

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)
TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

**THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
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**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

Trustees

Dr Dele Olajide (Chair)
Roger Skipp (Vice Chair)
Pankaj Shah (Treasurer) (appointed 1 October 2024)
Hasib Dewan (appointed 1 October 2024)
Jayesh Patel (appointed 1 October 2024)
Rachel Russell (appointed 11 October 2024)
Rachel Hutchings (appointed 18 October 2024)
Gemma Bull (resigned 30 April 2024)
Helen Richardson (resigned 8 May 2025)
Adam Antonio (resigned 6 June 2025)

Company registered number

04018315

Charity registered number

1084106

Registered office

The Stowe Centre
258 Harrow Road
London
W2 5ES

Company secretary

Katherine Shaw (Appointed 8 July 2024)
Alison Wright (Resigned 8 July 2024)

Independent auditor

Cooper Parry Group Limited
Sky View
Argosy Road
East Midlands Airport
Castle Donington
Derby
DE74 2SA

**THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
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**TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the Charity for the 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The Trustees are also directors, therefore the Annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

"The Advocacy Project breaks things down for you. Bit by bit. So, it's not one big organisation versus you, it's lots and lots of little steps to meet your goals. The Advocacy Project help provide you the confidence and the self-assurance to tackle these little steps one after another."

Marlon Morgan Advocacy project Service User Council member.

Since the Charity qualifies as small under section 382 of the Companies Act 2006, the Strategic report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

"Life is about relationships and relationships are built on trust and that's what the Advocacy Project is all about to me, trust and feeling safe" Advocacy project Service User Council member.

1. Objectives and activities

1.1. Aims and objectives

The Advocacy Project supports people to speak up and to make their own choices about their lives. Our vision is a world in which every person has a voice - including those who are marginalised or vulnerable because of their circumstances. We place a relentless focus on enabling people to have their voice heard, uphold their rights, and make informed choices. We support people to have their say and help improve important services we all need, including health and social care services. We also seek to tackle testimonial injustice - this kind of injustice occurs when someone is ignored, or not believed, because of identity-prejudice towards them, for example because of their circumstances, their gender, race, disability etc.

We achieve these aims by delivering a range of projects and services - statutory and non-statutory - including advocacy, user involvement, personal health budgets and Healthwatch services. The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should carry out.

1.2. How we work

At The Advocacy Project, we believe everyone has the right to be heard, to have control over their own life, and to be treated with dignity and respect. We support people who are often excluded or overlooked including people with protected characteristics, learning disabilities, mental ill health, older people and other disabilities to build their confidence, support them to speak up and be involved in choices made about their health and social care.

When people feel stronger, safer, and more empowered, they can shape their own futures! You can read personal stories from people we've supported on our website: www.advocacyproject.org.uk/news/real-stories-about-real-people.

Lived experience is at the heart of everything we do. Many of our staff bring personal experience of the challenges we help people navigate. We co-produce our projects with the people we support and actively recruit Trustees with lived experience. Our board includes a dedicated service user or lived experience Trustee. Alongside this, our Service User Council provides valuable insight and feedback, ensuring the voices of people who use our services inform and influence our work.

We're proud to be a diverse, inclusive organisation that reflects the communities we serve. That diversity helps us build trust and understanding, allowing us to focus on what matters most: standing alongside people who face disadvantage, discrimination, and marginalisation, and working together to create lasting change.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

1. Objectives and activities (continued)

1.3. Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty under the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. In planning and delivering the Charity's activities throughout the year, the Trustees have considered how these activities contribute to the Charity's aims and objectives for the public benefit.

1.4. Performance and achievements

External context

In 2024/25, the wider pressures on the health and social care sector continued to shape the environment in which The Advocacy Project operates. While the impact of the rising cost of living was less pronounced, many people using our services remained in difficult circumstances, with clear consequences for their mental and physical health. Ongoing delays and waiting lists in health and social care directly affected the people we support, increasing the urgency and complexity of advocacy needs. This has driven up referrals and placed additional pressure on our teams. We are proud to have worked with 2,801 people through our direct services and 10,844 through Healthwatch.

The abolition of NHS England signalled a major shift in health governance, creating uncertainty around commissioning and local accountability. Alongside this, the General Election brought further instability, with potential shifts in policy direction and continued scrutiny of public sector delivery. These dynamics, coupled with ongoing budget constraints across health and social care, drove up demand in our caseload in some areas. However, entering 2024/25 with a fully staffed team and increased investment in non-statutory services, we were well placed to respond to need and maintain our focus on amplifying voices.

During the year our largest contract went out for retender and we are still waiting for the result of this as this report is published. While the loss of this contract would have an impact on the size and the shape of the organisation, we have contingency plans in place to mitigate any risk.

In June 2025 we heard the news that Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch were to be abolished under the new 10-year plan. At the time of writing there is little detail, and we are working closely with both Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Local Authority colleagues to plan for the change. At this stage we do not expect this to impact until 2026/27.

Internal context

Our new permanent Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Katherine Shaw, joined us in July 2024. Katherine quickly embedded herself in the organisation and led the development of a new strategic direction, supported by Lime Green Consulting gathered data from internal and external stakeholders and working closely with the senior leadership team and Trustees developed a robust strategic plan for the next 5 years. While the environment in which we operate continues to be challenging with increased competition for funding, very tight margins in statutory funding and increased demand we remain ambitious and optimistic that the organisation can develop a sustainable business model that will secure our future for many years ahead.

With a focused Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in place, we prioritised stabilising the Charity, ensure that the internal processes and systems enable us to continue to deliver high-quality advocacy, Healthwatch and user involvement services. We were thrilled to be awarded the Advocacy quality mark (QPM) for the second time and the feedback from the assessment was extremely positive.

"The advocacy team have very robust, well executed processes and procedures in place, which provide a comprehensive Independent Advocacy service to the communities in which they work in. The assessor was extremely impressed with the breadth of support available within the service itself being complimented in addition to the many other projects they deliver. "

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

1. Objectives and activities (continued)

Internal context (continued)

"Feedback from all those we spoke with who had used the service was outstanding. There was a strong thread of excellent support being provided with people feeling listened to and empowered." **QPM inspector 2024.**

This is testament to the skills and experience of our teams. We work collaboratively with all our commissioners to ensure the quality of all our services continues to improve, responding to feedback and securing extensions on both our Healthwatch contracts.

We were delighted to have 5 new Trustees including a Treasurer joining the board all bringing with them valuable additional experience and insight to our board.

We continued to prioritise staff involvement and internal collaboration, maintaining the regular managers meetings introduced last year and building on opportunities for cross-team working. Partnerships have remained a core focus, with efforts to build new relationships and expand into new areas aligned with our strategy to play to our strengths, particularly in non-statutory advocacy, accessible information, and user-led projects.

Under our communication strategy, we invested in strategic communications to strengthen our external presence and better showcase the impact of our work and support our sales income for easy read and training. This included improving how we share stories, engage partners, and position ourselves as a leader in advocacy and involvement.

1.5. Service highlights

In 2024/25 we engaged with over 13,000 people through our services and through hosting Healthwatch. Some of these interactions were intensive one 2 one advocacy work, or personal health budgets or through our user voice groups, others were lighter touch through advice and information or engagement and consultation but running through all these the common thread of enabling people to be heard and acting on this to affect change.

Spot-purchase work

We continue to grow our spot purchase offer to Local authorities and saw 1,070 hours delivered this year. Next year we will expand this further taking the offer to more local authorities and recruiting more spot purchase advocates to join the 2 we currently work with.

Advocacy services

The Head of Service oversaw a very successful quality performance mark assessment, resulting in us being awarded this for the second time. Feedback was extremely positive, and we continue to improve quality and impact of our advocacy services.

- **Ealing advocacy team:** At the beginning of the financial year, we were having difficulties managing big caseloads due to being a small team. After sending a business proposal to Ealing council they agreed to increase our funding, which allowed us to recruit more staff members to take on cases. Our Care Act referrals have increased gradually in the year after providing many advocacy awareness sessions for professionals. We worked with 217 people this year.
- **Bi-borough team:** Our activity has included delivering individual advocacy awareness training to social workers, the Carers Network, the West London GP Forum, providing input into The Ministry of Justice consultation of extending the role of IMHA into Prisons and detention centres and participating in the consultation by the University of London on Culturally Appropriate Advocacy Standards. We were proud to receive recognition from CQC inspectors for the presence of advocates and visible advocacy materials on the wards in St Charles Hospital and Bluebell Lodge and have an article published in the Royal College of Psychiatry's newsletter on advocacy in a PICU. We worked with 549 people this year.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

1. Objectives and activities (continued)

- **West London forensic advocacy service:** During Q4 2024/25, the advocacy team collaborated closely with Solaris to support service users in identifying goals related to leave, helping them navigate the application process and communicate effectively with clinical teams. Referrals were received from all 18 wards, reflecting strong engagement and trust in the service across secure and specialist units. Of the 344 issues addressed, 23% came from professionals, with the majority initiated by service users or advocates, highlighting increased awareness of advocacy rights. Advocates played a key role in care planning, Mental Health Review Tribunal preparation, and safeguarding, while also contributing to weekly Independent Long-Term Seclusion Reviews to ensure patient voices were central to decision-making. Proactive outreach and education further empowered service users, promoting self-advocacy and reducing reliance on ongoing casework. We worked with 225 people this year.

Case Study: Upholding Rights in Complex Mental Health Care

A man in his 40s, detained in a medium secure hospital with schizophrenia and emotionally unstable personality disorder, displayed complex behaviours including hunger strikes and refusal to engage with staff. He declined family involvement in his care decisions.

During his second hunger strike, concerns arose about his capacity to make treatment decisions. An Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) was appointed, who found the existing capacity assessment was inadequately documented. The IMCA recommended a formal reassessment due to the serious health risks involved.

Although the patient declined to engage directly, the IMCA noted conflicting professional views about his capacity and advised the case be referred to the Court of Protection. Working closely with staff, the IMCA ensured legal and ethical issues were addressed, helping to safeguard the patient's rights despite limited cooperation.

User Involvement

Our User Involvement projects continue to enable the voices of older people, people with learning disabilities, and individuals facing mental health challenges, to be heard and to influence both local and strategic level decisions about health and social care. We have engaged 934 people through this work with highlights including:

- **Learning Disability (LD) User Involvement (UI) Team:** Camden and Bi-borough LD UI staff delivered a 1-day 'LD Reps Training' workshop, for all our LD Reps, covering topics such as 'First impressions', 'Being Professional', 'Speaking Up' and 'Representation'. The Reps participated in role plays and discussions with each other throughout the day.
- **'Synergy' - Camden Learning Disability User Involvement:** An example of successful procurement - we developed training for the Synergy Reps, who then participated on a panel for Camden Council's Community Support Recommissioning process.
- **'Big Voice' and 'Our Choice' - Bi-Borough Learning Disability User Involvement:** We delivered regular Speak Up/Have Your Say sessions to service providers such as Pursuing Independent Paths, LDN Hub, Caxton Youth and Westminster Adult Education services, on topics such as Digital Inclusion, Planned Care and Palliative care.
- **Older People's Voice' - Westminster Older Adults User Involvement:** Our members contributed to the Adult Social Care Preventative Services Strategy, by raising the issue of 'aging well' in their own homes with reasonable, efficient and timely adjustments and access to activities and support.
- **Mental Health Voice' - City & Hackney User Involvement:** At the Mental Health Voice (MHV) committee and the Mental Health Integration Committee (MHIC) meetings, MHV members highlighted the lack of accessible mental health services in the City. This resulted in 'Public Health City and Hackney' working with us to explore ways of addressing the gaps and mapping existing services.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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1. Objectives and activities (continued)

- **Camden Mental Health User Involvement:** Our Lived Experience Advisors (LExAs) are a core part of Reach Out Camden's Alliance Management Team (AMT), Alliance Leadership Team (ALT), and have contributed to Audit tools, Values work, and recruitment processes.

Healthwatch

- **Bi-borough:** In 2024/25, we supported over 3,400 in Westminster and 3,600 people in Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea to have their say and access information about their care. We published a total of 19 reports about the improvements people would like to see in areas like intermediate care, access to healthcare, primary mental health services for homeless communities and Enter and View. Amongst other areas, we highlighted the impact of the cost of living Crisis and people's struggles in accessing integrated support when transitioning between health and social care services. We also informed policy on dental care access through work with the Local Dental Committee and fed residents' feedback about barriers to accessing online healthcare into council strategy. Our joint report on maternity services led to improved postnatal information for new mothers.
- **Brent:** In 2024/25, 1,336 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care and 2,413 people came to us for clear advice and information on topics which informed our reports. We published six reports highlighting the improvements people want in areas such as GP services, maternity care, and hospital discharge. Brent is one of London's most diverse boroughs, and we have continued to build strong community partnerships. This includes helping the Brent Somali organisation engage with the council and health leaders, working with food banks to understand residents' needs, and collaborating with the Brent Autism Care Navigator to explore the lived experiences of autistic residents. We also engaged with people living with dementia and their carers to review the customer care team and care needs assessment process. Their feedback was fully accepted and used to improve services.
- **Across all three boroughs:** This year, we jointly raised concerns to the Integrated Care Board about the low level of engagement on their same day GP access plans which resulted in them extending the consultation time to ensure that resident voices are reflected in decision-making processes. Through Enter & View visits to GP surgeries, we identified areas for improvement - such as complaints processes and disability access - which were reflected in our recommendations. To ensure inclusive engagement, we collaborated with partner organisations to provide translated and accessible surveys, helping us gather feedback from across our diverse community.
- **Health Equalities lecture series** - a further four successful lectures were run this year:
GP Access: What Do Patients Want?; Survivors' Stories; 2 x A Mentally Healthier Future and How We Can Get There.

Personal Health Budget (PHB)

We ceased delivery of our PHB service in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham in 2024/25 and would like to thank all of our partners and commissioner for the opportunity to work on a true prevention focused project. Our Tower Hamlets Children and Young People's (CYP) PHB work was extended to October 2025.

Since its launch in 2022 with just 8 referrals, the CYP PHB service in Tower Hamlets has grown significantly, now receiving over 120 referrals. The service supports young people in accessing tailored resources to improve their mental health and wellbeing. All young people offered a PHB have received their agreed support, with improved wellbeing scores consistently reported.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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1. Objectives and activities (continued)

Infrastructure

Our people

Throughout the year we strengthened our leadership, with our new permanent CEO, Katherine Shaw, joining in July 2024. Katherine brings fresh leadership and is driving forward our new strategic direction. Lee Forster joined as our IT Manager, strengthening our digital infrastructure and supporting improved systems across the organisation, and we welcomed Gina Aston as our new Impact & Involvement Manager (Healthwatch), taking a more strategic approach to managing our Healthwatch contracts and how we measure and demonstrate impact.

To support the ambition in our new strategy we will be investing in a Deputy Head of Service role in 2025/26.

In 2024/25, 8 people joined the organisation and 12 people left (including TUPE and fixed term contracts). This gave us a retention rate of 74% which, although lower than we would hope for, however it includes 50% of staff eligible for TUPE. As we enter 2025/26, this figure is higher and remains a focus to increase to above 85%. To support this, the Senior Leadership Team continue to develop a model of staff cohesion.

This includes regular staff days and catch-ups to gather feedback, hear staff opinions and provide actions and responses where possible. Staff have fed into the new strategy and development of new values (underway). We have listened to feedback and simplified the appraisal process, reducing paperwork and focusing on short term goals. We plan to have regular pulse surveys for staff, as well as opportunities to engage through an online platform "Viva Engage". Trustees have attended staff meetings both in person and online and we continue to work hard to build confidence and relationships across SLT and the wider organisation to create a more collaborative workforce. Currently 79% of staff report being proud to work for The Advocacy Project; our aim is to make all our staff proud.

We are working to identify the 'golden thread' of advocacy across all the projects we deliver, looking at how our work connects to delivering our goal of 'raising vulnerable people's voices'.

The Employee Handbook and the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Handbook clearly set out our policies and procedures and are reviewed for compliance with legislation and best practice each year. We continue to invest in staff wellbeing by giving staff access to independent counselling in addition to a 24-hour confidential care service.

We continue to strive to make the organisation fully inclusive. This year, we undertook an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion self-assessment and a small working group are analysing the responses. We will use these to set priorities and develop an action plan. We will take a step-by-step approach, focusing on a few areas at a time to ensure that actions are deliverable and embedded in practice. We have a recognition agreement with UNISON and are a Mindful Employer and a Disability Confident Employer.

Learning and development for staff is very important to us. We support staff to achieve their Independent Advocacy Qualification (IAQ), continue to invest in our E learning platform from the Charity Consortium and work with services to identify and meet training and development needs (for example talking mats training for our Camden project and Safeguarding training tailored to Healthwatch needs).

Information Technology (IT)

Our new IT Manager has supported the organisation to move away from a hosted desktop and fully utilise Microsoft 365 for all staff. This has reduced cost and improved IT functionality and communications significantly. Lee has hosted regular IT training sessions to support the transition. We continue to explore the applications that come with Microsoft 365 to improve staff engagement and communication. We're aware of the opportunities and risks that AI can bring and are currently exploring how best to use this in the Charity.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

1. Objectives and activities (continued)

Communications

- **Internal:** We continue to produce our internal newsletter based on staff feedback that they wanted to know more about what was happening across the organisation internally. The newsletter goes out on a 6-weekly basis and includes key-dates, updates on teams, successes and key messages for staff. We plan to regularly share more company KPIs with the staff including key HR and finance data to support transparency.
- **External:** this year, we've continued to prioritise the growth and strategic development of our external communications, recognising its vital role in amplifying our impact.

Our communications work is underpinned by three core aims: raising awareness of our work, increasing funding opportunities, and inspiring volunteer engagement.

- To support this, we established a Communications and Social Media Committee. Meeting quarterly, this board-led group makes sure our messaging remains purposeful and aligned with our broader organisational goals. Their guidance is already shaping a more focused and effective communications strategy.
- Throughout 2024/25, we have delivered several events that have extended our reach and influence. Highlights include a national poetry competition judged by author and broadcaster Michael Rosen - who also headlined our Healthwatch lecture on 'Survivors' Stories' - attracting new audiences and fostering wider community engagement. We also hosted or co-hosted professional lectures exploring key sector themes such as GP Access: What Do Patients Want? and An Overview of the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework, offering valuable CPD opportunities for staff and partners alike. As we look to enhance the impact of our Healthwatch and Speak Up lectures, we've paused the series for a strategic review, with the aim of relaunching a unified, more effective platform later this year.
- To celebrate our 25th birthday we had organised an event on 3rd June 2025 to give us an opportunity to showcase our services and launch our new strategy to an existing and new audience of stakeholders.
- Our digital presence continues to grow steadily. LinkedIn and Instagram have become key platforms for us to connect with both professional networks and the public. By aligning our posts with sector-relevant awareness campaigns and sharing content - such as staff and service user video stories – we are celebrating our work whilst deepening public understanding of the issues we address.

2. Looking to the Future

With the launch of our new five-year strategy to guide our work, developed through engagement with staff, service users, volunteers and partners, and underpinned by our enduring vision: a world in which every person has a voice, The Advocacy Project stands on strong foundations. Shaped by 25 years of championing people's voices and rights, our ambitious strategy focuses on three key goals:

- **Achieving a sustainable business model through current areas of work while maintaining quality.**
- **Expanding our reach to increase access to advocacy, advice and information for more people.**
- **Speaking up for the work we do to increase our brand awareness, amplifying our voice and reputation.**

To achieve this, we've set out five strategic workstreams - Services, Impact, People, Voice and Finance - each guiding how we develop our delivery, demonstrate value, invest in staff and volunteers, grow influence, and secure future income. It's a strategy designed to strengthen what we do best, while equipping us to adapt to a challenging external environment. We'll break these down to achievable annual priorities and as we enter the first year of the strategy we are focusing on:

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

2. Looking to the Future (continued)

- Increasing income from spot purchase, paid for services and trusts and foundations.
- Benchmarking our salaries and developing a new reward and recognition strategy.
- Reviewing our data maturity and building a plan to improve our data capture and outcome and impact measurement.
- Reviewing internal processes and systems to ensure efficiencies.

Under our CEO's leadership, we're already making progress. We'll focus on securing the future of key contracts, including the Bi-Borough Advocacy contract, where we have a rich history of delivery.

We are reviewing our governance and streamlining our IT systems to ensure we're operating efficiently and transparently. We will continue our Trustee recruitment, including introducing 'lived experience' Trustees, broadening the experience from 'service user' Trustees specifically. We're committed to strengthening partnerships and networks across the sector, building effective relationships with commissioners and other advocacy partners and recognising that collaboration is key to sustainability and systemic change.

Staff and service user involvement continues to be central. Our service user council, now six members strong, have had training in safeguarding and recruitment and will be supported this year to act as 'critical friends' to our tender work. Their insights - along with input from staff across the organisation - will be integral to how our strategy takes shape in practice.

We remain alert to wider policy and funding developments, including the government's plans to reform the Mental Health Act. We're keen to understand the role that Advocacy should and must play in assisted dying, and how we can be part of that emerging area. The pressures facing health, social care, and the voluntary sector are significant, but we are confident that by staying grounded in our values, clear on our priorities, and open to partnership, we can rise to the challenge.

In 2025/26, our income generation will focus on securing our current contracts and maximising opportunities within existing service areas. We will also build strong cases for support for non-statutory Advocacy across London, with a clear strategy, committed leadership, and a powerful community of staff, volunteers and service users behind us, The Advocacy Project is well placed to shape a future where every voice counts.

3. Strategic report

3.1. Financial overview

The voluntary and charitable sectors have faced considerable challenges in securing new income, especially with rising living costs. However, through introducing and refining internal processes (such as extending contract terms, upgrading recruitment methods, utilising in-house meeting spaces, and improving digital infrastructure), we have achieved notable cost savings and delivered a surplus of £328k in 2024/25.

Despite fluctuations in our contract portfolio, we enter the next financial year with strengthened financial reserves. The dedication and hard work of our staff, supported by senior management, continue to ensure the delivery of high-quality services to the individuals we support.

For the 2024/25 financial year:

- Turnover was £2.923m, an increase of £487k from £2.436m in 2023/24.
- Expenditure increased to £2.595m, a £322k increase from £2.273m in 2023/24.
- Funding highlights include an additional £18k for Cancer Awareness, £15k for the NL Engagement Team, £36k in spot-purchase income, and new "Easy Read" initiatives.
- The current contract with Bi Borough has been extended to February 2026 (new tender submitted in January 2025 but the outcome is pending).
- Additional funding received for Ealing Advocacy of £44k.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

3. Strategic report (continued)

- We have secured Children's CYP advocacy contract until October 2025 and Camden Alliance contract until 2027.

To enhance financial governance, we appointed a new Treasurer Trustee and continue investing in organisational development.

In response to cost-of-living pressures, we are undertaking a review to implement a structured salary band system for 2025/26, aimed at ensuring fair, transparent, market-aligned compensation for all our employees.

We also upgraded our technology systems - migrating to Office365 to reduce IT overheads, support cloud backup and disaster recovery, and enhance service delivery. Additionally, we updated our website and invested in key assets, while reducing recruitment and meeting costs via internal resource utilisation.

The Trustees are confident that our strengthened reserves, robust cost-management practices and strategic investments (including leadership, digital infrastructure, and staff development) position the organisation well for sustained financial health and service excellence.

3.2. Income generation

Throughout 2024-25, we maintained a strong focus on strategic growth, enhancing our partnerships, securing additional funding, and strengthening our offer ahead of major contract retenders. This included investment in bid readiness, expanding our voluntary sector engagement, and building new income streams.

Contracts and Bidding

We submitted several large bids this year, most significantly preparing extensively for the Bi-borough advocacy retender, originally anticipated for September 2024 but then delayed with contract extension to February 2026. We gathered service user feedback, developed new case studies, and partnered with Advocacy for All to strengthen our bid. The bid was submitted in January, and we're still waiting for the result. While this contract is significant, we have plans to mitigate risk if not successful.

We bid for the PHB iNEL, Merton, Ealing and Croydon Advocacy contracts. Although we didn't win them, we gained valuable insights and scored highly in our responses.

We won the Children's CYP PHB contract (£30,000) and signed an MOU with all CAHMS teams across CNWL, allowing us to deliver ad hoc CYP advocacy across the ICB, positioning us well for future opportunities. We also submitted and won the Camden Alliance bid in Q3.

We submitted a bid for Hillingdon Healthwatch due to the strategic location of the contract in CNWL. We've been working with the Learning Disability team across CNWL, who have commissioned digital inclusion, easy read and health inequality focused work, and we successfully completed the cancer screening project. We're now looking at continued funding to expand into sexual health and menopause awareness for people with learning disabilities.

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3. Strategic report (continued)

Trusts, Foundations, and Corporate Support

We've made significant progress building a pipeline of funding to support non-statutory work, including applications to:

- City Bridge Trust – £150,000 (non-statutory advocacy)
- Garfield Weston – £30,000 (core funding)
- Earl's Court Fund – £15,000 (digital inclusion)
- Clothworkers Foundation – £25,000 (website redevelopment)
- The Masons, Mercers, Legal & General, National Lottery Community Fund – in progress

While we were unsuccessful with City Bridge and Masons, we reached second-stage assessment, indicating that our case for support is strong in a highly competitive funding environment.

We also fundraised to support a new website redevelopment project and expand our health inequalities work, including sexual health, menopause, and diabetes information for people with learning disabilities.

We've been working on a joint bid with Advocacy for All to the National Lottery to fund community-based advocacy with people with learning disabilities. We also developed the older people's community advocacy project, aimed at improving dementia care planning, and submitted a funding proposal.

Volunteering and Social Value

A new advocacy volunteer model has been embedded, with 4 active volunteers supporting RPR referrals. We created a Volunteer Handbook, updated website content, and produced new volunteer recruitment materials. The next phase will focus on recruiting people with lived experience and supporting them into volunteer - and potentially paid - roles, with corporate sponsorship for training (e.g., IAQ).

Volunteering with Healthwatch continues to be very successful with 45 volunteers actively volunteering.

We now have a carbon measurement in place, strengthening our environmental social value offer. Additionally, we've created an Easy Read pipeline and pricing model, increased rates to £40/hour, and developed promotional materials to boost visibility and income generation.

We expanded our community-based project proposals, submitting new applications to trusts and foundations to diversify funding and build sustainability. 2024-25 has been a year of consolidation and preparation, with progress across bids, partnerships, and income generation.

We've used learning from unsuccessful tenders to improve future submissions, deepened voluntary sector collaboration and attracted new funding to support health equity and inclusion.

We're now well-positioned for major opportunities in 2025-26, with a strong foundation for growth from a variety of income sources - including our new focus on paid-for services.

3.3. Structure

The Advocacy Project is a Charity, and a company limited by guarantee. Our objects enable us to have a governance structure with a board of Trustees and a user council. We are a unitary board with four board committees – Finance, Risk & Audit; HR, Remuneration & Policy; Business Development and Fundraising; and Information, Communications and social media. In line with our values (and with permission from the Charity Commission), we pay Service User Trustees a London Living Wage for their time as Trustees. The board delegates day-to-day management to the CEO who works with and through the senior leadership team.

**THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

3. Strategic report (continued)

3.4. Governance

Save for those members of the Board elected by the User Councils, members of the Board are elected by the Members at the AGM for two years, or three years in the case of the Chair of the Board, and retire at the end of their term. Members of the Board elected at the AGM following the adoption of these Articles may be elected for one or two years (as the Board may determine). Any member of the Board who is willing to act may be appointed for further terms of office, but no member of the Board may serve for more than eight years consecutively.

During this year we have taken steps to further progress our governance. We successfully recruited 5 new Trustees one of whom is also the Treasurer. They bring with them a wealth of diverse experience and skills. As we enter 2025/26, we are actively recruiting a Trustee with a legal or HR background to further strengthen our governance. Having a diverse board of Trustees that reflect the people we support is of great importance to the Charity, as it demonstrates our values in practice. We have widened our approach to capturing service user voice at a strategic level by expanding the role of Service User Trustee to Lived Experience Trustee, enabling us to recruit from a wider pool. We are actively recruiting for two positions.

We established a new committee (Information, Communications and Social Media Committee) and re-established our Business Development Committee under the leadership of a new chair. We developed a new role (Lead Trustee for Safeguarding) and a Safeguarding Working Group to reinforce our commitment to safeguarding.

We were delighted to appoint Roger Skipp to the role of Deputy Chair in December 2024.

In the current year, we plan to review our Articles of Association and Governance Handbook to ensure they are still relevant and appropriate.

The Annual General Meeting for 2024 was held on 21 November 2024. We also had an away day on 15 November 2024 with external facilitation when the Trustees and SLT worked to develop our new 5-year strategy.

3.5. Management

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic direction and accountability structures of the Charity with delegation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the implementation of the goals and strategic objectives to the Chief Executive Officer. The CEO is accountable to the Chair and responsible for the Senior Leadership team (Head of Finance and IT, Head of Fundraising and Business development and Head of Services.)

3.6. Reserves policy

As part of our financial strategy, our policy remains to maintain unrestricted funds equivalent to three to six months' expenditure. The Trustees are confident that maintaining reserves at this level will allow us to continue operations in the event of a significant drop in funding, providing time to explore alternative income streams.

3.7. Investment policy

The Trustees take a prudent view to the investment of surplus funds as these are being retained as reserves to allow the Charity to continue in operations in the event of an unexpected reduction in income. Accordingly, the surplus funds are placed on deposit with UK financial institutions.

**THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the Charity for the purposes 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. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and 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 persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

Auditor

The auditor, Cooper Parry Group Limited, has indicated his willingness to continue in office and their reappointment will be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Signed by:

22B68A7287G041A.....
D Olajide (Chair)

Date: 1 October 2025

**THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)**

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ADVOCACY PROJECT

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Advocacy Project (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of financial activities, the Balance sheet, the Statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council'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 charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ADVOCACY PROJECT (CONTINUED)

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.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Directors' Report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the charitable company's 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.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes 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 charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ADVOCACY PROJECT (CONTINUED)

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

Our assessment focused on key laws and regulations the charitable company has to comply with and areas of the financial statements we assessed as being more susceptible to misstatement. These key laws and regulations included but were not limited to compliance with the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, taxation legislation, data protection, anti bribery and employment legislation.

We are not responsible for preventing irregularities, including fraud. Our approach to detecting irregularities, including fraud, included, but was not limited to, the following:

- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the charitable company and how the charitable company is complying with that framework, including agreement of financial statement disclosures to underlying documentation and other evidence;
- obtaining an understanding of the charitable company's control environment and how the charitable company has applied relevant control procedures, through discussions with Trustees and other management and by performing walkthrough testing over key areas;
- obtaining an understanding of the charitable company's risk assessment process, including the risk of fraud;
- reviewing meeting minutes of those charged with governance throughout the year; and
- performing audit testing to address the risk of management override of controls, including testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias.

Whilst considering how our audit work addressed the detection of irregularities, we also considered the likelihood of detection of fraud based on our approach. Irregularities arising from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than those arising from error.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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

**THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)**

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ADVOCACY PROJECT (CONTINUED)

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's Trustees, 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 Trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Signed by:

Glen Bott

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Glen Bott (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Cooper Parry Group Limited
Sky View
Argosy Road
East Midlands Airport
Castle Donington
Derby
DE74 2SA

Date: 11 November 2025

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	Restricted funds 2025	Unrestricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
		£	£	£	£
Income from:					
Charitable activities	2	1,301,486	1,549,941	2,851,427	2,378,048
Investments	3	-	15,638	15,638	33,040
Other income	4	-	56,648	56,648	25,443
Total income		1,301,486	1,622,227	2,923,713	2,436,531
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	5				
Support costs		227,527	301,503	529,030	628,987
Governance costs		9,865	12,296	22,161	20,306
Staff costs		192,563	847,530	1,040,093	1,158,354
Direct expenditure		889,970	110,568	1,000,538	454,626
Depreciation		-	3,269	3,269	10,405
Total expenditure		1,319,925	1,275,166	2,595,091	2,272,678
Net movement in funds		(18,439)	347,061	328,622	163,853
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		86,181	586,933	673,114	509,261
Net movement in funds		(18,439)	347,061	328,622	163,853
Total funds carried forward		67,742	933,994	1,001,736	673,114

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 04018315

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible assets	10	720	1,440
Tangible assets	11	15,501	3,554
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due after more than one year	12	950	1,317
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	12	32,981	100,987
Cash at bank and in hand		1,404,284	1,961,148
		<hr/> 1,438,215	<hr/> 2,063,452
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(452,700)	(1,395,332)
Net current assets		<hr/> 985,515	<hr/> 668,120
Total net assets		<hr/> 1,001,736	<hr/> 673,114
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	17	67,742	86,181
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	17	933,994	586,933
Total unrestricted funds	17	<hr/> 933,994	<hr/> 586,933
Total funds		<hr/> 1,001,736	<hr/> 673,114

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

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Signed by:

 D Olajide
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D Olajide (Chair)

Date: 1 October 2025

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash used in operating activities	14	(558,006)	(120,256)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of intangible assets		-	(2,160)
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(14,496)	(2,214)
Interest received		15,638	33,040
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by investing activities		1,142	28,666
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(556,864)	(91,590)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,961,148	2,052,738
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	15	1,404,284	1,961,148

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - 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 Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

1.2 Going concern

These financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, as the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company will continue for the foreseeable future. The Trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment.

1.3 Income

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

1.4 Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, 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 accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the Charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

1.5 Alloaction and apportionment of costs

Staff and support costs are allocated to the particular activity where the costs relate to that activity.

1.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

1.7 Intangible assets

Intangible assets comprise primarily of computer software and internal database systems. Such assets are defined as having useful lives and the costs are amortised on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives of 5 years. Intangible assets are stated at cost less amortisation and are reviewed for impairment whenever there is an indication that the carrying value may be impaired.

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.8 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Fixtures and fittings	-	33% on cost
-----------------------	---	-------------

1.9 Taxation

The Charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities. It benefits from the exemptions available to charities under Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that income and gains are applied to charitable purposes.

1.10 Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objectives of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

1.11 Financial instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised in the balance sheet when the company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Trade and other debtors and creditors are classified as basic financial instruments and measured at initial recognition at transaction price. Debtors and creditors are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. A provision is established when there is objective evidence that the company will not be able to collect all amounts due.

Cash and cash equivalents are classified as basic financial instruments and comprise cash in hand and at bank.

1.12 Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to profit or loss on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

1.13 Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the company's pension scheme are charged to profit or loss in the period to which they relate.

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.14 Cash and cash equivalents

These comprise cash at bank and other short-term highly liquid bank deposits with an original maturity of three months or less.

1.15 Debtors

Debtors do not carry any interest and are stated at their nominal value. Appropriate allowances for estimated irrecoverable amounts are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when there is objective evidence that the asset is impaired.

1.16 Trade Creditors

Trade creditors are not interest bearing and are stated at their nominal value.

1.17 Significant judgements and estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting practice requires management to make estimates and judgement that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities as well as the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period.

There is estimation uncertainty in calculating accruals, accrued income and deferred income and a review of these accounts are carried regularly. Whilst every attempt is made to ensure that the calculations are as accurate as possible, there remain a risk that not all expenses and income have been considered.

The key point of estimation for accrued and deferred income relates to the point in time in which work has been completed to the standard of acceptance by the donor within restricted income.

2. Charitable activities

	Restricted funds 2025	Unrestricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025
	£	£	£
Contracts and grants	1,301,486	1,549,941	2,851,427

	Restricted funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024
	£	£	£
Contracts and grants	757,286	1,620,762	2,378,048

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £
Interest receivable	15,638	15,638

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Interest receivable	33,040	33,040

4. Other incoming resources

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £
Spot Purchase activity	37,874	37,874
Easy Read	12,521	12,521
Various	6,253	6,253
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	56,648	56,648
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Easy Read	-	2,103	2,103
Various	2,428	20,912	23,340
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
	2,428	23,015	25,443
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

5. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £
Support costs	-	139,071	139,071
Direct expenditure	1,000,460	1,040,171	2,040,631
Depreciation	-	3,269	3,269
Governance costs	-	22,161	22,161
Staff cost	319,465	-	319,465
Management Cost	-	70,494	70,494
	<hr style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; border-left: none; border-right: none; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> 1,319,925	<hr style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; border-left: none; border-right: none; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> 1,275,166	<hr style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; border-left: none; border-right: none; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> 2,595,091

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Support costs	-	137,151	137,151
Direct expenditure	571,564	1,051,821	1,623,385
Depreciation	-	10,405	10,405
Governance costs	-	20,306	20,306
Staff cost	344,007	-	344,007
Management Cost	-	137,424	137,424
	<hr style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; border-left: none; border-right: none; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> 915,571	<hr style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; border-left: none; border-right: none; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> 1,357,107	<hr style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; border-left: none; border-right: none; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> 2,272,678

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

6. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2025	Support costs 2025	Total funds 2025
	£	£	£
Staff cost	-	319,465	319,465
Office cost	-	139,071	139,071
Management cost	-	70,494	70,494
Direct expenditure	2,040,631	-	2,040,631
Depreciation	-	3,269	3,269
Governance costs	-	22,161	22,161
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	2,040,631	554,460	2,595,091
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

	Activities undertaken directly 2024	Support costs 2024	Total funds 2024
	£	£	£
Staff cost	-	344,007	344,007
Office cost	-	137,151	137,151
Management cost	-	137,424	137,424
Direct expenditure	1,623,385	-	1,623,385
Depreciation	-	10,405	10,405
Governance costs	-	20,306	20,306
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	1,623,385	649,293	2,272,678
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

7. Auditor's remuneration

	2025	2024
	£	£
Fees payable to the Charity's auditor for the audit of the Charity's annual accounts	19,200	18,040
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

8. Staff costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	907,499	960,513
Social security costs	81,569	123,262
Pension costs	51,025	74,579
	<hr/> 1,040,093	<hr/> 1,158,354
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The average number of persons employed by the Charity during the year was as follows:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Employed staff	43	49
Sessional	13	13
	<hr/> 56	<hr/> 62
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	1	-

9. Trustees' remuneration, benefits and expenses

The Trustees were not paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from employment (2024: Nil) or expenses, except for one Trustee (2024: two Trustees), who has been reimbursed expenses.

No Trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £26,013).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the CEO, Head of Finance, Head of Business Development, Head of Services. The total employee remunerations of key management personnel of the charity were £258,133 (2024: £309,730).

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

10. Intangible assets

	Computer software £
Cost	
At 1 April 2024	24,869
At 31 March 2025	24,869
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2024	23,429
Charge for the year	720
At 31 March 2025	24,149
Net book value	
At 31 March 2025	720
At 31 March 2024	1,440

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £
Cost or valuation	
At 1 April 2024	92,864
Additions	14,496
At 31 March 2025	107,360
Depreciation	
At 1 April 2024	89,310
Charge for the year	2,549
At 31 March 2025	91,859

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

11. Tangible fixed assets (continued)

	Fixtures and fittings £
Net book value	
At 31 March 2025	15,501
	<hr/>
At 31 March 2024	3,554
	<hr/>

12. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Due after more than one year		
Other debtors	950	1,317
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	10,992	67,694
Other debtors	400	403
Prepayments and accrued income	21,589	32,890
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	32,981	100,987
	<hr/>	<hr/>

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	35,365	84,149
Other taxation and social security	28,229	31,328
Other creditors	23,498	13,811
Accruals	88,306	107,472
Deferred income	277,302	1,158,572
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	452,700	1,395,332
	<hr/>	<hr/>

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year (continued)

	2025 £	2024 £
Deferred income at 1 April 2024	1,158,572	1,560,937
Resources deferred during the year	1,353,148	1,076,685
Amounts released from previous periods	(2,234,418)	(1,479,050)
	<hr/> 277,302	<hr/> 1,158,572
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Deferred income represents income received in advance of the relevant services being performed.

14. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	328,622	163,853
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	3,270	10,405
Decrease in debtors	68,373	183,343
Decrease in creditors	(942,632)	(444,817)
Interest received	(15,638)	(33,040)
Net cash used in operating activities	<hr/> (558,005)	<hr/> (120,256)
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

15. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	1,404,284	1,961,148
Total cash and cash equivalents	<hr/> 1,404,284	<hr/> 1,961,148
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

16. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2024	Cash flows	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	1,961,148	(556,864)	1,404,284
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,961,148	(556,864)	1,404,284
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

17. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds				
Reserves	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	586,933	1,622,227	(1,275,166)	933,994
Restricted funds				
WJC LD Our Choice	11,311	42,288	(52,834)	765
WJC LD Advocacy	10,150	82,326	(81,165)	11,311
Big Voice	462	48,517	(48,637)	342
Speak Up Speak Out	2,727	12,875	(14,761)	841
WJ OA Advocacy	57,428	196,759	(200,095)	54,092
WJ OA UI	4,103	36,051	(39,763)	391
City & Hackney PHB	-	239,895	(239,895)	-
Newham PHB	-	327,000	(327,000)	-
Tower Hamlet PHB	-	305,000	(305,000)	-
Tower Hamlet CYP PHB	-	10,775	(10,775)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	86,181	1,301,486	(1,319,925)	67,742
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total of funds	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	673,114	2,923,713	(2,595,091)	1,001,736
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

17. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Designated Funds - all funds	2,271	-	(2,991)	720	-
General funds					
Reserves	417,784	1,676,817	(1,506,860)	(808)	586,933
Total Unrestricted funds	420,055	1,676,817	(1,509,851)	(88)	586,933
 Restricted funds					
WJC LD Our Choice	6,055	41,663	(36,407)	-	11,311
WJC LD Advocacy	18,795	79,928	(88,573)	-	10,150
Big Voice	-	47,711	(47,249)	-	462
Speak Up Speak Out	-	13,107	(10,380)	-	2,727
WJ OA Advocacy	61,742	191,028	(195,342)	-	57,428
WJ OA UI	114	35,607	(31,618)	-	4,103
City & Hackney PHB	-	250,670	(250,670)	-	-
Newham PHB	-	33,000	(33,000)	-	-
Tower Hamlet PHB	-	55,000	(55,000)	-	-
Tower Hamlet CYP PHB	2,500	12,000	(14,500)	-	-
Speak Up Radio	-	-	(88)	88	-
	89,206	759,714	(762,827)	88	86,181
Total of funds	509,261	2,436,531	(2,272,678)	-	673,114

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

18. Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2025 the Charity had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Not later than 1 year	10,345	2,700
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	20,998	3,492
	<hr/> 31,343	<hr/> 6,192
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

19. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	15,501	15,501
Intangible fixed assets	-	720	720
Debtors due after more than one year	-	950	950
Current assets	67,742	1,369,523	1,437,265
Creditors due within one year	-	(452,700)	(452,700)
Total	<hr/> 67,742	<hr/> 933,994	<hr/> 1,001,736
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	3,554	3,554
Intangible fixed assets	-	1,440	1,440
Debtors due after more than one year	-	1,317	1,317
Current assets	86,181	1,975,954	2,062,135
Creditors due within one year	-	(1,395,332)	(1,395,332)
Total	<hr/> 86,181	<hr/> 586,933	<hr/> 673,114
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
(A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

20. Employee benefit obligations

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The charge to income and expenditure account in respect of defined contribution scheme was £51,025 (2024: £74,579).

21. Related party disclosures

Except for the transactions referred to in Note 9 to the accounts, there were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025 or 31 March 2024.

22. Company limited by guarantee

The company is a private company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have share capital. The members of the Company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited up to £1 per member of the company. The Company was incorporated in England and Wales and information relating to the registered office can be found on page 1.