Area Blind Society and BridgeVis through the support page agreed by WVF members. This is in line with drawing people to Perspectif as a source.

**Regional Forums.**

These are where individuals with sight loss are able to share their views and, to some extent, direct WCB's agenda. As an independent organisation we provide this crucial platform through which people are able to express themselves freely. Three meetings took place in West Wales, Cardiff and Southeast Wales.

Members in West Wales received a Local Health Board update on services and discussed the impact of Covid on their confidence. Cardiff and Southeast Wales met to explore the potential of establishing VI Bowls in the area. A new club has been established in Cardiff. WCB is working with the Welsh Association of Visually Impaired Bowlers to develop the number of clubs and people with sight loss who play the game. Participation in sport increases confidence and well-being, as well as reduce isolation and loneliness - these are key Welsh Government objectives.

**3) Service improvement.**

**Scarcity of Rehabilitation Officers.**

Following the report on the scarcity of rehabilitation officers in Wales, WCB and Guide Dogs held regular meetings to ensure that the recommendations take place. In May, WCB gave a presentation on the scarcity of ROVIs to the Deputy Minister for Social Services. WCB and Guide Dogs Cymru also met with Welsh Government officials in November to discuss the ongoing workforce crisis and to seek the establishment of a task and finish group.

**Wales-based Rehabilitation Degree.**

Rehabilitation Work (Visual Impairment) - FdSc (Foundation Degree) is only currently available in Birmingham. WCB, WVF and WROF continue to work together to explore the option of having a course delivered in Wales.

Following a successful meeting with Welsh Government, we have been actively seeking solutions to the workforce crisis: WCB led on the development of a Training Needs Analysis for additional Vision Rehabilitation Specialists in Wales.

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#### Year ended 31 March 2023

This report supports the inclusion of the role of the Vision Rehabilitation Specialist within the

apprenticeship scheme in Wales. WCB has collected up-to-date information from 18 of the 22 authorities to inform this work. WCB has met with Cardiff Metropolitan University to explore the possibility of Cardiff Met being the training provider for the satellite course in Wales.

We acknowledge the responsibilities of the Regional Partnership Boards and the local authorities in delivering habilitation and rehabilitation services, but we feel that the role of supporting Higher Education opportunities rests with Welsh Government. It's important to note that rehabilitation and habilitation services for vision impaired people cannot be delivered by a person without the Rehabilitation Foundation Degree or Habilitation Degree respectively. In some instances, third sector organisations are paid by the local authority to deliver the services but, similarly, these can only be delivered by fully qualified specialists.

There are currently only 31.1 FTE out of the recommended 44.9 FTE Vision Rehabilitation Specialists currently employed across Wales (the recommended number is 1 per 70,000 residents). It is essential that new Vision Rehabilitation Specialists gain qualifications, as half (15) of the current workforce is set to retire in the next 5 years. There are also only 10 practising Habilitation Specialists out of the recommended 20 (1 Habilitation specialist per 100 children).

On 7th February we met with Christopher Hare and Jason Stickler from Welsh Government's Further Education and Apprenticeship Division to discuss training needs analysis. We were informed that the role is too niche to be added to the apprenticeship scheme. This has forced us to explore an alternative model and we shall be discussing this with Welsh Government.

In brief, we propose a model to obtain a bursary to train specialists over the next 5 years. This 5-year plan will be led by a project officer who shall:

- Develop national wellbeing outcomes;
- Define an all-Wales rehabilitation pathway;
- Capture and analyse the outcomes data for service planning across Wales;

Importantly, the bursary shall also fund:

- 10 Habilitation Specialists .
- 25 Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (5 places have been guaranteed by Birmingham Central University).
- 5 Vision Rehabilitation Specialists top-up for Habilitation of Complex Needs (DeafBlind)).
- Yearly expenses of each student enrolled.

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**Year ended 31 March 2023**

In March we wrote to the Deputy Minister for Social Services explaining that her officials have signalled their intention to meet with us, and we would ask that these discussions take place as soon as possible. We wish to contribute our knowledge and understanding to a long-term solution, but we need to act now if we are to prevent a work force crisis.

Additionally, we have met with Birmingham Central University (BCU) who, as the role of the VRS will not be added to the apprenticeship scheme here in Wales, will offer training to Welsh VRSs in Birmingham and not via a satellite course in Wales. BCU has agreed to hold 5 places a year for Welsh students for the next 5 years.

**Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum (WROF).**

WCB continued to pay RWPN membership of Welsh ROVIs for 2022. ROVIs will receive specialist training opportunities as determined by WROF, as a result of our report 'addressing a workforce crisis'.

WROF held an AGM in March that included training for ROVIs. WCB will now provide secretariat support to WROF, as well as continuing to act as a Treasurer.

WROF has asked WCB to organize and facilitate the WROF Conference. WCB will also be responsible for organizing all WROF meetings in the future, as secretariat.

This year's conference doubled-up as an extended event so that members could discuss a range of topics including:

- Change of name - ROVI to Vision Rehabilitation Specialist (VRS)
- CVI in Primary Care - impact on social services - increased referrals
- Awareness of WCB Perspectif portal re: LVSU practitioners

**Referral Pathways.**

We work with WVF, LVSU and the Welsh Government to increase and improve referrals between health, social care, and the third sector.

LVSU practitioners shall engage with WCB and use Perspectif to offer signposting to patients as part of their LVSU assessment package.

WCB has also collated contact details (address and email) for Welsh Government in relation to sending CVIs in Primary Care to Social Care. This will ensure that all CVIs will get to the most appropriate person, and we hope this will involve a telephone call from a ROVI.

WCB also sits on the Optometry Reform Clinical 1 group. We have led on developing an updated CVI patient leaflet that has been agreed and signed off by members of the WVF. This leaflet cites WCB as the sole contact for signposting of services. We will use Perspectif for this function.

## **Wales Council of the Blind**

### **Company Limited by Guarantee**

#### **Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

#### **Wales Eye Care Conference.**

WCB supported the Welsh Government in the designing and running of the Annual Wales Eyecare Conference for 2022.

The conference, the first since the pandemic, 'Future Approach to Eye Care: Reform and Recovery' took place on Monday 7th November. A total of 106 delegates attended. We had 148 people booked on. 42 people didn't turn up on the day. Attendance was down from 138 delegates in 2019. Covid and the late cancellation of the train strike directly influenced attendance.

LVSU PREMs: WCB established a group of vision impaired LVSU users to design PREMs for the service. This was piloted across Hywel Dda and has now been rolled out across Wales. WCB continues to provide support for the publication of research on the process. We hope to add Perspectif and its usefulness to the PREMs in order to gain user satisfaction data regarding the portal.

Additional support for member organisations: We have aided the following in their successful funding applications with letters of support:

- Vision Support and Sight Life
- Macular Society
- UCAN Productions

Patient information leaflet for Ranibizumab and biosimilars treatment: we were consulted on the leaflet to be issued to patients with Macular conditions.

Diabetic Eye Screening Wales: We have provided advice on accessibility of their appointment, cancellation and reminder letters.

## Wales Council of the Blind

### Company Limited by Guarantee

#### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

#### Financial review

With the ending of the financial year, the board of trustees report a year-end financial position of a deficit of £39,987 (2022: deficit £22,284). This deficit includes net losses on investments revaluation of £19,155. Welsh Government funding has continued throughout the year.

WCB reserves policy is fully met and we have sufficient funds to plan for the future.

Unrestricted funds at year-end were £223,074 (2022: £263,061) with free reserves of £1,987 (2022: £27,551).

#### Investment Policy

Under articles of association the charity has the power to make any investment which the trustees see fit. The present policy is to keep an amount that represents short term operating requirements in liquid deposits (bank deposit accounts) and place the balance in the hands of a professional investment broker, to invest in wide range of fixed interest and equity funds. During the period 2015/16 the charity invested £200,000 with Quilter Cheviot as part of a Discretionary Managed Portfolio at a lower to medium tolerance of risk. WCB's investment objective is to grow the capital of the portfolio, as well as generating some degree of income. At the year-end WCB's managed portfolio was valued at £217,442. This was a net loss of £17,888 on the previous year. This will continue to be invested.

#### Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered carefully the purpose of any reserves Wales Council of the Blind has or might have in the future. The stated aim of the reserves policy is to allow for unforeseeable events. This could be anything from replacing essential office equipment, to the sudden loss of funding. The amount should be sufficient to pay for staff redundancies and outstanding liabilities.

Reserves should be maintained at a level of 6 months operating costs of the core organisation. In addition, we may need to recognise any longer-term grant / project commitments and to settle the finances accordingly. Reserves should exclude funding that has been restricted for other specified use.

Reserves should be invested in a safe, low risk environment that maintains the capital invested and where possible provides a level of return on those funds.

The policy is reviewed annually by Trustees, or more frequently as necessary.

## **Wales Council of the Blind**

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#### **Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

#### **Plans for future periods**

WCB received Welsh Government funding of £105,000 for this period and has been awarded an indicative grant for the following two years 2023-24 and 2024-25 of up to £105,000 per annum. We have restarted the Thomas Pocklington Trust project now that covid restrictions have ended and will draw down the final payment of £5,756.25 in 2023/24.

WCB is a partner in a Wales-wide project led by the Royal Society for Blind Children. The project will provide specialist personal development support that focuses on establishing social connections, empowering families and young people to take control of their lives, link into their communities and equipping local providers with the knowledge, confidence and skills to include children and young people with sight loss in their existing provision.

#### **Structure, governance and management**

##### **Governing Document**

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and as such is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 31 January 1991 under the Companies Act 1985 and registered as a charity on 18 April 1995.

##### **Recruitment and Appointment of the Management Committee**

The directors of the company also serve as trustees of the charity and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Committee. Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. Casual vacancies are filled by the Management Committee and ratified at the next Annual General Meeting.

Each member of the Management Committee has agreed to guarantee the company's debts for the amount of £1 each.

All new Trustees are given induction training via the issuing of our organisational policy and procedures book and WCB offers to arrange for Trustees to have the opportunity to attend Trustee training provided by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) should they wish. Trustees are able to contact the Council's secretary if they wish to have specific advice or guidance on any policies or procedures. WCB provides Trustees with indemnity insurance to the value of £500,000.

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**Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**Structure, governance and management *(continued)***

**The staff and volunteers**

Owen Williams is the Director at Wales Council of the Blind. He provides senior management to WCB and helps plan and deliver strategic direction to the sector.

Richard Bowers is our Communications Officer, and he manages WCB's communications and has developed and updates 'Perspectif, our online information portal.

Our Engagement Officer, Rebecca Phillips, facilitates and organises the Regional Steering Groups, as well as enables the voice of people with sight loss to be heard.

WCB has a dedicated team of volunteers who we would like to thank, providing invaluable support to the organisation around information gathering, keeping our database up-to-date and updating our Twitter feed, collating the material for Roundup, providing help with fundraising, answering the telephone, and providing advice. Thank you, Ann, Dewi, Alan and Valmai for your continued support. We would also like to thank Bethan Smale our bookkeeper for all of her hard work

**Small company provisions**

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

The trustees' annual report was approved on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



.....Signed  
Trustee

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Year ended 31 March 2023**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Wales Council of the Blind ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act: or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Farzana Ahmed FCCA  
Independent Examiner  
1st Floor, Tudor House  
16 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9LJ

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Statement of Financial Activities**  
**(including income and expenditure account)**

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

		<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>		
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £
<b>Income and endowments</b>					
Donations and legacies	5	12,943	110,756	<b>123,699</b>	115,641
Investment income	6	5,078	–	<b>5,078</b>	4,425
<b>Total income</b>		<u>18,021</u>	<u>110,756</u>	<u><b>128,777</b></u>	<u>120,066</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of other trading activities	7	1,002	–	<b>1,002</b>	1,428
Investment management costs	8	3,812	–	<b>3,812</b>	3,993
Expenditure on charitable activities	9,10	34,039	110,756	<b>144,795</b>	144,051
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u>38,853</u>	<u>110,756</u>	<u><b>149,609</b></u>	<u>149,472</u>
Net (losses)/gains on investments	12	(19,155)	–	<b>(19,155)</b>	7,122
<b>Net expenditure and net movement in funds</b>		<u>(39,987)</u>	<u>–</u>	<u><b>(39,987)</b></u>	<u>(22,284)</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		263,061	–	<b>263,061</b>	285,345
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<u>223,074</u>	<u>–</u>	<u><b>223,074</b></u>	<u>263,061</u>

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

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

**The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these financial statements.**

**Wales Council of the Blind  
Company Limited by Guarantee  
Statement of Financial Position**

**31 March 2023**

	Note	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible fixed assets	18		3,645		180
Investments	19		217,442		235,330
			<u>221,087</u>		<u>235,510</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	20	4,510		4,433	
Cash at bank and in hand		3,169		29,160	
		<u>7,679</u>		<u>33,593</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	21	5,692		6,042	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>1,987</u>		<u>27,551</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>223,074</u>		<u>263,061</u>
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>223,074</u>		<u>263,061</u>
<b>Funds of the charity</b>					
Unrestricted funds			223,074		263,061
<b>Total charity funds</b>	23		<u>223,074</u>		<u>263,061</u>

For the year ending 31 March 2023 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

The statement of financial position  
continues on the following page.

**The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these financial statements.**

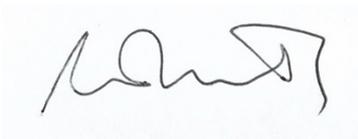
**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Statement of Financial Position** *(continued)*

**31 March 2023**

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023, and are signed on behalf of the board by:



.....Signed  
Trustee



.....Signed  
Trustee

Company registration number: 02578918

**The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these financial statements.**

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**1. General information**

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Hastings House, Fitzalan Place, Unit 3.1, Cardiff, CF24 0BL.

**2. Statement of compliance**

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the 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) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

**3. Accounting policies**

**Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

**Going concern**

After making reasonable enquiries and having considered the impact of the economic downturn and other factors on the financial performance of the charity and its current performance, the Trustee's believe that the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable purpose, will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and will have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis in in preparing the financial statements

**Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

**Wales Council of the Blind****Company Limited by Guarantee****Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)***Year ended 31 March 2023****3. Accounting policies** *(continued)***Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

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

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

**Incoming resources**

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

## Wales Council of the Blind

### Company Limited by Guarantee

#### Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

### 3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

#### Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

#### Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Fixed assets are not capitalised where the cost is below £100.

#### Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Office equipment                      -    25% reducing balance

#### Investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

**Wales Council of the Blind****Company Limited by Guarantee****Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)***Year ended 31 March 2023****3. Accounting policies** *(continued)***Debtors and creditors receivable/ payable within one year**

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

**Financial instruments**

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument. Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted. Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Where investments in shares or preference shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

**Defined contribution plans**

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

**4. Limited by guarantee**

Each member of the Board of Trustees has undertaken to guarantee the Council's debts to the sum of £1 each.

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)*

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**5. Donations and legacies**

	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restricted Funds £	<b>Total Funds 2023 £</b>
<b>Donations</b>			
Donations and bequests	5,274	–	<b>5,274</b>
<b>Grants</b>			
Welsh Government	–	105,000	<b>105,000</b>
Local Authority grants	1,533	–	<b>1,533</b>
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	700	–	<b>700</b>
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	<b>5,756</b>
<b>Other donations and legacies</b>			
Other income	5,436	–	<b>5,436</b>
	<u>12,943</u>	<u>110,756</u>	<b><u>123,699</u></b>
	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restricted Funds £	<b>Total Funds 2022 £</b>
<b>Donations</b>			
Donations and bequests	4,315	–	4,315
<b>Grants</b>			
Welsh Government	–	105,000	105,000
Local Authority grants	1,437	–	1,437
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	700	–	700
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	–	–
<b>Other donations and legacies</b>			
Other income	4,189	–	4,189
	<u>10,641</u>	<u>105,000</u>	<b><u>115,641</u></b>

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)*

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**6. Investment income**

	Unrestrict ed Funds	<b>Total Funds 2023</b>	Unrestrict ed Funds	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Income from listed investments	5,078	<b>5,078</b>	4,425	4,425

**7. Costs of other trading activities**

	Unrestrict ed Funds	<b>Total Funds 2023</b>	Unrestrict ed Funds	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising costs	1,002	<b>1,002</b>	1,428	1,428

**8. Investment management costs**

	Unrestrict ed Funds	<b>Total Funds 2023</b>	Unrestrict ed Funds	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Portfolio management	3,812	<b>3,812</b>	3,993	3,993

**9. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type**

	Unrestrict ed Funds	Restricted Funds	<b>Total Funds 2023</b>
	£	£	£
Promoting Welfare	14,170	110,756	<b>124,926</b>
Support costs	19,869	–	<b>19,869</b>
	<u>34,039</u>	<u>110,756</u>	<b><u>144,795</u></b>

	Unrestrict ed Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£
Promoting Welfare	19,812	105,000	124,813
Support costs	19,239	–	19,238
	<u>39,051</u>	<u>105,000</u>	<u>144,051</u>

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)*

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**10. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type**

	Activities undertaken directly £	Support costs £	<b>Total funds 2023 £</b>	Total fund 2022 £
Promoting Welfare	124,926	16,172	<b>141,098</b>	140,880
Governance costs	–	3,697	<b>3,697</b>	3,171
	<u>124,926</u>	<u>19,869</u>	<u><b>144,795</b></u>	<u>144,051</u>

**11. Analysis of support costs**

	Analysis of support costs		
	activity 1 £	<b>Total 2023 £</b>	Total 2022 £
Staff costs	13,512	<b>13,512</b>	12,816
General office	2,658	<b>2,658</b>	3,251
Governance costs	3,699	<b>3,699</b>	3,171
	<u>19,869</u>	<u><b>19,869</b></u>	<u>19,238</u>

**12. Net (losses)/gains on investments**

	Unrestricte d Funds £	<b>Total Funds 2023 £</b>	Unrestricte d Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Gains/(losses) on listed investments	(19,155)	<b>(19,155)</b>	7,122	7,122

**13. Net expenditure**

Net expenditure is stated after charging/(crediting):

	<b>2023 £</b>	2022 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u><b>364</b></u>	<u>60</u>

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)*

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**14. Independent examination fees**

	<b>2023</b>	2022
	<b>£</b>	£
Fees payable to the independent examiner for:		
Independent examination of the financial statements	<b><u>2,640</u></b>	<u>2,640</u>

**15. Staff costs**

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	<b>2023</b>	2022
	<b>£</b>	£
Wages and salaries	<b>108,122</b>	103,912
Social security costs	<b>6,703</b>	6,679
Employer contributions to pension plans	<b>3,130</b>	3,190
	<b><u>117,955</u></b>	<u>113,781</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 3 (2022: 3). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	<b>2023</b>	2022
	<b>No.</b>	No.
Project staff	<b><u>3</u></b>	<u>3</u>

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2022: Nil).

**Key Management Personnel**

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £41,487 (2022: £39,812).

**16. Trustee remuneration and expenses**

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

All trustees are entitled to claim reimbursement of the cost of attending meetings, no trustees were reimbursed during the year (2022: £nil) for travelling costs to attend meetings.

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)*

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**17. Transfers between funds**

No transfers between general funds and designated funds took place during the year.

**18. Tangible fixed assets**

	Equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2022	24,289	<b>24,289</b>
Additions	3,829	<b>3,829</b>
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<u>28,118</u>	<u>28,118</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2022	24,109	<b>24,109</b>
Charge for the year	364	<b>364</b>
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<u>24,473</u>	<u>24,473</u>
<b>Carrying amount</b>		
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<u>3,645</u>	<u>3,645</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>180</u>	<u>180</u>

**19. Investments**

	Cash or cash equivalent s £	Listed investment s £	Total £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>			
At 1 April 2022	7,277	228,053	<b>235,330</b>
Additions	66,656	56,412	<b>123,068</b>
Disposals	(60,239)	(73,326)	<b>(133,565)</b>
Fair value movements	–	(7,391)	<b>(7,391)</b>
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<u>13,694</u>	<u>203,748</u>	<u>217,442</u>
<b>Impairment</b>			
<b>At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023</b>			<u>–</u>
<b>Carrying amount</b>			
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<u>13,694</u>	<u>203,748</u>	<u>217,442</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>7,277</u>	<u>228,053</u>	<u>235,330</u>

## Wales Council of the Blind

### Company Limited by Guarantee

#### Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

#### 19. Investments *(continued)*

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

##### Listed investments

The aggregate market value of listed investments is £203,748 (2022: £228,053) and the stock exchange value is £203,748 (2022: £228,053).

##### Financial assets held at fair value

Investments are stated at fair value at the balance sheet date, listed investments are stated at the stock exchange values at the year end. Other investments are valued based on investment performance.

The historical cost of investments at the year end date is £203,504 (2022 : £215,588).

#### 20. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	2,115	1,574
Prepayments and accrued income	2,395	2,859
	<u>4,510</u>	<u>4,433</u>

#### 21. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	245	–
Accruals and deferred income	2,640	2,640
Social security and other taxes	2,807	3,402
	<u>5,692</u>	<u>6,042</u>

#### 22. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

##### Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £3,130 (2022: £3,190).

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)*

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**23. Analysis of charitable funds**

**Unrestricted funds**

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	250,561	18,021	(38,853)	(19,155)	<b>210,574</b>
Designated Fund	12,500	—	—	—	<b>12,500</b>
	<u>263,061</u>	<u>18,021</u>	<u>(38,853)</u>	<u>(19,155)</u>	<u><b>223,074</b></u>

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	272,845	15,066	(44,472)	7,122	250,561
Designated Fund	12,500	—	—	—	12,500
	<u>285,345</u>	<u>15,066</u>	<u>(44,472)</u>	<u>7,122</u>	<u>263,061</u>

**Restricted funds**

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Thomas Pocklington Trust	—	5,756	(5,756)	—	—
Welsh Government	—	105,000	(105,000)	—	—
	<u>—</u>	<u>110,756</u>	<u>(110,756)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Welsh Government	—	105,000	(105,000)	—	—

The Welsh Government grant was received in respect of funding for delivery information services, network support and service improvement for the sight loss sector in Wales.

Thomas Pocklington Trust grant was received towards producing a State of the Nation report on third sector services for blind and partially sighted people.

**Wales Council of the Blind**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Notes to the Financial Statements** *(continued)*

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

**24. Analysis of net assets between funds**

	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	3,645	<b>3,645</b>
Investments	217,442	<b>217,442</b>
Current assets	7,679	<b>7,679</b>
Creditors less than 1 year	(5,692)	<b>(5,692)</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>223,074</u>	<u><b>223,074</b></u>
	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	180	180
Investments	235,330	235,330
Current assets	33,593	33,593
Creditors less than 1 year	(6,042)	(6,042)
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>263,061</u>	<u>263,061</u>

**25. Related parties**

The charity was under the control of the trustees throughout the current and previous year.

No transactions with related parties were undertaken such as are required to be disclosed under FRS 102.