The Advocacy Project

2025 - 2026

ANNUAL REPORT

Annual Report of the Trustees and Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2026

Your voice.
Your choice.
Your rights.

Everyone has the right to be heard. We stand by your side when it matters most.





Helping people have a voice for over 25 years - standing by your side when it matters most.

The Advocacy Project

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

Trustees
Dr Dele Olajide (Chair)
Roger Skipp (Vice Chair)
Pankaj Shah (Treasurer)
Jayesh Patel
Rachel Russell
Rachel Hutchings
Deborah Finding (Appointed 2 October 2025)
Vivienne Modebe (Appointed 8 September 2026)
Helen Richardson (Resigned 8 May 2025)
Adam Antonio (Resigned 6 June 2025)
Hasib Dewan (Resigned 8 July 2026)

Company registered number
04018315

Charity registered number
1084106

Registered office
The Stowe Centre
258 Harrow Road
London
W2 5ES

Company secretary
Katherine Shaw

Independent auditor
Goldwins Limited
Chartered Accountants
75 Maygrove Road
West Hampstead
London
NW6 2EG

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the Charity for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. 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 FRS 102 (effective January 2019).

"The Advocacy Project has close-knit and very supportive teams, willing to continue to learn from best practice and to help each other with the day-to-day business of providing good services to the people they serve." QPM Award.

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.

"It is evident that the principles of empowerment and being person led are at the heart of The Advocacy Project's Advocacy Services." QPM Award.



1. OUR VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our vision is a world in which every person has a voice - including those who are marginalised or vulnerable because of their circumstances.

The Advocacy Project supports people to speak up and to make their own choices about their lives.

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.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm they have complied with their duty under the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. Our objectives are for the public benefit and promote the relief of all persons in need (whether by reason of their learning disability, mental health, age, youth, physical disability, visual or sensory impairment or other disadvantage) and/or build the capacity of such communities. In planning and delivering the Charity's activities throughout the year, the Trustees have considered how these contribute to the public benefit.

2. WHO WE ARE

2.1 How we work

For more than 25 years, The Advocacy Project has been championing people's right to have a voice, make informed choices, and shape the way they live their lives. We work alongside people who are often excluded or marginalised, helping to break down barriers and make sure everyone is heard and respected.

We're a team of passionate advocates, connectors, and changemakers – united by a belief in equality, inclusion, and human rights. Our strength lies not just in our expertise, but in the diversity of the people who make up our organisation. 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 always 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 strong, well-managed, and forward-thinking organisation – one that never stands still. Together, we're building a future where everyone has the opportunity, confidence, and support to speak up and shape the decisions that affect their lives.

2.2 Our values

Earlier this year, we launched a refreshed set of organisational values that reflect the culture, behaviours and standards that matter most to us. Developed with colleagues, these values are a foundation for how we work together and deliver high-quality services. They will play an important role in strengthening our reputation, attracting and retaining talented staff, and continuing to build a positive and inclusive place to work.

Our Values

WE ARE KIND

We treat people with respect and kindness and appreciate the unique experiences and viewpoints they bring. By creating an organisation where people listen to and value each other, we are building a community where everyone feels included, welcome and heard. We try to understand how others feel and respond with kindness and care



WE ARE HONEST



We always try to do the right thing. That means being honest, fair and open in everything we do. We empower people to make their own decisions: they can trust and count on us.

WE BELIEVE

We have strength, determination and passion. We're committed to delivering high quality support and information that makes a difference. We believe in our mission, the people we support, the power of advocacy, user involvement and co-production, and in each other.



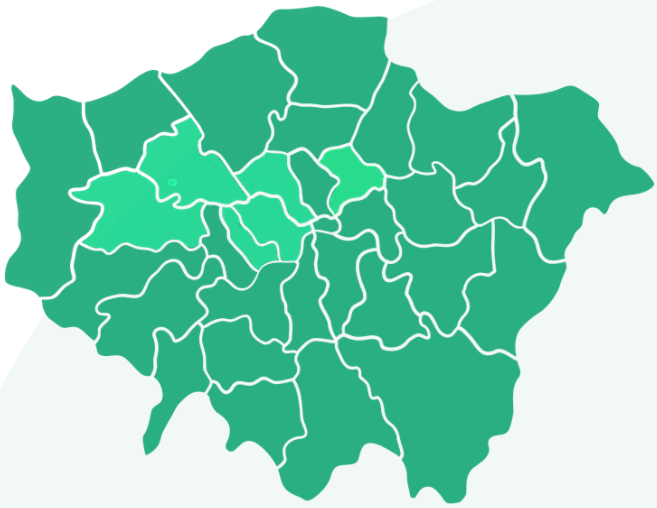
WE ARE STRONG



We're problem solvers who stay positive and flexible. We're committed to giving the best support we can, breaking down barriers and pushing through challenges. We work with energy, creativity and joy to help The Advocacy Project thrive.

2.3 Where we work and who with

Our current commissioned services cover the London Boroughs of Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, Ealing, Camden, City & Hackney, and Brent. Our spot purchase and paid for advocacy is available anywhere in England. Our work supports people from marginalised communities and those with learning disabilities, neurodiversity, mental health conditions, older age, or reduced capacity.



3. OUR IMPACT



37,000

People who engaged with us or requested information



1,200

People received free advocacy



76

Easy Read documents commissioned externally



600

People taking part in user involvement

4. MESSAGE FROM DELE OLAJIDE, OUR CHAIR OF TRUSTEES



I am pleased to present this year's annual report and to reflect on the progress The Advocacy Project has made in a period of significant change across health and social care. The environment we operate in continues to be shaped by system reform, financial constraint and increasing demand. Against that backdrop, our mission championing people's rights and ensuring their voices are heard, has never been more important.

Throughout 2025/26, the Board remained focused on assurance and risk. We updated and future proofed our Articles and welcomed a new Trustee with HR expertise.

Proposed changes to Healthwatch, the pending bi borough outcome and wider shifts across health and social care have increased uncertainty for the charity. As a result, financial resilience and sustainability have been central to our oversight. We prioritised scenario planning and careful resource management, while continuing to invest in the capabilities we need for the future. Trustees remain committed to helping the organisation navigate this transition with integrity, and to protecting the independence and impact that our communities rely on.

This has been the first full year of delivering our strategy, and the Board has been encouraged by the pace of progress. Refreshing and embedding organisational values, introducing clearer and more equitable pay structures, focusing on income diversification and improving our digital presence all contribute to a stronger platform for growth and impact. The Trustees have benefited from coming together with the Senior Leadership Team and managers to explore new income generation opportunities and develop our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion plans. We look forward to continuing to work with the Chief Executive Officer and management team to focus on the strategic priorities that matter most: diversifying income, strengthening partnerships, widening reach to underserved communities, and building a sustainable operating model.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our staff, volunteers and partners for their commitment and professionalism, and our commissioners and supporters for the trust they place in us. We enter 2026/27 with challenges ahead, but also with confidence in our purpose and our people. The Board remains ambitious for The Advocacy Project's future and resolute in our commitment to ensuring that those who are most often unheard have an active voice in the decisions that matter to them.

5. MESSAGE FROM KATHERINE SHAW, OUR CEO



As I look back on 2025/26, I am filled with optimism for The Advocacy Project. Despite a year that has not been without its challenges, across the charity I find everyone has such passion and commitment for the work we do. I am immensely proud of the difference our teams make by enabling the most unheard to have a voice. Independent Advocates meet with people when they are often facing the biggest challenge in their lives, and our work on the West London Forensic Service is a great example of this. Our advocates work across 20 wards, enabling patients to have their views heard and giving them greater involvement in decisions affecting their care and treatment. It is often difficult to gather feedback from forensic patients given their circumstances, so it is wonderful when we hear from a family member about the difference we make in such difficult situation:

'What a breath of fresh air is it when dealing with Nia.*

I got in touch with the advocacy team regarding issues we were having. Issues such as not being able to visit [my father] in seclusion and even speaking to him on the phone was forbidden. He was 78, so to not be able to talk to him for ages was quite distressing. So for her to help this restriction be lifted, getting me to see him in seclusion seemed like a real victory....Nia has fantastic people skills. You really have to earn my father's trust. Things have definitely got better because of Nia's support and I truly believe he has a better quality of life with her on his side.

It is so refreshing to speak to Nia, her passion for the role really shines through. She helps immensely with the relationship between myself and my father.

I have ranted and she has listened, always remaining professional. She has done so much to support my father.

Thank you Nia. Never let anyone dull that sparkle!'

Extract from feedback given directly by the daughter of a patient on a ward
*Names have been changed for anonymity

Our user Involvement projects show that if you bring the voice of those often excluded to decision makers, it makes a huge difference. Nowhere is this more apparent than our work with the North West London Integrated Care board (ICB) on their Co-design Advisory board. As Rory Haggarty, ICB Executive Director of Communications & Engagement, shared:

"working with the Advocacy Project and others have taught us such a lot about the lives and needs of the people we are there to serve. There is a long way to go in community engagement, but it's so important the NHS really understands and responds to the many communities it serves."

We've achieved so much this year, in a challenging external environment. It's been a year of change and uncertainty in the NHS, both nationally and locally. Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) have been tasked with 50% reductions and restructure, which led to a merger between North West and West London ICBs. For us, this meant a loss of many key contacts and champions of our work. As the new structure begins to take shape, I'm looking forward to introducing the work of The Advocacy project to the new teams.

In June, we also received the news that Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch are to be abolished, as part of a 10-year plan and forthcoming NHS Bill. While we'd been anticipating changes to how Healthwatch is delivered, the decision to abolish the programme entirely came as a shock to us and many others. Details of the national plan have been slow to emerge, but we currently expect 2026/27 to be the final year of Healthwatch. While there's widespread concern across the sector about the loss of an independent voice for residents and patients, this also presents an opportunity to help shape what comes next. We've made sure our voice is heard, raising constructive challenges and contributing to solutions and, as CEO, I've begun early discussions with peer CEOs on a joint approach to gathering and amplifying residents' voices to support ICBs and local authorities. Despite these challenges, Healthwatch received over 3,500 responses to surveys during the year and the Healthwatch advice and information service was accessed over 34,000 times.

We're also awaiting the outcome of our Bi-borough Advocacy contract retender, submitted in January 2025. This contract represents a significant proportion of our income and delivery, supporting over 800 people each year, so the result will have a considerable impact. This prolonged uncertainty has been extremely challenging for staff across all our contracts, and we're keen to receive the outcome so we can plan accordingly. I would like to thank staff for their professionalism, passion and commitment; I'm proud to say there has been no impact on the quality of our work or service delivery.

In other areas, we have welcomed positive news: we were recommissioned by Ealing Council to provide Care Act and IMCA advocacy; our West London forensic contract was re-awarded for 2 years; and we received confirmation that our Camden 'Expert by Experience' contract will be extended for a further six months.

This year also saw the end of a successful Children and Young People's Personal Health Budget pilot, which had been running in Tower Hamlets since December 2021. Over the course of the programme, we supported 125 young people under the age of 18 to access funding to support their wellbeing. We are proud to have delivered this initiative and the positive outcomes it achieved.

In the first full year of our strategy, we made strong progress in strengthening our brand, improving our offer to staff, and diversifying income. Early in the year, we came together to review and refresh our values, which are now central to everything we do. We also delivered on our commitment to benchmark salaries and introduce transparent and equitable pay bands.

We're delighted with our new website, which better reflects who we are and provides a more flexible and accessible platform. Its launch has supported the development and promotion of our paid-for advocacy services (including spot-purchase), moving us closer to our goal of a sustainable business model. We were also able to hold two really exciting events this year. Firstly, our 25th birthday celebration which showcased the work of our user reps and, later in the year, a book talk with Stephen Unwin, author of Beautiful Lives: How We Got Learning Disabilities So Wrong. We're looking forward to holding more events this year, including piloting lunchtime lecture series.

As we move into our 26th year, our purpose remains clear: to ensure that people whose voices are too often unheard are listened to, respected and able to influence the decisions that affect their lives. To support us to further strengthen our work and deliver on our 5-year strategy, we have ambitious plans to: launch a new outcomes framework; review our client management system to ensure we have the best solution for staff and service users; develop our spot purchase offer to reach more people in need; and build a bigger pipeline of trust and foundation opportunities.

I'm grateful to all our staff, trustees, volunteers, partners and commissioners for their continued support. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Freya Marshall, our Head of Business Development and Fundraising, who leaves us in June, for her valuable contribution over the past three years. I am confident that, whatever changes come next, The Advocacy Project will continue to play a vital role in raising and championing the voice of our communities.

"There is a very strong spirit of empowerment and enablement throughout the team at The Advocacy Project, promoting individualised and rights-based approaches."

QPM Award Report





“What grounds them is user need...it is their core. They are challenging and raising issues, and they have a clear image of what might need development which is really helpful. They are delivering on the ground what is needed.”

External stakeholder, QPM Report

6. SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

Through our Advocacy and User involvement projects we are proud to work alongside individuals, and groups whose voices are too often unheard. Many people are unable to understand or exercise their rights and may struggle to have their wishes respected or their voices heard. This can arise because of individual circumstances for example, where someone is assessed as lacking capacity or is experiencing a mental health crisis or because of wider systemic issues such as health inequalities, discrimination and poor service design.

Through our work, we aim to make a meaningful difference in people's lives by:

- providing one-to-one and group advocacy support
- working with and educating professionals
- creating accessible resources
- facilitating the co-design of services
- enabling people to participate in decision-making
- providing information and raising awareness

The impact of this support varies from person to person, but common outcomes include greater choice and opportunity, increased involvement in local communities, and stronger voice, control and influence over the services they use. People also tell us they feel more independent, informed and confident, and that they have a better understanding of their rights.



"At The Advocacy Project, we don't believe that face-to-face is optional. We believe that it's at the core of what we do."

Member of our Service User Council

6.1 ADVOCACY

Independent Mental Health Act Advocacy (IMHA)
Supports people who are detained under the Mental Health Act, on certain community treatment orders, or subject to specific mental health powers. An IMHA advocate supports individuals to understand their rights, express their views, and participate in decisions about their care and treatment.

We provide IMHA advocacy across Westminster, RBKC, Ealing, and the Bi-borough. In the Bi-borough, advocates visit all hospitals and units where patients are detained under the Mental Health Act 1983, while the forensic advocacy team is based at Ealing Hospital and maintains a regular presence across 20 wards. The service also supports community patients subject to a Community Treatment Order (CTO).

A key area of development this year has been the continued focus on self-advocacy and empowerment. Through regular ward presence, community contact, informal drop-ins, and rights-based discussions, advocates have supported individuals to better understand their rights and build the confidence to raise concerns independently where appropriate. This has strengthened autonomy, promoted recovery-focused practice, and reduced reliance on advocacy for lower-level issues while ensuring support remains available when needed.

Throughout the year, our advocates supported service users with a broad range of issues, with IMHA advocacy continuing to have a significant impact across the service by enabling individuals to have greater involvement in decisions affecting their care and treatment, ensuring their views were heard and considered. Support included:

Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) support
Assisting service users to prepare tribunal statements, clearly communicate their views, wishes, circumstances, and progress, and strengthen their ability to advocate for progression or discharge

Care and treatment issues
Supporting discussions around medication, care planning, leave, discharge pathways, and treatment decisions, helping to improve communication between service users and professionals and promote more transparent decision-making

Leave and progression planning
Working closely with solicitors to support service users in identifying progression goals and planning for leave, discharge, and transition into the community.

Community advocacy support
Supporting individuals in the community who remain subject to CTOs or liable to recall, helping them understand their rights, challenge conditions, and raise concerns relating to aftercare and treatment. This addressed an important gap in provision by ensuring continued access to independent advocacy during transition from inpatient care and while navigating ongoing legal restrictions and conditions.

Complaints and concerns
Supporting service users to raise formal and informal complaints, including concerns about staff attitudes, ward culture, and restrictive practices

Rights under the Mental Health Act
Ensuring individuals understood their legal rights and the options available to them

Safeguarding issues
Supporting service users where there were concerns about safety, vulnerability, or welfare

Seclusion and restrictive practice reviews
Attending weekly Independent Long-Term Seclusion Reviews to ensure patient views remained central and restrictive interventions were reviewed appropriately

Independent Care Act Advocacy (ICAA)
For people who have difficulty understanding or taking part in social care assessments, planning, or reviews, and who have no one else to support them. A Care Act advocate helps them engage in the process and ensures their wishes are considered.

ICCA CASE STUDY: illustrates how independent, non-statutory advocacy can help an individual understand their situation and ensure their voice is clearly heard.

Mark, an autistic man in his 40s, was living in a short breaks service following discharge from hospital and was due to move into a permanent supported living placement. He had initially agreed to the move (and had been assessed as having capacity to decide) but after discussions with his family, who opposed the plan, he changed his mind. Mark's social worker was concerned that his decision may have been influenced by his family, and referred him for independent advocacy to support him to express his own views.

Our advocate John met with Mark, taking time to communicate in a way that suited him. John used clear language and visual aids, and built rapport through patient, focused conversation. John explained his independent role and supported Mark to explore his thoughts about the move and his family's concerns.

Through this process, Mark was able to reflect on his preferences and rights. He clearly expressed to John that he did want to move to the new placement, which he liked and recognised as a more suitable long-term home, but was worried about upsetting his family. John ensured that Mark understood his right to make his own decision, and accurately represented his views back to the social worker.

Following advocacy involvement, Mark's wishes were respected and he successfully moved into the new placement, where he settled well. The process enabled Mark to feel heard, strengthened his confidence in decision-making, and ensured professionals had a clear, unbiased understanding of his views. It also helped guide ongoing work with his family to maintain positive relationships, demonstrating the value of independent advocacy in promoting person-centred outcomes and informed, autonomous decision-making.

We provide Independent Care Act Advocacy (ICAA) in Ealing and The Bi borough, supporting individuals through assessments and reviews in their homes, care homes, and other community settings. This occasionally requires travel outside borough boundaries where individuals remain funded by the commissioning authority.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)
For people who lack capacity to make a specific decision about serious medical treatment or long-term accommodation, and who don't have family or friends to speak for them. An IMCA ensures the person's wishes, feelings, and rights are represented within best interest decision-making.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and RPR
For people who are subject to a DoLS authorisation in a hospital or care home, and their Relevant Person's Representatives. An advocate can help the person or their RPR understand their rights, stay involved in decisions, and challenge a DoLS authorisation if needed.

In Ealing, we additionally provide Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA) and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) advocacy services.

Across all our Advocacy services our teams work closely with professionals including:

- Safeguarding Managers
- Social workers
- Learning Disability teams
- Consultant Psychiatrists.
- Solicitors

These positive relationships ensure that we are able to identify and raise systemic issues with commissioners and partner agencies, often resulting in more referrals and therefore the right support delivered at the right time. Strong partnership working was particularly evident for our Bi-borough team during the cyber-attack affecting social workers; our advocates supported the continuation of referrals despite online Care Act systems being unavailable. Further examples of systemic issues identified and escalated during the year include:

1. In Bi-borough advocates raised with the Mental Health Law Team concerns regarding Consultant Psychiatrists withholding advocates' contact details from patients, with improvements now being seen.
2. Advocates asked why social workers were carrying out assessments before making referrals to advocacy. This was escalated to commissioners and has since reduced in frequency.
3. Advocates highlighted ongoing gaps in provision, including repeated referrals for advocacy support for students in colleges and universities, as well as requests for family advocacy services, both of which fall outside the current service remit.

Emerging trends identified:

1. Current trends show an increase in Care Act assessments for patients detained on psychiatric wards, alongside a rise in Mental Health Act referrals for patients detained within general hospitals across the BB.
2. A noticeable rise in Care Act referrals from social workers, which is believed to be linked to the continued advocacy awareness sessions delivered to social work teams across the London Borough of Ealing.
3. Advocates noticed an increase in referrals for patients in seclusion.
4. An increase in Care Act and non-statutory advocacy referrals, particularly within Bi-Borough and Ealing services. This reflects both growing complexity in people's situations and improved awareness from professionals around advocacy eligibility and referral pathways. There's also been more involvement in complex safeguarding and deprivation of liberty work, including self-neglect, hoarding and community-based cases.

Ealing advocacy team

During the last year, the Ealing Advocacy Team received 332 referrals (113 of which are still open this year), representing a significant increase compared to the previous year.

Increased funding from Ealing Council enabled the service to complete recruitment for additional posts. The team now consists of five advocacy staff members - three part-time and two full-time - supported by a part-time manager overseeing the service and referral allocations.

Despite staffing pressures for much of the year, the team avoided developing a waiting list and continued to manage caseloads effectively with support and guidance from the Head of Service.



"Stephanie is a highly commendable advocate. Proficient in ensuring best practice in her direct work and thus achieve positive outcomes. Has been of immense support with adult safeguarding cases and care act reviews. She has a thorough understanding of the Care Act 2014 and Safeguarding Adults Review. She is acutely aware that shortcomings in practice have an immediate and direct impact upon the adult at risk, she explains guidance and aspects of her role very clearly which can impact on direct practice.

Stephanie is truly an asset to the profession and is unequivocally deserving of recognition."

Social Worker

Bi-borough team

During the last year, the Bi-borough Advocacy Team received 788 referrals of which 85 were for Care Act advocacy, 632 for Mental Health Act advocacy and 71 non-statutory referrals. They also delivered Advocacy Awareness Training to external professionals, including 10 Consultant Psychiatrists and 60 Social Workers.

Staff were supported through regular team meetings where advocates share best practice and discuss concerns. Internal training included safeguarding and the Mental Capacity Act, while external training opportunities have covered topics such as cuckooing and whether coercion should end within mental health settings.

West London forensic advocacy service

We have continued to provide consistent, rights-based advocacy across the forensic service. Following the addition of two new wards, our coverage has expanded from 18 to 20 wards.

During the year, the service responded to 1,481 issues across all wards and community pathways, demonstrating sustained demand and continued trust in the advocacy service.

Referrals came directly from service users, ward staff, and through advocate-led identification of unmet need during regular visits. Professional referrals continued to demonstrate strong staff engagement and recognition of the value advocacy brings in supporting patient voice and rights.

The service remains an essential part of the forensic pathway, promoting patient voice, safeguarding rights, and supporting least restrictive, person-centred care across both inpatient and community settings.

Looking to the future

The Mental Health Act 2025 passed into law in December 2025 and will introduce significant changes, including statutory care and treatment plans, nominated person reforms, higher detention thresholds, and enhanced treatment safeguards. These reforms are expected to increase the volume, duration, and complexity of advocacy activity, resulting in additional demand for IMHA services.

We are working closely with commissioners to plan for this increased demand and who are planning on piloting an early adopter ‘opt-out’ model within the Bi-borough service. This opt-out model would mean we’re automatically notified about all detained patients, so advocacy can be proactively offered rather than relying on patients requesting support for themselves. We’re also forecasting increasing demand around community-based Mental Capacity Act advocacy work, including RPR, IMCA 39A and serious medical treatment cases, which reflects the growing complexity of advocacy work outside traditional inpatient settings.

“I have found it really helpful and very supportive, talking to me every day while they were helping me with the case. What makes it special they came to see me face to face, and ask me what I was worried about. They are independent, the advocacy project they are always on your side, asking you how do you feel.”

Service User, QPM Report

Spot Purchase advocacy (pilot review April 25 - March 26):
Our spot purchase services allows commissioners from any London borough to purchase advocacy support of a case by case basis. We have continued to develop the service over the year, recruiting three zero-hour advocates to deliver case work. All have received training and hold a case load, carrying out visits and writing reports. During the April 2025 - March 2026 pilot review period, we supported 32 people with 35 issues.

At the time of writing we had 34 active spot purchase cases, the majority coming from Ealing. Enquiries leading to spot purchase cases tend to come via the website or word of mouth, and often boroughs that we're already working in. However, we've also had referrals from Brent, Hackney and Hammersmith & Fulham adult social care teams, where we've previously worked, and have referrals from North West and Central and North West London ICBs. We're also setting up as a registered provider with West Sussex County Council, who want to refer for spot purchase of Care Act advocacy out of area. This remains a business area of focus for us in 2026/27.



"The advocate is outstanding to work with, really collaborative and gaining the advocacy point of view making sure staff are aware of the process, shaping and getting it right."

External stakeholder, QPM Report

6.2 USER INVOLVEMENT

Our User Involvement projects continued to support people with learning disabilities, older people, and people with mental health needs to influence local and strategic decisions about health and social care. This year, members, Reps and lived experience partners contributed to consultations, service reviews, accessibility work, recruitment, partnership meetings and service improvement.

Highlights include:

Learning Disability User Involvement
'Bi-Borough: Big Voice' (RBKC) and 'Our Choice' (Westminster) delivered regular 'Speak Up and Have Your Say' sessions with Equal People Mencap, PIP, LDN Hub, Caxton Youth and Westminster Adult Education Services. Topics included health inequalities, menopause, accessible transport and annual health checks. Our Learning Disability Reps also continued to campaign for better access to physiotherapy, hydrotherapy and wheelchair services. Across Big Voice, Our Choice, the London Network Campaign and People First/TfL work, the project engaged 134 people with learning disabilities.

Synergy - Camden Learning Disability User Involvement
Delivered Speaking Up Groups, worked with all nine Camden libraries, completed Mystery Shopping of the CLDS Duty Desk, and attended monthly Royal Free Hospital meetings to support accessibility and inclusive practice. Synergy also supported Camden Council to renew the Terms of Reference for the Partnership Board's 'Planning Together' Meetings. The Synergy project engaged 291 Camden residents with learning disabilities.



"For the first time in my life, I feel listened to. Meeting others with learning disabilities has made me feel less alone. Now I'm part of something that makes a difference."

Member of Synergy

6.2 USER INVOLVEMENT

Older People's Voice (OPV) - Westminster Older Adults User Involvement:
Members contributed to Westminster Adult Social Care's new 'Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy', raising concerns about barriers to accessing services and suggesting practical improvements to how information is shared with older residents. OPV also consulted on RBKC and Westminster's 'Adult Social Care Sensory Impairment Strategy 2026-2031', recommending clearer communication, sensory impairment training for staff and providers, and clearer pathways into services. Older People's Voice engaged 45 older adults.

Mental Health Voice (MHV) - City and Hackney User Involvement:
MHV members contributed to Mental Health Integration Committee discussions and took part in a consultation on the Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England. Members also influenced crisis pathway work, with two MHV members and one PPI representative presenting at a Home Treatment Team away day attended by around 70-80 staff, sharing key messages about person-centred care, communication, continuity and respect for people's home environments. Mental Health Voice engaged 46 people with lived experience of mental health services.

Camden Mental Health User Involvement:
Lived Experience Advisors continued to shape Reach Out Camden through the Alliance Management Team (AMT) and Alliance Leadership Team (ALT), including input into service development, recruitment and strategic discussions. Activity included 20 AMT meetings, 9 ALT meetings, 9 reflection/cross-pollination meetings, 10 Patients' Council sessions, 11 CBUG meetings, and 7 Mental Health Partnership Board meetings, supported by preparation and agenda-setting meetings. CBUG and Patients' Council continued to raise issues affecting access, information, inclusion and people's experience of services. The project engaged 104 people with lived experience of mental health services.



"It's very beneficial and gives me a sense of purpose."

User Involvement member



"During 2024-2026, the Brent Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) established a project to strengthen community engagement. Brent Healthwatch supported this project incredibly well. It meant that, as Independent Chair of the BSAB, I gained access to members of the community who would not be the usual people to raise their voices to professionals.

The Brent HW team supported the development of the project, identified the groups for me to visit, and assisted me in facilitating the groups.

This project has been one of the most important areas of work I have undertaken during my two years in Brent. The voices of the people have influenced the work taken forward by the BSAB and emphasised the need for a long-term community engagement group to inform, and challenge, the BSAB.

Thank you Brent Healthwatch for all the valuable work you have achieved, both on the community engagement project, and as a valued member organisation of the BSAB."

Nicola Brownjohn
Independent Chair for Brent Safeguarding Adults Board

6.3 HEALTHWATCH

Across the London Boroughs we work in there are some stark inequalities in both health and social care outcomes for many communities. The reason for these can be multifactored, but a lack of trust in and opportunity to influence statutory services drives an absence of user voice in the commissioning, design and development of those services. This in turn can mean services don't meet needs and can disadvantage those they are meant to serve. Healthwatch was created to ensure that the voices of patients and the public were heard within the health and social care system. Since April 2013, it has been gathering people's experiences of healthcare services and using this feedback to influence improvements, giving communities a stronger voice in shaping the NHS and social care. We see daily the value of local Healthwatch teams being embedded in communities and acting as the conduit between seldom heard residents and decisions makers).

However, recent developments have put its future in doubt. Since June 2025, the UK government has announced plans to abolish Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch organisations as part of broader NHS reforms, arguing that the system is too complex and that patient feedback should instead be handled directly by NHS bodies and government departments. We as many others are concerned that this will reduce independent scrutiny and weaken independent voice, ultimately increasing the inequalities communities are facing. Despite the uncertainty our local Healthwatch continue to serve their communities with passion and commitment.

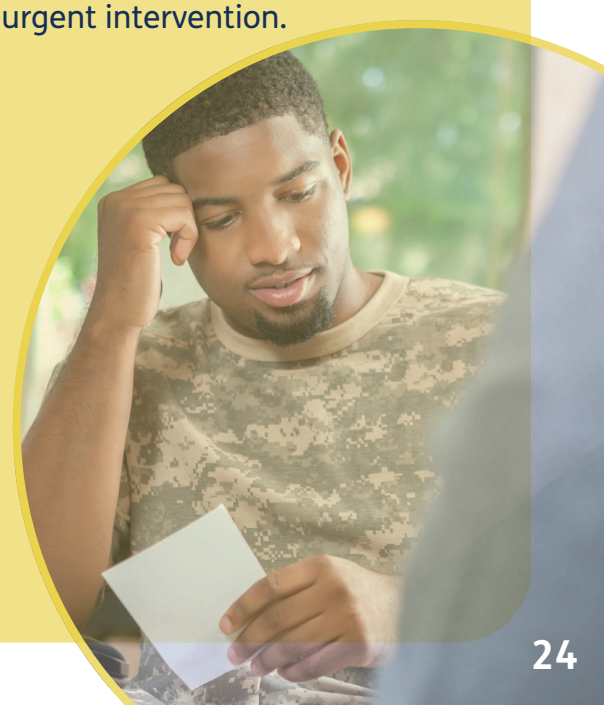
CASE STUDY: Improving access to urgent mental health support for students.

Following Luke's experience, services are improving how urgent mental health concerns are identified, escalated and supported to ensure timely access to appropriate care.

'Luke, a student, contacted us after struggling to access timely mental health support while feeling suicidal. We immediately escalated his concerns to safeguarding teams and contacted the hospital he had approached to ensure urgent intervention.

As a result, Luke was able to access appropriate mental health services and connect with local community support groups. Our borough managers now attend Strategic Participation Group meetings, using cases like Luke's to influence improvements in the council's mental health strategy and strengthen crisis response pathways.'

"Healthwatch Westminster saved me!"



Bi-borough

In 2025/26, we supported over 19,000 residents across Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, to share their experiences and access information about their care. More than 2,100 people told us about their experiences of health and social care services, helping us raise awareness of key issues and drive improvements. A further 17,600 people accessed clear advice and information - both online and in person - on topics including mental health support, navigating the NHS complaints process, and accessing services. We published seven reports highlighting the changes people want to see across hospitals, GP services, mental health provision and care homes. Our most widely read publication, the Patient Experience Programme Q1 2025/26 report, brought attention to ongoing challenges around accessibility and quality of care. Through this work, we've influenced meaningful improvements. These include: enhancing primary care services (such as The Doctor Hickey Surgery) by broadening advice and signposting for people transitioning out of homelessness; improving secondary care services at St Mary's Hospital, Chelsea Hospital and Westminster Hospital, ensuring patient voice shapes waiting times, communication, transparency, and safer environments for vulnerable groups. Our 'Know Your Rights' programme has been particularly effective in reaching underserved communities. Through free advice and signposting workshops, we've supported people experiencing diverse complexities including: physical disabilities, learning disabilities, language barriers, digital exclusion, older populations, and people experiencing homelessness.

CASE STUDY: Improving access to NHS dentistry

Samantha felt she was being denied appropriate NHS dental care after being advised she needed root canal treatment and later discovering her NHS referral had not been submitted.

'Samantha raised concerns about pressure from her dental practice to choose private treatment as well as delays in her NHS treatment referral, and poor communication, including an unanswered complaint and difficulty contacting Central London Community Healthcare (CLCH) dental services.

We supported the resident by contacting the dental practice, prompting them to acknowledge her concerns. We also signposted her to NWL ICB and CLCH specialist dental triage services who confirmed that her referral had been prioritised by NHS endodontic treatment.'

"Thank you very much for forwarding the direct contact number for the triage service. I have been able to talk to a member of the team and get the help I need!"



Brent

In one of London's most diverse boroughs, we have continued to build strong stakeholder and community partnerships. In 2025/26, 1,471 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care. A further 17,060 people came to us for clear advice and information. We published 7 reports, highlighting the improvements people want in areas such as adult social care, pharmaceutical needs, access to GP services and raising complaints. We attended 28 engagement events and maintained regular touchpoints with residents living with dementia and their carers. We continue to build partnerships with seldom-heard groups such as our Somali residents, and attend council and health meetings to escalate resident feedback to key decision makers.

CASE STUDY: how supporting an individual can also lead to systemic change

This year, Healthwatch Brent set out to understand the challenges facing carers and spotlight their voices. One important example is Tom, who has a teenage son who requires a wheelchair update as he grows. Without the correctly-sized wheelchair, Tom's son's quality of life was being negatively affected, including a potential drop-off in school attendance.

After several months of contacting the supplier directly and unsuccessfully, Tom contacted Healthwatch Brent. The team signposted Tom and escalated his son's case to the Integrated Care Board and commissioner of the supplier contract. This intervention resulted in the clear communication of when the wheelchair would be delivered. Additionally, Healthwatch Brent asked the commissioner to review the service delivered by the supplier to ensure Brent residents are receiving the service expected under the agreed contract.



6.4 PERSONAL HEALTH BUDGETS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

During the period December 2021 to August 2025, The Advocacy Project delivered the Personal Health Budget (PHB) pilot for children and young people in Tower Hamlets as part of an NHS England initiative to embed personalised care within Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. The programme supported 125 children and young people with tailored wellbeing plans and access to PHBs designed to help them achieve individual mental health and wellbeing goals. Demand for the service increased significantly throughout the pilot, with over 80% of the 130 referrals received from August 2023 onwards. More than 95% of participants reported improved wellbeing scores at three- and six-month review points, with positive outcomes including increased confidence, improved emotional regulation, better engagement with education, reduced anxiety, and improved physical wellbeing.

The programme particularly supported young people with autism and/or learning disability traits who were at risk of exclusion from education, experiencing high levels of isolation, or at increased risk of crisis intervention. PHBs enabled access to practical, personalised support such as IT equipment, sports activities, and community-based opportunities, all linked directly to agreed CAMHS wellbeing goals. Feedback from young people, families, and clinicians was overwhelmingly positive, with clinicians reporting improved engagement with CAMHS services and families highlighting the value of a more flexible, compassionate, and person-centred approach. The project also demonstrated effective partnership working and value for money, including securing reduced-cost and donated community resources to maximise impact for families.



"My gym membership worked out really well for me and I would say I definitely feel happier than before. I made friends with some local women and I lost some weight."

PHB recipient

6.5 EASY READ CONVERSION AND ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION

Accessible information has long been at the heart of The Advocacy Project's person-centred approach. As more organisations seek to meet their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Accessible Information Standard, demand for high-quality Easy Read resources continues to grow.

During the year, we further developed our Easy Read translation service, strengthening both the quality of our offer and our ability to reach new clients. We produced 86 Easy Read documents, including 76 externally commissioned documents for eight organisations and 10 resources to support our own projects and services.

Key developments included:

- recruiting a team of people with learning disabilities to quality check every Easy Read document from a service user perspective;
- co-developing our 'Quality Checked by The Advocacy Project Service Users' logo, demonstrating that every document has been reviewed by people with lived experience;
- updating our website to showcase examples of our Easy Read work;
- launching a dedicated online enquiry page to make it easier for organisations to commission the service;
- actively networking with organisations to raise awareness of the service and secure new commissions.

Our largest commissioned clients continue to be our local authority partners in Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and Camden.

Alongside our commissioned work, we produced Easy Read resources to support our own projects, including work on National Lottery-funded programmes, climate change and heat resilience, ensuring that people with learning disabilities could access information and participate fully.

In the coming year, we will continue to promote and expand the service, building on this year's progress and increasing opportunities for organisations to access high-quality, co-produced Easy Read information.

"We are a team of seven people with learning disabilities who work as learning disability reps for The Advocacy Project...In our work, we carry out quality checks, create Easy Read materials, and help people communicate clearly by busting jargon."

SYNERGY team

7. HOW WE FUND OUR SERVICES

Throughout 2025–26, we continued to strengthen and diversify our income generation activity across advocacy contracts, trusts and foundations, accessibility consultancy, training and community partnership work. Across the year, we developed a pipeline valued at over £7.6m, including more than £2m in annualised contract and funding opportunities.

Contracts and commissioning

A significant focus this year has been preparing for major advocacy retenders across London. We submitted bids for Westminster Advocacy, Hillingdon Advocacy, Havering Advocacy, Ealing IHCA, Hammersmith & Fulham Advocacy and Healthwatch Harrow, continuing to strengthen TAP's position across North West London and neighbouring boroughs.

We also continued delivering and developing health inequalities, digital inclusion and accessibility work across CNWL, including projects supporting people with learning disabilities to better access healthcare and information.

Alongside larger contracts, we continued growing smaller earned-income opportunities through Easy Read development, accessibility consultancy and training. This included accessibility and lived experience-led training with organisations including the British Museum, UCL and City University.

Trusts, foundations and fundraising

We significantly expanded our trusts and foundations pipeline during 2025–26, submitting applications across learning disability advocacy, health inequalities, heritage, mental health, employability and community engagement.

This included applications to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, John Lyons Foundation and Health Lottery Fund. Successful funding secured during the year included £19,795 from Awards for All, support from the Bailey Thomas Foundation and multi-year funding from the 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust for our learning disability health inequalities work.

We also secured almost £20,000 from the Westminster Climate Fund to support greener living education for people with learning disabilities, alongside £12,000 from the Westminster Heat Resilience Fund to support people with learning disabilities during periods of extreme heat and improve community awareness around heat-related health risks.

We continued strengthening partnerships with community organisations, NHS partners, universities and cultural institutions, while further developing our User Involvement and speaking up groups including Big Voice, Our Choice, Older People's Voice and Synergy.

Alongside this, we continued developing earned-income opportunities linked to accessibility, training and co-production work, helping diversify TAP's income beyond statutory contracts and grant funding.

“The Advocacy Project have supported us to work with people with lived experience to improve health outcomes and employment prospects for people with Learning Disabilities in our local area – I could not have done this without them!

They provide support and insight in a professional way with kindness and compassion and they provide just the right amount of challenge with sensitivity in their role of critical friend.

I cannot speak highly enough of the service and they add real value to the local community.”

Senior Commissioning Officer, Carers and Learning Disabilities CWHHE Clinical Commissioning Groups Collaborative



8. HOW WE COMMUNICATE OUR IMPACT

Throughout 2025/26, we continued to strengthen our internal and external communications, recognising their importance in supporting transparency, amplifying lived experience and increasing awareness of our services and impact. Our communications activity is guided by two core objectives: raising awareness of our work and supporting long-term sustainability through increased engagement and funding opportunities.

Communications Strategy and Governance

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 5-year strategy outlines three themes which inform the organisation's strategic goals: we want sustainability without compromising on quality; we want to grow and reach more people; we want to speak up more about our work. Our communications work seeks to support this by capitalising on our expertise and networks to have more impact, and focusing on innovation to increase income levels. Priority areas include promoting paid advocacy services, increasing engagement with decision makers and strengthening accessible communications and Easy Read provision.

Our quarterly 'Information, Communications and Social Media' committee meetings help ensure that our messaging remains purposeful and aligned with our organisational goals. Their guidance shapes a more focused and effective communications strategy.

Internal Communications and Organisational Culture

Part of the role of the communications team is to support staff engagement, improve transparency and create a positive working culture. Internally, we introduced new approaches to staff communications, including the move from a traditional staff newsletter to Viva Engage, creating more regular and interactive opportunities for colleagues to share updates, celebrate successes and communicate key organisational messages.

In line with our team strategy, we introduced regular organisation-wide KPI reporting, including workforce and financial updates, to support greater transparency and staff engagement across the organisation.

We also continue to prioritise accessible internal communications and opportunities for collaboration across teams. Key organisational documents, including the 5-year strategy and AGM minutes, were produced in Easy Read format and quality checked by members of our Service User Council.

"I just wanted to say a huge thank you...I really enjoyed reading about a different area within the organisation and a different role within it. It was interesting and helpful too...It also provided an easy way to vote. Thanks so much."

Staff feedback on internal comms

External Communications and Public Engagement

We have delivered several events that have extended our reach and influence. Highlights included a talk by acclaimed author, director and teacher Stephen Unwin discussing his latest book 'Beautiful Lives: How We Got Learning Disabilities So Wrong', which attracted new audiences and fostered wider community engagement. We paused our 'Speak Up' discussion series to undertake a strategic review and focus on the development and launch of our new website. Our 25th birthday event on 3rd June gave us an opportunity to showcase our services and launch our new 5-year strategy to existing and new stakeholders. Ketan Sheth, long-time supporter and Brent Councillor said of his time at the event: "I was honoured to attend the event, where service users, staff, volunteers and supporters gathered to reflect on the charity's journey and its lasting impact."



We recognise that we must look at everything through a plain English and accessibility lens, guided by those with lived experience, if we are to successfully grow and reach more people. As part of our new website, we have developed a 'resource' area which provides guidance on making information accessible for everyone, and how to meaningfully involve people with lived experience in a co-production approach. As well as being about themes of accessibility and inclusion, the layout and content has also been designed with these at the forefront. By challenging confusing language and promoting clear communication, we aim to make services more inclusive, respectful and accessible for everyone.

"Lived experience remains central to the charity's mission. People who have used services are not only shaping projects – they are also helping to lead the organisation."

Brent Councillor

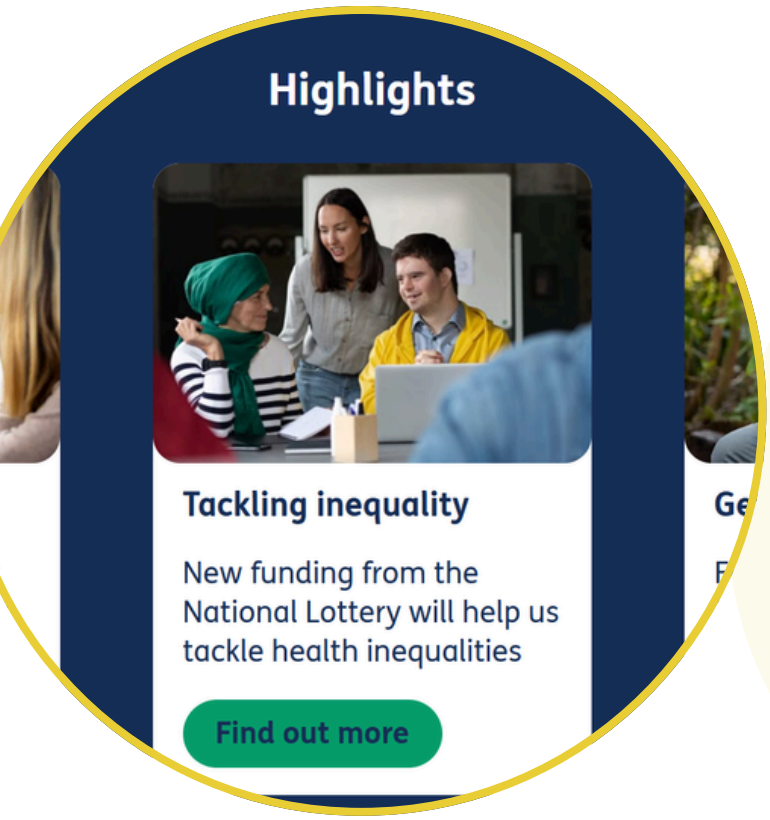
Digital Communications and Website Development

During the year, we also invested in strengthening TAP's communications and digital infrastructure to support future sustainability and income diversification.

We began redevelopment of the TAP website to improve accessibility, strengthen our public profile and create clearer pathways into our services. Alongside this, we developed a wider communications strategy focused on promoting advocacy, increasing awareness of rights and supporting development of paid advocacy services.

A key development was successfully accessing the Google Ad Grants programme, providing The Advocacy Project with up to $10,000 per month in in-kind advertising support. This has enabled us to begin developing targeted digital marketing campaigns to promote advocacy services and support future growth in paid advocacy.

Our website was developed using accessible and user-centred design principles. Staff and service users were consulted during the design process to help improve navigation and accessibility for people seeking support or information about our work.



"As we worked together on crafting the look and feel of the website, it was clear how deeply The Advocacy Project team cares about the people they support. Every design decision circled back to accessibility and the real needs of people using their services, which made the whole process feel purposeful and genuinely collaborative."

Eilidh Marks, designer

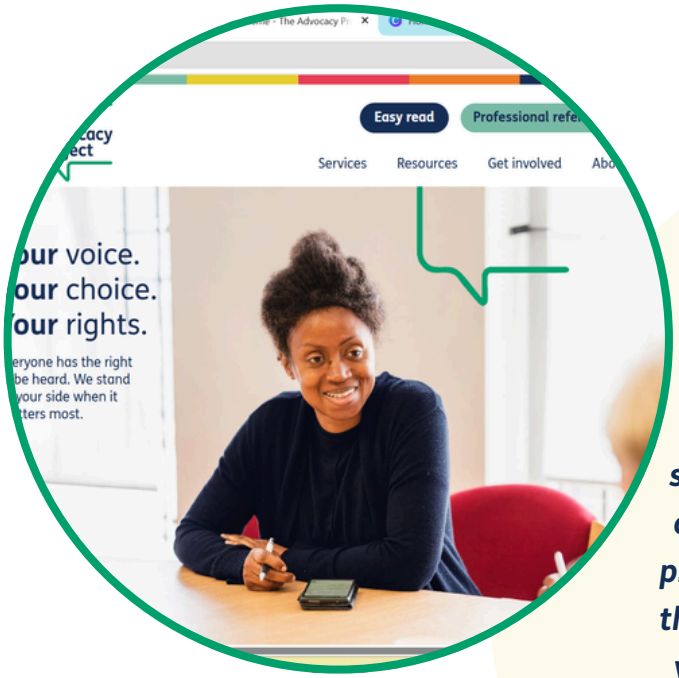
Our digital presence continued to grow across LinkedIn and Instagram, helping us connect with professional networks and wider audiences. By aligning content with sector awareness campaigns and sharing staff and service user stories, we increased engagement whilst deepening understanding of the issues affecting people with learning disabilities. Our research into audience engagement has informed a greater focus on accessible short-form content, including reels and carousel posts, and we continue to work closely with delivery teams to develop new storytelling opportunities. Our LinkedIn audience grew by 15% during the year, helping us extend the reach of our advocacy messages, service information and organisational updates. We had 6.5k new website users during the reporting period , and a key part of our new strategy is to convert more of these visitors into active members of our network .

Learning and Future Development

During the year, members of the Communications team participated in specialist training opportunities to strengthen strategic communications skills. This included participation in the Media Trust's "Stronger Voices" programme for London-based equality organisations. Learning from the programme is informing the development of our future Communications Strategic Plan and improving our approach to audience engagement and storytelling.

Looking ahead, we will continue to enhance our communications activity to ensure that the voices and experiences of the people we support remain at the centre of our work. Building on the foundations established this year, we will focus on developing more accessible and inclusive communications, creating more opportunities for co-production work, expanding our digital reach and strengthening the use of storytelling to demonstrate impact and engage new audiences.

As we implement our new five-year strategy, communications will continue to play a vital role in supporting organisational sustainability, raising awareness of the issues affecting people with learning disabilities and amplifying the expertise, experiences and achievements of our staff, volunteers and service users.



"Working with The Advocacy Project on their new website was a genuine privilege. Their unwavering commitment to the people they support, combined with a deep understanding of the communities they serve, shaped every aspect of the project. From our very first conversations, it was clear that accessibility and user needs were central to their vision. Their passion for empowering people to have their voices heard is inspiring, and we are proud to have created a platform that supports and strengthens that important work."

Nick Balneaves, Southbrae Digital Ltd



Our events are more than lectures - they're opportunities to have a voice and explore how advocacy can make a real difference in people's lives.

9. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

9.1 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. We are Trustee board with four board committees – Finance, Risk & Audit; HR, Remuneration, Policy and EDI ; Business Development and Fundraising; and Information, Communications and Social Media. In line with our values (and with permission from the Charity Commission), we pay Lived experience Trustees London Living Wage for their time as Trustees if they are Service Users. The board delegates day-to-day management to the CEO who works with and through the Senior Leadership team.

9.2 GOVERNANCE

During this year we have taken steps to further progress our governance. We undertook a review of our articles of association. Working with Michele Price of Gunner Cooke, we adopted a newer updated version that more accurately reflects current practice. This version was adopted by a special resolution on 22nd October 2025. The key changes were:

- The only members will be the Trustees;
- The appointment and retirement of Trustees has been streamlined so that Trustees are appointed for up to two terms of four years but, in exceptional circumstances, this can be extended by a further two years;
- The quorum has been increased to five, to ensure good representation in decision making;
- Removed the requirement for the Chief Executive Officer to be a Trustee;
- Defined Service User and Lived Experience Trustee.

We are currently undertaking a review of our governance handbook to reflect these changes.

During the year, we successfully recruited a new Trustee with HR experience and, since the year-end, we have also recruited a Lived Experience Trustee. Having a diverse Board of Trustees that reflects the people we support is of great importance to the Charity, as it demonstrates our values in practice.

"Our board of trustees is made up of so many experiences from different walks of life. This is critical to our success as it reflects the people we're here to support. I'm particularly interested in developing our unique selling point in order to have as high an impact as possible in our communities."

Trustee, The Advocacy Project



Trustees came together outside of Board meetings twice in 2025/26. First at an annual away day in December, supported by external facilitation, where Trustees, Senior Leadership Team and managers worked together develop a refreshed theory of change and 2026/27 business plan. They came together again in March to review and reflect on our EDI journey and agree next steps.

9.3 MANAGEMENT

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

10. REMUNERATION OF STAFF AND KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

The Chief Executive Officer and Head of finance review staff, including key management personnel, with pay based on internal pay scales, industry benchmarks, professional experience, performance, and the charity's long-term needs. To avoid conflict of interest, the Trustees set the salaries of the Chief Executive Officer, following the same method.

11. STAFF

This year, we continued our focus on staff engagement. Early in the year, we launched our refreshed values, co-produced with staff and service users. These values reflect who we are and how we work, and they are now embedded in recruitment and development. Mid-year, we completed a benchmarking exercise and introduced organisation-wide pay bands, creating a transparent remuneration approach with roles aligned to sector norms and clear progression routes. In October, we awarded a 2.5% pay rise and adjusted salaries to align with the new bands. Annual increases in the London Living Wage remain challenging, as commissioned services are delivered within fixed budgets that do not routinely allow for uplifts. This is an area under review, and we have some ideas to address it in the coming year to help ensure we can meet our commitment to paying the London Living Wage.

In January 2026, we launched our employee engagement survey, the first since 2021, and we were pleased to see real progress since the previous survey. Across five key areas, Manager & Team, and Alignment & Role Clarity were the highest-rated areas showing over 84% and 82% satisfaction, while Pay, Recognition & Resources at only 54.3% was the clearest opportunity for improvement. Results have been shared with staff, and we are developing an action plan to address concerns around pay and benefits, where only 36% of staff reported satisfaction. We are committed to creating opportunities for staff to be informed, involved and to feedback including regular all staff meetings, our internal networking site Engage, an annual engagement survey, alongside quarterly pulse surveys focused on key areas.

12. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI)

During the year, the organisation renewed its commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), recognising that meaningful change requires time, reflection and sustained effort. We paused to review policies and practice, and listened to staff, people who use our services and funders to better understand our history and culture. This process highlighted strong intentions alongside past challenges in implementation, and the impact this had on colleagues' confidence and willingness to re-engage.

Acknowledging this openly, the organisation has prioritised rebuilding trust and taking purposeful steps towards becoming a genuinely inclusive and 'brave' organisation.
To lay strong foundations, the team refreshed organisational values, reviewed equality data to identify gaps and improve recording and use of information and strengthened governance by appointing a trustee lead for EDI, an internal EDI Champion, and a new trustee with lived experience. Managers, the leadership team and trustees also co-created an EDI action plan for the next 12 months, ensuring clear accountability at every level.

Looking ahead, priorities include creating regular opportunities to listen and learn; delivering training and workshops with sector partners; supporting staff-led forums for colleagues with protected characteristics and underrepresented groups alongside the user council; and embedding robust measurement, review and transparent reporting. EDI is led by the board, with dedicated oversight and standing agenda time, reflecting its role as an ongoing organisational priority.



"By taking thoughtful, sometimes small steps towards ambitious goals, we will become a truly inclusive organisation , one that offers the best possible opportunities for our teams and delivers even stronger support for the people we work with."

Katherine Shaw, CEO

13. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The voluntary and charitable sectors have faced significant challenges in securing and sustaining income in recent years, particularly during the cost-of-living crisis, as rising operating costs and increased demand for services have coincided with pressure on donations, fundraising and public funding.

Against this backdrop, the charity maintained a strong financial position through careful financial management, including extending the duration of key contracts and achieving savings across areas such as room hire, consultancy, IT, insurance and governance costs. As a result, the charity delivered a surplus of £338k in 2025–26.

While our contract portfolio continues to evolve, we enter the next financial year from a position of financial strength. The dedication and commitment of our staff, supported by senior management and Trustees, continue to ensure the delivery of high-quality services to the individuals and communities we support.

For the 2025–26 financial year:

- Turnover was £1.949m, a decrease of £974k compared with £2.923m in 2024–25, primarily reflecting the end of the PHB contracts.
- Expenditure decreased to £1.612m, a reduction of £983k compared with £2.595m in the previous year, largely due to the completion of the PHB contracts.
- The charity secured £47k of new grant funding during the year, including support from the National Lottery Community Fund, Baily Thomas Charitable Fund and the Westminster Climate Fund, while continuing to generate additional income through Easy Read and Spot Purchase services.
- The Bi-Borough Advocacy contract was extended to September 2026, providing stability while the re-tender process remains ongoing.
- Extensions were also secured for the Ealing Advocacy, Camden Expert by Experience and Healthwatch contracts.
- The year-end surplus strengthened the charity's financial position and provided additional resilience in the face of future funding uncertainties.

In response to ongoing cost-of-living pressures, the charity implemented a structured salary banding framework during the year to support fair, transparent and market-aligned remuneration.

The charity also continued to invest in its digital infrastructure. Following the migration to Office 365, IT overheads were reduced while cloud-based backup, disaster recovery and operational resilience were enhanced. Additional investment was made in the organisation's website, alongside efficiencies achieved through savings in consultancy, insurance and governance costs.

The Trustees are confident that the charity's prudent financial management and continued investment in leadership, digital infrastructure and staff development position the organisation well to navigate future uncertainties while continuing to deliver high-quality services in the years ahead.

14. RESERVES POLICY

Our Reserves Policy stipulates that we will retain free reserves of unrestricted funds equivalent to three to six months of operating expenditure for the following year. Based on the agreed budget for 2026/27, this equates to £478k to £956k.

The year-end surplus strengthened the charity's reserves position, providing greater resilience in the face of future funding uncertainties. At year end, free reserves were £1.339m, equivalent to approximately 9.5 months of operating expenditure, exceeding the target range set out in the reserves policy. Trustees recognise that this level is above the desired range and will keep reserves under review during 2026–27, taking into account contract retendering risks, anticipated changes to Healthwatch commissioning arrangements and opportunities for strategic investment in service development, digital infrastructure and organisational capacity.

15. 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 further its objects and to continue in operation in the event of an unexpected reduction in income. Accordingly, the surplus funds are placed on deposit with UK financial institutions.

Since the balance sheet date, the Charity has moved to a more active treasury management strategy to maximise interest returns while strictly managing risk and protection limits and ensuring that sufficient funds are maintained for the day-to-day cash flow.

16. RISK MANAGEMENT

The charities risk register is reviewed quarterly by the Senior Leadership Team and new or emerging risk reviewed at quarterly committees and in total by the Board on an annual basis.

Risks are prioritised according to their likelihood and potential impact. Each risk has a designated owner responsible for overseeing existing controls, and further mitigating actions are identified where required. Like many organisations, the charity faces a number of key risks that could affect its financial sustainability, operational effectiveness, external relationships, regulatory compliance, and ability to deliver services to the beneficiaries.

Risks are categorised under the following headings: Strategic, Financial, People, Communications, Safeguarding, and Business Development. Each risk is rated before and after mitigation and any risk rated high are brought to quarterly Trustee meetings for discussion.

17. 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.

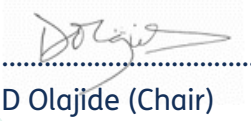
Disclosure of information to auditor

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.

During the year, the Trustees undertook a review of the charity's audit arrangements and appointed Goldwins Limited as the charity's auditor. A resolution to reappoint Goldwins Limited as auditor for the forthcoming year will be proposed at the December 2026 board meeting.

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



.....

D Olajide (Chair)

Date: **22/09/2026**

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

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Advocacy Project for the year ended 31 March 2026 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the statement of cash flows and the related notes. 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).

Opinion on financial statements

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 2026 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended:
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. 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.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

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

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the 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 they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 set out below.

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

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. 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.

Use of our report

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

Nabeel Shahzad

Nabeel Shahzad (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Goldwins Limited
Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants
75 Maygrove Road
West Hampstead
London NW6 2EG

13/10/2026

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

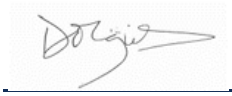
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	**2026 Total funds £**	2025 Total funds £
Income from:					
Charitable activities	**3**	1,481,456	420,287	**1,901,743**	2,851,427
Investment income	**4**	20,348	-	**20,348**	15,638
Other income	**5**	27,488	-	**27,488**	56,648
Total income		**1,529,292**	**420,287**	**1,949,579**	2,923,713
Expenditure on:	**6**				
Charitable activities		1,125,994	485,973	**1,611,967**	2,595,091
Total expenditure		**1,125,994**	**485,973**	**1,611,967**	2,595,091
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	**7**	**403,298**	**(65,686)**	**337,612**	328,622
Transfers between funds		(448)	448	**-**	-
Net movement in funds		**402,850**	**(65,238)**	**337,612**	**328,622**
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		**933,994**	**67,742**	**1,001,736**	673,114
Total funds carried forward	**14**	**1,336,844**	**2,504**	**1,339,348**	1,001,736

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities.
There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above.
The attached notes form part of these financial statements.

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

	Note	2026 £	2026 £	2025 £	2025 £
Assets					
Intangible assets	**9**		**-**		720
Tangible assets	**10**		**13,003**		15,501
			13,003		16,221
Current assets:					
Debtors: amounts falling due after more than one year	**11**	**-**		950	
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	**11**	**465,823**		32,981	
Cash at bank and in hand		**1,247,485**		1,404,284	
		1,713,308		1,438,215	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**12**	**(386,963)**		(452,700)	
Net current assets			**1,326,345**		985,515
Total net assets			**1,339,348**		1,001,736
Funds	**13**				
Restricted funds			**2,504**		67,742
Unrestricted funds			**1,336,844**		933,994
Total funds			**1,339,348**		1,001,736

Approved by the Trustees on 22/09/2026
and signed on their behalf by:



D Olajide (Chair)

Company Registration No. 04018315

The attached notes form part of the financial statements.

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	Note	2026 £	2026 £	2025 £	2025 £
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	**15**		**(174,326)**		(558,006)
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,821)		(14,496)	
Interest received		20,348		15,638	
Cash provided by investing activities			**17,527**		1,142
			(156,799)		(556,864)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year					
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			**1,404,284**		1,961,148
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**16**		**1,247,485**		1,404,284

1 Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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.

b) 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.

c) 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.

d) 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 to settle the obligation and the amount can be measured reliably. Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis and is classified under headings that aggregate all cost relating to each category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they are allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred in undertaking activities that further the Charity's charitable purposes, together with an appropriate allocation of associated support costs.

The Charity is not registered for VAT, and all its expenditure is therefore inclusive of VAT, which cannot be recovered.

e) Allocation and apportionment of costs

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

f) 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.

g) 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.

h) 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 provided on the following basis.

Fixtures and fittings	33% on cost

1 Accounting policies (continued)

i) 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.

j) 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.

k) 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.

l) Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to income and expenditure account on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

m) Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme in line with the Government's auto-enrolment regulations. Contributions payable to the company's pension scheme are charged to income and expenditure account in the period to which they relate.

n) 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.

o) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid bank deposits with an original maturity of three months or less.

p) Trade creditors

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

q) 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 reviews of these accounts are carried out regularly. Whilst every attempt is made to ensure that the calculations are as accurate as possible, there remains 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 Detailed comparatives for the statement of financial activities

	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Restricted £	2025 Total £
Income from:			
Charitable activities	1,549,941	1,301,486	**2,851,427**
Investments	15,638	-	**15,638**
Other income	56,648	-	**56,648**
Total income	1,622,227	1,301,486	**2,923,713**
Expenditure on:			
Charitable activities	1,275,166	1,319,925	**2,595,091**
Total expenditure	1,275,166	1,319,925	**2,595,091**
Net income / expenditure	347,061	(18,439)	**328,622**
Transfers between funds	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	347,061	(18,439)	**328,622**
Total funds brought forward	586,933	86,181	**673,114**
Total funds carried forward	933,994	67,742	**1,001,736**

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2026 Total £**	2025 Total £
Contracts and grants	1,481,456	420,287	**1,901,743**	2,851,427
Total income from charitable activities	1,481,456	420,287	**1,901,743**	2,851,427

4 Investment income

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2026 Total £**	2025 Total £
Interest receivable	20,348	-	**20,348**	15,638
	20,348	-	**20,348**	15,638

5 Other income

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2026 Total £**	2025 Total £
Spot Purchase activity	15,256	-	**15,256**	37,874
Easy Read	7,568	-	**7,568**	12,521
Various	4,664	-	**4,664**	6,253
	27,488	-	27,488	56,648

Google Ad Grants programme
The Charity, under the Google Ad Grants programme, received access to up to $10,000 per month of free Google advertising for the period from 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026, but made very limited use of the facility during the period. As the benefit to the Charity is primarily increased online visibility and presence, rather than a specific service or expenditure we would otherwise have incurred, we have not been able to reliably measure a monetary value for the benefit received. On this basis, no amount has been recognised in the accounts.

6 Analysis of expenditure

	Basis of allocation	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	**2026 Total £**	2025 Total £
Staff cost	Direct	981,893	394,518	-	**1,376,411**	1,359,557
Direct expenditure	Direct	47,204	(122)	-	**47,082**	1,000,539
Office cost	Usage	9,546	84,981	-	**94,527**	139,071
Management cost	Usage	5,546	61,774	-	**67,320**	70,494
Depreciation and amortisation	Usage	-	6,039	-	**6,039**	3,269
Governance costs	Usage	-		20,588	**20,588**	22,161
		1,044,189	**547,190**	**20,588**	**1,611,967**	2,595,091
Support costs		547,190	(547,190)		**-**	
Governance costs		20,588		(20,588)	**-**	
Total expenditure 2026		**1,611,967**	**-**	**-**	**1,611,967**	
Total expenditure 2025		2,595,091	-	-	-	2,595,091

Analysis of expenditure by fund type	**Unrestricted funds £**	**Restricted funds £**	**2026 Total £**
Staff cost	813,433	168,460	**981,893**
Direct expenditure	54,118	8,178	**62,296**
Support cost	242,293	304,897	**547,190**
Governance cost	16,150	4,438	**20,588**
	1,125,994	485,973	1,611,967

	Unrestricted funds £	**Restricted funds £**	**2025 Total £**
Staff cost	-	319,465	319,465
Support cost	139,071	-	139,071
Direct expenditure	1,040,171	1,000,460	2,040,631
Depreciation	3,269	-	3,269
Governance cost	22,161	-	22,161
Management cost	70,494	-	70,494
	1,275,166	1,319,925	2,595,091

Of the total expenditure, £1,125,994 was unrestricted (2025: £1,275,166) and £485,973 was restricted (2025: £1,319,925).

7 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging / (crediting):	2026 £	2025 £
Amortisation	**720**	720
Depreciation	**5,319**	2,549
Auditor's remuneration:		
Audit fees	**12,600**	19,200

8 Analysis of staff costs, Trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:	2026 £	2025 £
Salaries and wages	**1,185,816**	1,184,303
Social security costs	**131,228**	124,229
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**59,367**	51,025
	1,376,411	1,359,557

The number of employees who received employee benefits (excluding employer pension) totalling £60,000 or above during the year were:

	2026 No.	2025 No.
£70,001 to £80,000	1	1

The total employee benefits including pension contributions and employers' NIC of the key management personnel were £381,059 (2025: £258,133).

Although the charity has permission to pay lived-experience trustees in certain circumstances, no trustee was paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charitable company in the year (2025: £nil). No charity Trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charitable company or received any reimbursement for their expenses (2025: one trustee was reimbursed for expenses).

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was :

	2026 No.	2025 No.
Employed staff	44	43
Sessional staff	13	13
	57	56

9 Intangible assets

	Computer software £	2026 Total £	2025 Total £
Cost			
Cost at the start of the year	24,869	**24,869**	24,869
Additions in year	-	-	-
Cost at the end of the year	24,869	**24,869**	24,869
Amortisation at the start of the year	24,149	**24,149**	23,429
Charge for the year	720	**720**	720
Amortisation at the end of the year	24,869	**24,869**	24,149
Net book value	**-**	-	720

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixture & Fittings £	2026 Total £	2025 Total £
Cost			
Cost at the start of the year	107,360	**107,360**	92,864
Additions in year	2,821	**2,821**	14,496
Cost at the end of the year	110,181	**110,181**	107,360
Depreciation at the start of the year	91,859	**91,859**	89,310
Charge for the year	5,319	**5,319**	2,549
Depreciation at the end of the year	97,178	**97,178**	91,859
Net book value	**13,003**	**13,003**	15,501

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

11 Debtors

	2026 £	2025 £
Due after more than one year		
Other debtors	**-**	950

	2026 £	2025 £
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	**436,622**	10,992
Other debtors	**362**	400
Prepayments and accrued Income	**28,839**	21,589
	465,823	32,981

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2026 £	2025 £
Trade creditors	**18,393**	35,365
Taxation and social security	**35,757**	28,229
Other creditors	**1,846**	23,498
Accruals	**51,608**	88,306
Deferred income	**279,359**	277,302
	386,963	452,700

Deferred income

	2026 £	2025 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	**277,302**	1,158,572
Amount released to income in the year	**(277,302)**	(2,234,418)
Amount deferred in the year	**279,359**	1,353,148
Balance at the end of the year	**279,359**	277,302

13 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	13,003	-	**13,003**
Net Current assets	1,323,841	2,504	**1,326,345**
Net assets at the end of the year	**1,336,844**	**2,504**	**1,339,348**

Analysis of net assets between funds 2025
(previous year for comparison)

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	16,221	-	**16,221**
Net Current assets	917,773	67,742	**985,515**
Net assets at the end of the year	**933,994**	**67,742**	**1,001,736**

14 Movements in funds

		At 1 April 2025 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2026 £
	Restricted funds					
a)	WJC LD Our Choice	765	42,713	(43,701)	223	-
b)	WJC LD Advocacy	11,311	82,328	(93,675)	36	-
c)	Big voice	342	48,516	(48,973)	115	-
d)	Speak up Speak out	841	12,876	(13,780)	63	-
e)	WJ OA Advocacy	54,092	196,760	(248,348)	-	**2,504**
f)	WJ OA UI	391	36,052	(36,454)	11	-
g)	Tower Hamlet PHB	-	1,042	(1,042)	-	-
	Total restricted funds	**67,742**	**420,287**	**(485,973)**	**448**	**2,504**
	Unrestricted funds:					
	General Fund	**933,994**	1,529,292	(1,125,994)	(448)	**1,336,844**
	Total unrestricted funds	**933,994**	**1,529,292**	**(1,125,994)**	**(448)**	**1,336,844**
	Total funds	**1,001,736**	**1,949,579**	**(1,611,967)**	**-**	**1,339,348**

Movements in funds 2025

		At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
	Restricted funds					
a)	WJC LD Our Choice	11,311	42,288	(52,834)	-	**765**
b)	WJC LD Advocacy	10,150	82,326	(81,165)	-	**11,311**
c)	Big voice	462	48,517	(48,637)	-	**342**
d)	Speak up Speak out	2,727	12,875	(14,761)	-	**841**
e)	WJ OA Advocacy	57,428	196,759	(200,095)	-	**54,092**
f)	WJ OA UI	4,103	36,051	(39,763)	-	**391**
g)	Tower Hamlet PHB	-	305,000	(305,000)	-	-
h)	Tower Hamlet CYP PHB	-	10,775	(10,775)	-	-
i)	City & Hackney PHB	-	239,895	(239,895)	-	-
j)	Newham PHB	-	327,000	(327,000)	-	-
	Total restricted funds	**86,181**	**1,301,486**	**(1,319,925)**	**-**	**67,742**
	Unrestricted funds:					
	Reserves	**586,933**	1,622,227	(1,275,166)	-	**933,994**
	Total unrestricted funds	**586,933**	**1,622,227**	**(1,275,166)**	**-**	**933,994**
	Total funds	**673,114**	**2,923,713**	**(2,595,091)**	**-**	**1,001,736**

Purpose of restricted funds:

a) *WJC LD Our Choice – This fund is to support service user engagement, participation, and involvement for people with learning disabilities in shaping and improving local services in Westminster.*

b) *WJC LD Advocacy – This fund is to support service user engagement, participation, and involvement for people with learning disabilities in shaping and improving local services in Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.*

c) *Big voice – This fund is to support service user engagement, participation, and involvement for people with learning disabilities in shaping and improving local services in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.*

d) *Speak up Speak out – This fund is to support service user engagement, participation, and involvement for people with learning disabilities in shaping and improving local services in Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.*

e) *WJ OA Advocacy – To support service user engagement, participation, and involvement in shaping and improving local services in Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.*

f) *WJ OA UI – These funds to support service user engagement, participation, and involvement for older adults in shaping and improving local services in Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.*

g) *Tower Hamlet PHB – This fund supports Personal Health Budgets for patients with mental health needs in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.*

h) *Tower Hamlet CYP PHB - This fund supports Personal Health Budgets for children and young people up to the age of 18 with mental health needs in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.*

i) *City & Hackney PHB - This fund supports Personal Health Budgets for adults with mental health needs in the London Boroughs of City & Hackney.*

j) *Newham PHB - This fund supports Personal Health Budgets for adults with mental health needs in the London Borough of Newham.*

£

15 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2026	2025
		£
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	**337,612**	328,622
Depreciation & amortisation	**6,039**	3,269
(Increase)/ decrease in debtors	**(431,892)**	68,373
Increase/ (decrease) in creditors	**(65,737)**	(942,632)
Interest received	**(20,348)**	(15,638)
Net cash (used in) operating activities	**(174,326)**	**(558,006)**

16 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 1 April 2025	Cash flows	Other changes	**At 31 March 2026**
	£	£	£	**£**
Cash at bank and in hand	1 ,404,284	(156,799)	-	**1,247,485**
Total cash and cash equivalents	**1,404,284**	**(156,799)**	**-**	**1,247,485**

17 Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2026, the charity had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2026	2025
	£	£
Due within one year	**10,345**	10,345
Due between 1 and 5 years	**12,870**	20,998
	23,215	31,343

18 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Each member is liable to contribute a sum not exceeding £1 in the event of the charity being wound up.

19 Related party transactions

Except for the transactions referred to in Note 8 to the accounts, there are no related party transactions to disclose during the financial year (2025: Nil).

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 £59,367 (2025: £51,025).