

Your Voice Counts

# Our Year in Review

Annual Report and Accounts  
for the year ended 31 March 2023



# Making a difference



"I enjoyed everything, looking forward to September's session."  
**Karen, Community Voice participant**

"Simon is excellent at engaging with and knowing the people he works with and advocates for, being able to give insights into the wants and desires of patients, always ensuring the patient voice is heard and their views expressed. He is brilliant to work with, offering insights and understanding to the clinical team as well as appropriate challenge when required."  
**Clinical Nurse Specialist**



"I thoroughly enjoy my role at Your Voice Counts. I think it's such an important service for so many people. I've enjoyed meeting new people and maintaining contact with Your Voice Counts users I have known for many years. I would recommend volunteering with Your Voice Counts to anyone considering it. The staff are welcoming and supportive and I always look forward to my visit."  
**Heather, Your Voice Counts volunteer**

"Thanks so much for letting me know. This has put my mind at rest - I feel that this man has hugely slipped through many nets, it's such a shame. I really appreciate you acting so quickly on this case."  
**Best Interests Assessor**



"Previously having worked as a Mental Health and Learning Disability Nurse for around 30 years, I was keen to undertake a new challenge that also utilised the skills that I have built up over the years. I have to say, I have never regretted moving to Your Voice Counts, for a minute - I get immense job satisfaction from working with a fantastic team and some great clients, and really feeling that I am making a positive impact in a holistic way. This is how I truly feel and could not be happier!"  
**John, Your Voice Counts Health and Wellbeing Facilitator**



"I have recently been diagnosed with diabetes. It was useful to find out how to eat healthily if you are a diabetic."  
**Lillian, Diabetes group member**



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# Welcome from Matthew Bailey and Christina Gates



As we reflect on another year, we would like to say a huge thank you on behalf of the Board of Your Voice Counts to all of the staff, volunteers and partners who have once again shown such hard work and commitment to Your Voice Counts and our aims.

There have been some big changes on the Board this year, with our longstanding Co-Chair Lisa Kelly standing down in February – Lisa is a tireless campaigner for the rights of people to have a voice and as Co-Chair always helped and challenged us to put the people we support at the heart of our services. On behalf of everyone at Your Voice Counts we want to say a big thank you to Lisa and we're delighted she remains on our Board in an Expert by Experience role. We also say a massive thank you to Nick Herron who also stood down from the Board this year after many years of service.

Matthew has now taken over from Lisa as Co-Chair, joining the Board this year alongside other Experts by Experience Jess Fielding and Preddi Bononge, and Sophie Swanston-Newbrook who has joined as an Advocate by Experience.

Our new members bring a range of skills, experiences and specialisms to our Board, really helping to strengthen and focus the Board on what we want to achieve for Your Voice Counts.

We have established two new sub-committees – our Services and Quality Committee and our People Committee – and earlier this year we held an away day with the Board and Senior Management Team so we could talk about what we do well and plan what we want to focus on and get better at. This was a highlight of the year for us all and we're looking forward to seeing our plans come to life.

It has been a busy year for Your Voice Counts with many, many achievements – we're particularly proud of the three national awards we won at the start of this year, including a Charity Governance Award for how we support people with learning disabilities to be part of our Board.

Co-production and lived experience are at the heart of Your Voice Counts, from the Board to our staff team to our volunteers and the people who use our services so this award was very special for us and we're proud our approach has been recognised.

Our commitment to co-production has gone from strength to strength this year – not only with Matthew, Jess and Preddi joining our Board but the number of people with lived experience on the staff team increasing to 20.

We've also committed funding to create a new dedicated Co-Production team that will help to make even more progress in this area. We hope this investment shows the importance we place on this and we're looking forward to seeing this work develop over the next year.

Best wishes,

**Matthew and Christina,  
Co-Chairs, Your Voice Counts**



# Welcome from David Woolley



At this point last year, we set ourselves some big targets for the year ahead and now we're looking back over the last twelve months it's incredibly satisfying to see the progress we've made.

## Developing and improving

One of our main goals for this year was to grow our advocacy offer beyond the statutory services we already deliver, so I am delighted that we launched Voice for Families, our service to support parents with learning disabilities. We also secured funding to deliver a community mental health advocacy project which we will be mobilising in the coming months.

We wanted to employ more people with lived experience of using health and social care services, and I'm incredibly proud that we've done that, increasing the number of employees with lived experience to 20 colleagues working in a range of different roles. Supporting all of our staff is a priority for us so I'm also pleased we've been able to implement pay rises, introduce new staff benefits and develop our first People Plan.

Improving how we measure and articulate our impact has been a key aim for us in recent years but this year, with the support of the Lloyds Foundation, we have developed new impact management systems which are helping us to better understand and articulate the difference our work makes. This complements our desire to raise our profile and promote the work we do so we can increase our ability to influence on behalf of the people we support. Growing our social media presence and establishing an e-newsletter are just some of the ways we've been doing this.

## Economic climate

Looking more widely, the rising cost of living has been a big challenge this year, both for the people we support and our staff.

We want our staff to feel valued and to receive a good wage with employee benefits that make a difference to their lives, so we were pleased Board approved a 5% cost of living pay

increase for all staff this year. We also signed up to the Living Wage Foundation to show our commitment to paying a fair wage and adopted the increase five months early so our staff could benefit as soon as possible.

For the people we support, we established our Financial Health team to provide specialist 1 to 1 support to help people access the financial support they need and the benefits they are entitled to, while developing key skills such as effective budgeting. We also provided opportunities to help people make changes that have a positive impact on their lifestyles and finances, such as healthy cooking classes and free and low-cost activities such as group walks and arts and crafts at home.

## Building on our strengths

At the start of this year we won three awards in the space of three weeks, which was fantastic recognition at a national level for the work we do. The awards celebrated our approach to Board diversity and inclusion and the work we do to champion and embed co-production within our advocacy and community-based services.

We've also been reflecting on our experience of winning new contracts and setting up new projects this year - not only across advocacy, but our new Health and Wellbeing Facilitator team, and the Co-Production team we're preparing to launch. This puts us in a great position for the year ahead, and with the dedication and expertise of our fantastic staff team I'm confident we can build on this momentum to ensure our support reaches the people who need it and makes the difference we know we can make in more people's lives.

**David Woolley,**  
Chief Executive, Your Voice Counts

# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## Advisors

### Auditors:

Azets Audit Services,  
Bulman House,  
Regent Centre,  
Gosforth,  
Newcastle upon Tyne,  
NE3 3LS

## Main

### Bankers:

Lloyds Bank,  
17 Ellison Walk,  
Gateshead,  
NE8 1BF

## Savings:

Hampshire Trust Bank,  
55 Bishopsgate, London,  
EC2N 3AS

Aldermore Savings, 1st Floor,  
Block B, Western House,  
Lynch Wood, Peterborough  
PE2 6FZ

Redwood Bank  
The Nexus Building, Broadway,  
Letchworth Garden City,  
Hertfordshire, SG6 3TA

## Our Board

Your Voice Counts is a registered charity and limited company governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. Our Governance Handbook sets out how we ensure our governance is effective and inclusive.

### Our Articles

Our Articles set out that at least 50% of our Board need to have lived experience of our services, which includes family carers of people who have used our services. We call the Directors with lived experience of our services Experts by Experience. We call Directors who don't have experience of our services Advocates by Experience.

Our Articles also set out that we should have a Chair and Co-Chair and that one should be someone with a learning disability and the other someone without a learning disability.

## Our Directors

Our Directors serve for a term of four years and are eligible for re-appointment by the Directors. There are no restrictions on the number of terms a Director can serve.

There are arrangements for induction, training and support of Board members, which are reviewed by our Operations Committee. Each new Board member is given an induction pack and attends an induction session with the executive team and meets the Chair. The Operations Committee reviews the training needs of the Board members and arranges training as required.

Our Co-Chairs hold an annual appraisal of the Board and of individual Directors to ensure that the skills and time provided by Directors are used to best effect. Additionally, Board skills are kept under review to inform Board member recruitment, engagement and support.

## Board meetings

Our Board meets six times a year. Our Experts by Experience also hold a pre-meeting before each Board meeting to give them additional time to prepare for the meeting. Our Experts by Experience and Advocates by Experience meet separately six times a year in order to explore themes and key subject areas in more detail.

The Board holds an annual plan which includes:

- Agreeing the operating budget
- Reviewing monthly management accounts
- Reviewing the organisation's strategic priorities
- Monitoring performance within agreed targets
- Considering risk and ways to mitigate these risks
- Considering strategic issues; and
- Receiving reports and minutes from all our sub-committees.

## Sub-committees

The Board appoints sub-committees, which are responsible for more detailed oversight of strategy and activities within their area of responsibility. The sub-committees that met during the year were:

- Finance Committee
- Operations Committee
- Services and Quality Committee.

Our new People Committee will meet in the coming year.

## Directors during 2022/2023

Directors who served during the year up to the date of signing the financial statements were:

	APPOINTMENT DATE	RESIGNATION DATE
Matthew Bailey	16/02/2023	NA
Christina Gates	15/08/2019	NA
Lisa Kelly	12/03/2011	NA
Derek Peters	19/08/2014	NA
David Taylor	17/06/2015	NA
Jess Fielding	16/02/2023	NA
Preddi Bononge	16/02/2023	NA
Nick Herron	12/03/2011	15/2/23
Matthew Ife	18/01/2018	NA
Tom Relph	13/03/2018	NA
Andrew Lane	17/12/2020	NA
Rebekah Coombes	19/08/2021	NA
Sophie Swanston-Newbrook	20/10/2022	NA

# OBJECTIVE AND ACTIVITIES

## About Your Voice Counts

Your Voice Counts is a registered charitable company limited by guarantee. The charity's object is to relieve the need or disability of persons, particularly those suffering impairment of their learning abilities.

## What does Your Voice Counts do?

Your Voice Counts is a charity that exists to support people with learning disabilities, autistic people and people who are at risk of exclusion due to disability, illness or other challenges.

We achieve our object, or our aims, by focusing on our mission to help people to be connected, to have choice and control in their lives, and to speak up for what they want and need. We believe in listening to and empowering people with different needs and abilities to bring about positive change. To do this, we work with our partners to design and deliver learning, personal development and social opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autistic people, and promote and support self-advocacy and user-led groups that are run by adults with learning disabilities.

We are also a statutory provider of mental health and learning disability advocacy services for people living in Newcastle upon Tyne, Gateshead and South Tyneside.

## How do we decide what services to offer?

We have a five-year organisational strategy that has been approved by our Board of Directors. This strategy guides our work and ensures all of our activities work towards at least one of our six priority areas:

1. Design services that make a difference to people
2. Learn from what we're doing so that we get better at helping people
3. Improve how the Board works
4. Help our staff and volunteers be great at their jobs
5. Ensure the organisation is financially resilient
6. Make sure people know who we are, what we do and the difference we make to the people we support.

Our strategy also sets out our commitment to ensuring the voices of lived experience underpin all of our work, and we're proud to co-produce and co-deliver our services with people with learning disabilities, autistic people and people who have experienced mental ill health.

## Public Benefit

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'Public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. Our main activities and the people we aim to support are described in this report. All of our charitable activities focus on supporting vulnerable people - particularly those with learning disabilities and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.



# Communities team highlights

## Tackling health inequalities

People with learning disabilities often experience poorer health outcomes and lower life expectancy than the rest of the population so we have been developing the services we offer that help people to understand and look after their health and wellbeing.

### Health and Wellbeing Facilitator team

Our Health and Wellbeing Facilitator team was established in July 2022 to provide a specialist service that helps people with learning disabilities in South Tyneside take positive steps to manage their physical and mental health and to engage with the healthcare services that are available to them.



This includes providing 1 to 1 support as well as delivering accessible health education that supports South Tyneside's vital health pathways that include Covid and flu vaccinations, diabetes, smoking cessation, cancer screening, weight management and mental health support.

### Helping people stay well

<b>21</b> people supported to get annual health check	<b>15</b> people received help to complete their hospital passport	<b>59</b> health appointments made with our help	<b>27</b> people accompanied to appointments
<b>15</b> attendees at weight management sessions	<b>54</b> participants in Dry January mocktail class	<b>12</b> pieces of Easy Read health info created	<b>13</b> health awareness sessions delivered

### Helping people access vaccinations



**123** people contacted to offer support to get flu jabs



**1** pop up Covid and flu jab clinic at our weekly drop-in group



**8** people supported to vaccination appointments

### Understanding Type 2 Diabetes

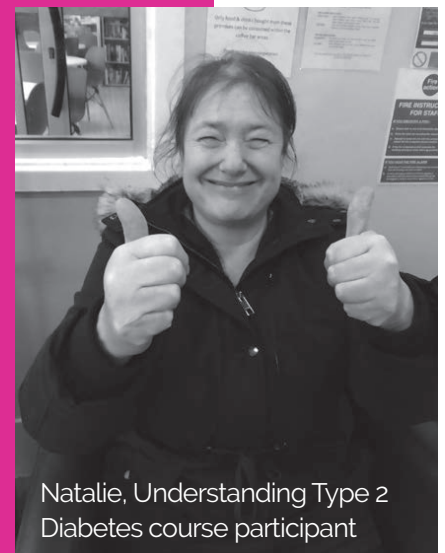
Thirteen people attended our Understanding Type 2 Diabetes courses which were developed by Skills for People in collaboration with North East and Cumbria Learning Disability Network and Your Voice Counts with funding from the NENCICS in South Tyneside.

Each course ran over six weeks and was specially designed for people with learning disabilities to help them understand and manage their condition.

"Since attending the course I have increased my exercise routine and have been more aware of my overall health. I am looking at better alternatives to food, counting my calories and looking at the sugar content of food. I feel happier in my life as I have learned more about my overall health.

"It is worth to attend as the staff is so lovely and are non-judgmental, they are there to help you. The content was informative, and I learnt a lot of different things about diabetes, things that give me a wakeup call."

Natalie



Natalie, Understanding Type 2 Diabetes course participant

# ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE



## International Day of Happiness

To mark the end of a project funded by NHS Charities Together we held a celebration event to coincide with International Day of Happiness on 20 March.

The funding had been awarded by NHS Charities Together, Newcastle Hospitals Charity and County Durham Community Foundation with Your Voice Counts chosen as one of seven local organisations to deliver initiatives that address health inequalities, improve mental health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation for people with learning disabilities.

Over the course of the project, we provided a range of opportunities for people with learning disabilities to improve their skills and confidence and connect with others so we were pleased to use leftover funding to organise an International Day of Happiness event to celebrate the end of the project.

The theme of the day was being mindful, being grateful and being kind so there were lots of activities on offer to give people a reason to smile, including face painting, arts and crafts, bracelet making, Henna, bingo, yoga and mindfulness sessions.

## The Your Voice Counts Quality Checkers

People with learning disabilities can find it difficult to access NHS services, often due to complicated forms, words or confusing layouts in buildings.

Our Quality Checkers programme is one way we are trying to change this and we're proud to have a contract with the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board in South Tyneside to carry out regular reviews of GP practices in South Tyneside.

At these reviews, our team of Quality Checkers, who have lived experience of having a learning disability or being autistic, take a tour of the surgery and speak to patients with learning disabilities to hear about their experiences of using that practice. This information is then shared with the surgery so they can understand what is and isn't working well for their patients with learning disabilities and make any improvements that are needed.

"Working with the NHS Quality Checkers has been an excellent, worthwhile experience. The Quality Check process helps us to identify areas where we can make improvements and where we do things well. I'd recommend being part of this process to all practices."

**Suzanne Roberts, Practice Manager,  
Imeary Street Surgery**

Quality Checker David with Suzanne Roberts,  
Imeary Street Surgery Practice Manager



## Helping people manage their money

Funding from the Henry Smith Charity enabled us to create a Financial Health team that provides vital casework and training to people with learning disabilities to improve their financial resilience and address specific financial issues they are facing.

The  
Henry Smith  
Charity  
founded in 1628

This year we have provided 1 to 1 support to 58 people, offering much needed assistance as people face the rising cost of living and struggle to navigate the generic support services that are not designed to meet the needs of people with learning disabilities.

Our service is delivered with peer support workers and includes helping with benefits applications and appeals, budgeting tools, information about managing debt, food bank referrals and help to understand bills and housing costs.

FINANCIAL INTERVENTIONS OFFERED	NUMBER OF PEOPLE
General benefit queries or support	9
New benefit claims	30
Welfare benefit appeals and PIP tribunals	12
Budgeting, bills, debt and food bank support	69
Housing benefit and rent arrears support	16
Safeguarding alert (due to loan shark threats)	1
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVENTIONS</b>	<b>137</b>

### Ali's story

Ali was in an abusive relationship for many years. Her ex-partner had total control of the household finances so when he moved out she was left with piles of bills, policies and letters which she couldn't understand or manage. She had no confidence and didn't know what to do next or how to budget for herself.

We started meeting weekly, working our way through her finances, setting up direct debits and developing a manageable budget plan. We also helped her liaise with the DWP and supported her through the Capability for Work Process and connected her to other Your Voice Counts services that have helped to improve her mental health and wellbeing.

**"I think you've been amazing. I couldn't have coped without you. I'm over the moon about it all." Ali**

## Working in the Communities team with lived experience

We're incredibly proud that this year the number of employees with lived experience of learning disabilities, autism or mental ill health working in the Your Voice Counts Communities team increased to 20 members of staff. People with lived experience bring amazing skills and insight to our organisation and work in a range of jobs from peer support roles to commissioning to research.

"I joined Your Voice Counts in September 2017 and have had a range of different jobs. I enjoy working for Your Voice Counts, I really like working within the Communities team as working with other people is the best part of the job, it is insightful to talk to people to find out how they feel and ways to help them. This is why I've stayed at YVC because I enjoy working with people and have gained a lot of knowledge and understanding by being around the clients and always work to the best of my ability." **Melissa, Peer Support Worker**

"I have worked with Melissa over the last year on the Community Voice project, it has been great to see her confidence and presentation skills develop as well as her enjoyment in her work." **Lucie, Project Support Worker**



Lucie and Melissa



# ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

## Developing skills, confidence and connections

### Drop-in groups

Our popular weekly drop-in groups in Boldon, Gateshead and Jarrow are a vital part of our South Tyneside Enabler project funded by South Tyneside Council and our Gateshead Enabler work that is funded by the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

The sessions provide opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autistic people to get together, make friends and take part in activities while also providing a space where our team of community connectors and peer support workers can engage with people around the How Am I Doing framework, identify issues they may be experiencing and plan how further support can be accessed.

The sessions are informal so people can chat, ask questions and enjoy snacks in a relaxed environment, but we also



include structured activities such as arts and crafts, health and wellbeing sessions and talks from other organisations so people can learn new skills and access information and services relevant to them.

We also organise regular day trips to give people the chance to visit somewhere new and develop their confidence and this year have enjoyed visits to places such as St James' Park, Happy Hooves animal sanctuary and Jarrow Hall.

### Cooking with Confidence

Our regular Cooking with Confidence sessions take place in person and online to help people develop their skills and confidence to cook healthy meals independently.

With support from the Prime Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, this year we were able to offer support to 75 people with learning disabilities who were facing social and financial disadvantage.

Many of these people lived independently lacking basic cooking skills and living on microwave meals, struggling to afford the food they wanted. By using accessible equipment and Easy Read recipe cards we were able to show them how to cook affordable, nutritious meals at home while also having fun.

#### After taking part:

- 29 people cooked a low cost hot meal at home for the first time
- 5 people shared their own recipes
- 3 people have taught preparing a meal to others in the group.



### The YVC Young People's Group

We launched our first group specifically for young people in November. Funded by the Morrisons Foundation and facilitated by our community connectors and peer support workers, the group is for people who live in South Tyneside who are 18 – 25 years old and have a learning disability or are autistic.

Designed with young people in mind, the group has 15 members and meets every Monday evening with regular trips out too, providing opportunities for group members to develop friendships and tackling issues such as social isolation and loneliness.

## Community Voice

Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and delivered in partnership with Vision & Hearing Support and Bliss=Abilty, the Community Voice project was launched in July and is aimed at people who have learning disabilities, autistic people and people who are at risk of exclusion due to disability, sight loss or who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

49 people have participated in the project, taking part in a varied programme of activities including information, advice and guidance sessions, pre-employability training and creative and historical workshops, all designed to support the project's aims to combat social isolation and improve mental health and wellbeing.

Five volunteers have also been recruited to help deliver the sessions which has been a fantastic support and an opportunity for people to further develop their skills and confidence.



**100%**  
of participants felt their emotional wellbeing and mental health improved after taking part



**100%**  
felt more confident



**83%**  
felt their physical health was improved



### From participant to volunteer

Ricky was diagnosed with a learning disability in later life and started attending our drop-in groups to make friends and access support with many aspects of his life. As Ricky's confidence grew, he told us about his passion for art and showed an interest in being part of Community Voice so we encouraged him to become a volunteer to help deliver the arts sessions.

Through doing this his confidence grew and he was able to choose an art activity for the group, arrange the equipment needed and promote the session. He's now confident enough to apply for job opportunities and look for ways to develop his skills further.

**"I was nervous at first and didn't know what to say to people but enjoyed doing the art sessions and helping people. I like helping people and have made friends... I was quiet at first, but YVC has boosted my confidence."**



Ricky



# ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

## The power of lived experience

### Leading the way in co-production

Shaun Armour is an Expert by Experience working for Your Voice Counts who is a Commissioning Officer for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (NENCICS) in South Tyneside. This year, Shaun has been working alongside our Project Support Worker Amy Broughton to raise awareness and promote the benefits of involving people with lived experience in the delivery of services and projects.



Amy and Shaun at an NHS Health Education England event

### Voice of the Person

We are very proud to be part of South Tyneside's Learning Disability Strategy that aims to improve the services and support that are available to people with learning disabilities in the area. Central to the strategy is making sure that people with lived experience of learning disabilities are given the chance to have their say and play a real part in creating change. This year Shaun was chosen to lead on the Voice of the Person element of the strategy that will see him responsible for ensuring people with lived experience are a central part of the work.

### Training health and social care staff

This year we became approved lead trainers for the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training programme and worked with Skills for Care to design the training framework and 'train the trainers' model that will be used for its national roll-out.

The training is mandatory for all NHS and social care staff and is designed to teach people about the specific needs of autistic people and people with learning disabilities so they receive safe, compassionate and informed care when they need it.

The programme is named after Oliver McGowan whose death highlighted the need for better training across the sector and has been co-produced, co-evaluated and is co-delivered by people with a learning disability and autistic people who are paid for their time.

We also won the contract for a second consecutive year to run the National Workforce Advisory Group that enables people with learning disabilities to influence best practice among the health and social care workforce. The group meets regularly and is chaired by Shaun to ensure lived experience runs throughout the group.

### Sharing our peer support worker best practice

We were honoured to attend an NHS Health Education England event in Leeds in July where Shaun delivered a presentation about how we create opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autistic people to use their lived experience to support others. We received lots of great feedback about Shaun's presentation and answered many questions afterwards from other organisations that are interested in peer support worker roles and hope by sharing our experience we can encourage others to consider how they can also create opportunities for people with lived experience.

### Understanding autistic people's experiences of being diagnosed with autism

We were commissioned by the NENCICS to carry out a peer research project around the support people receive before, during and after the process of being diagnosed with autism.

Working across the region, our researchers designed, delivered and wrote up the research which was framed around finding out what support people think would be useful and who should deliver this. The results of the research are due to be published in 2023/2024.

### What is peer research?

Peer research is carried out by people who have lived experience of the subject they are researching. This project was delivered by peer researchers from Your Voice Counts who have received a diagnosis of autism as adults so their lived experience could inform how the research was designed and delivered.

"The reason I became a peer researcher for this project was due to my own experiences of being diagnosed as having autism just this year. I think involving autistic people and considering the different communities and intersections of barriers in this type of research help to break down barriers. Where people do not just become figures on a research page, voices can be clearly heard, and this should be supported in any way to improve the lives of autistic people."



Anthony, YVC Peer Researcher

**seven**  
focus groups

**318**  
survey responses

# Self-advocacy highlights



Your Voice Counts believes in supporting and connecting people to be advocates for themselves so they can share their views and speak up for what they want and need. One of the ways we do this is by supporting and championing self-advocacy groups like Speaking Up Together.



Speaking Up Together is run by and for adults with learning disabilities. This year the group has taken part in many activities together, including an Equality Matters course, Recipe for Success healthy eating group, cathedral choir, book club and a regular Women's Group.

Influencing and raising awareness is at the heart of the group, and this year the group has been part of the Insights

Network where they worked with professionals and carers in Gateshead to help improve services.

The group has also delivered peer-led Be Cancer Aware training with the Learning Disability Network to help people with learning disabilities understand and attend cancer screenings and learn more about how they can look after their health by staying safe in the sun.

## We Are Human Too

The group works in partnership with other local self-advocacy groups and this year has been heavily involved in the We Are Human Too group alongside Sunderland People First and Skills for People. The groups work together to campaign for the rights of patients with learning disabilities who are in assessment and treatment units and we are also proud that members spoke at the national HOPE(S) conference this year as well as co-hosting the Building Community Capacity conference.



You can find out more about We Are Human Too by watching this video at [https://youtu.be/ABzVxU1SMRU?si=tZr7J\\_pDrWcXf\\_Bw](https://youtu.be/ABzVxU1SMRU?si=tZr7J_pDrWcXf_Bw) or by scanning this QR code opposite.

## Paula Lawson

In October, our first Co-Chair Paula Lawson sadly passed away. Paula was a committed and passionate self-advocate and the founder of Speaking Up Together. Paula is greatly missed by all of the group but the memory of Paula's drive is an inspiration for us all.



## Find out more

If you are interested in finding out more about Speaking Up Together, please contact [joanne.speakinguptogether@gmail.com](mailto:joanne.speakinguptogether@gmail.com) or search for Speaking Up Together on Facebook. [www.facebook.com/speakinguptogether](http://www.facebook.com/speakinguptogether)

# Advocacy services highlights

## Expanding our services

In April, we became the statutory provider of NHS independent complaints advocacy services in Gateshead for the first time, providing information and support to people who need help to navigate the NHS complaints process.

We also launched our Voice for Families service this year after being awarded a three-year grant to provide advocacy support for parents with learning disabilities and their families in Newcastle and South Tyneside. The project is funded with the support of the Charity of Sir Richard Whittington and works with parents to help them navigate challenges, be involved in decision-making about their family and improve their support networks.



THE  
MERCERS'  
COMPANY

Trustee to The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington

## Partnership working

We work closely with colleagues across the health, social care and local authority sector to ensure we share our experiences and improve the services available in our local area. This year we took part in Newcastle's Safeguarding Board's Task and Finish group around the Mental Capacity Act and also got involved with an advocacy leaders' group to explore how advocacy could be improved for people with learning disabilities, autistic people and people in restricted settings.

Two of our advocates also took part in a regional project delivered by Inclusion North to look at the different needs of people receiving advocacy support in hospital compared to people being treated in long term seclusion; the findings of which will feed into a national advocacy review in addition to being shared with our local Integrated Care Board.



## Raising the profile of advocacy

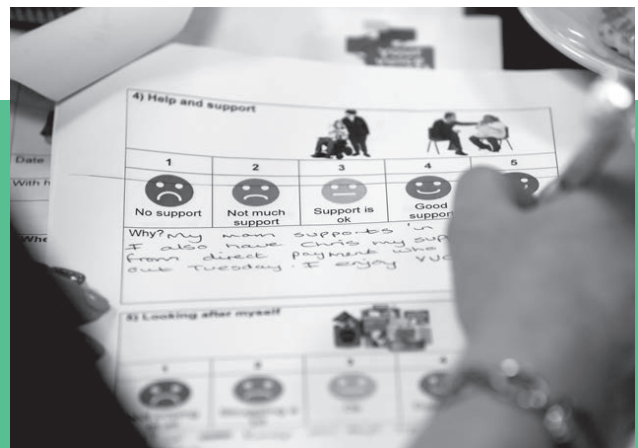
We took part in Advocacy Awareness Week and Safeguarding Adults Week to raise awareness of the role and impact of advocacy where we used case studies and 'day in the life' features to illustrate what advocates do and the difference they make to the people they support.

## Professional development

Our regular supervision and team meetings ensure our advocates are able to reflect and get support around their professional practice but we are also keen to take part in other professional development opportunities to ensure our advocates keep up to date with best practice.

For example, in May 2022, our advocates took part in a dementia interpreter course to help them better understand the communication barriers faced by people living with dementia. We were also pleased that our advocates received training in July around the HOPE(S) model that is designed to reduce the need for restrictive practice in hospital admissions.

Our advocates also benefit from Your Voice Counts' wider staff training and development initiatives and were able to take part in a menopause awareness session delivered in our office in August.



# Our advocacy services

## Independent Care Act Advocacy (ICAA)

Local authorities have a legal duty under the Care Act of 2014 to arrange for an independent advocate to represent and support a person who has a 'substantial difficulty' in understanding the Care Act process and has no one else appropriate to support them.

The aim of our advocates is to enable people to be involved in the relevant Care Act process and to be supported as fully as possible in understanding what is happening, why and what it may mean for them. Where necessary our advocates will represent the person and speak on their behalf and ensure their wishes, feelings and needs are at the heart of the process.

## ICAA in Newcastle



**72 people**  
supported



**1,094**  
hours  
of advocacy

## South Tyneside Community Case Advocacy for people with a learning disability

Our community advocates work with people who have difficulties being involved in decisions that affect them. Community advocates can support people to have their voice and views heard by others, gain access to relevant information to make decisions and to act on information, attend meetings, and assist with issues such as benefits, housing, and to be afforded fair and equal treatment.

Our community case advocacy service also offers support to parents with a learning disability where they are involved with the local authority in child protection procedures.

## Community case advocacy in South Tyneside



**39 people**  
supported



**1,053**  
hours  
of advocacy

## Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)

This service supports people who are detained under the Mental Health Act in hospitals or in the community, helping people to understand what their rights are in relation to their legal situation, their medication and treatment and discharge plans.

They can help the person communicate with medical teams and other appropriate professionals and assist with raising their own issues or complaints. Advocates can attend meetings, tribunals and appeals and assist the person to access legal support.

## IMHA in South Tyneside and Newcastle



**280 people**  
supported



**2,597**  
hours  
of advocacy



# Activities, achievements and performance

## Case study: A joined up advocacy service

Simon was referred to us by the local authority when a decision was being made about where he should live and if a secure setting was the right option for him. Simon has complex needs with a history of offending and drug and alcohol misuse as well as having a learning disability so it was important that he had the support of an advocate to help him understand the process and make sure his human rights were upheld.

"I worked with Simon for over two years - my role was to primarily provide an Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA) service because Simon was deemed to lack capacity to make the decision about where he should live. Simon was clear that he did not want to have his liberty restricted, so as an IMCA I supported him to convey his wishes and help him be involved in the decision-making process as much as possible. On the surface, this involved practical tasks such as arranging independent mental capacity assessments and contributing to the many court hearings, reports and multi-disciplinary team meetings that are a necessary part of any legal process.

"Simon was also entitled to a Relevant Person's Representative so I was also appointed to this role so there would be consistency in the service he received from us. As part of this, I helped Simon to access legal representation and liaised with his solicitor throughout the process, ensuring Simon's wishes were heard and he was supported to understand what was happening.

"It's more than all that though – at the basis of it all was building a relationship with Simon, making sure he trusted me and could rely on me as a consistent presence throughout the process. Some of this was as simple as ringing Simon at a regular time every week, even when I had no updates about his situation, so that he knew he could trust me and that I wouldn't judge him.

"The court finally recommended supported accommodation for Simon and I'm pleased to say he's doing well. He told me that he doesn't want his life to go back to the way it was before he lived there, showing how much progress he's made and just how important it was that he had an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate to represent him and help him challenge the original plan to move him to a secure setting."

Your Voice Counts Advocate

## Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)

Our IMCA service provides independent advocacy for people who are deemed to lack decision-making capacity for a specific decision at the time that decision needs to be made. This might include where they live, what medical treatment they receive, what care and support they need or as part of safeguarding protective measures to ensure they are safe from harm or neglect.

## IMCA in South Tyneside and Newcastle



232 people supported



2,176 hours of advocacy

## Paid Relevant Person Representative (RPR)

RPRs work with people who are subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). They ensure that when it is necessary to deprive someone of their liberty it is the least restrictive option possible to provide the required care and treatment and to keep the person safe from harm. If the person is objecting the advocate can request a review or support the person to access legal support and take their case to the Court of Protection.

## RPR services in South Tyneside and Newcastle



350 new people supported



535 people supported in total



7,007 hours of advocacy



## NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy (NHS ICA)

Our NHS ICA service can help people who live in Gateshead who need support with an NHS complaint. An advocate can help people through the NHS complaints procedure by providing information about the NHS complaints process, helping to draft letters, providing support to prepare for and attend complaints resolution meetings and liaising with NHS complaints teams.

Not everyone making a complaint about the NHS will need an advocate but may benefit from useful information so we can also provide Self-Help Information Packs for people who want to make a complaint by themselves.

## NHS ICA in Gateshead



**63 people supported**



**509 hours of advocacy**



**4 complaints successfully resolved**

## Voice for Families

Our new Voice for Families service uses targeted early intervention to help parents with learning disabilities access the support they need to play a proactive part in family life. This may be through providing support to help people manage and thrive in their role as parents or, where this may not be possible, ensuring parents are supported to be involved in any decision-making that affects their family.

Our advocates can help parents to engage with other services, understand what is happening, put their point across and develop relationships. This can include helping people to navigate the health, legal and social care system, addressing underlying needs (such as housing or financial issues) and working with parents to identify goals, build support networks and develop their skills and confidence.

## Voice for Families in Newcastle and South Tyneside



**5 people supported**



**30 hours of advocacy**

## Case study: Helping parents with learning disabilities have their voices heard

Kim has a learning disability and was supported by our Voice for Families service after experiencing domestic abuse. An advocate supported Kim through family court proceedings and helped Kim access support and develop the relationships needed to improve her circumstances and feel more positive and confident.

"Before my social worker told me about Your Voice Counts I didn't know which way to turn. I was in a really bad situation and didn't feel safe for me and my daughter where I was. My advocate helped me to find a refuge place. She helped me to speak up at lots of meetings about me and my daughter and she went with me to court. I was really nervous but she calmed me down and helped me to understand what was going on. She helped me to get a house and to get back on my feet. She also helped me to build my confidence back up and to get into volunteering at Your Voice Counts."

Kim

## Outcomes for the people support

Through our advocacy services we ensure people receive the support they need to be involved in important decisions about their lives. This year, this has included:



**299**

people deprived of their liberty had their views represented



**279**

people detained under section supported to understand their treatment and hospital discharge plans



**228**

incapacitated people had their rights and views represented while decisions were made by others on their behalf



**72**

people supported to take part in their Care Act assessment or review

# ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

## Operations, Finance and Business Development team highlights

Our team of admin, finance and business development colleagues works behind the scenes to keep everything running smoothly and ensure we act on opportunities to grow and develop, and work towards our business objectives.

### Our People

This year we developed our approach to recruitment, using different advertising styles and channels to advertise roles across our services. These included newly created posts such as our Advocacy Practice Manager, Volunteer Coordinator and Communities Manager roles that are intended to grow our capacity to make improvements and to support our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to making Your Voice Counts a fantastic place to work and are proud of the enhanced benefits package we offer, including death in service, pension salary sacrifice and travel pass schemes that were agreed this year. This year we wrote our People Plan that sets out how we support and develop our staff. Making sure our staff feel valued and receive a fair wage is important to us so we also joined the Living Wage Foundation and adopted the Real Living Wage increase early, along with giving all staff a 5% cost of living pay increase in light of the ongoing cost of living crisis.



Lived experience is at the heart of Your Voice Counts and we're proud that we have created new job roles that increase the number of staff members with lived experience to 20 colleagues.

<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Peer Support Workers	GP Quality Checkers	Commissioning Officer	Peer Researchers	Diabetes Trainer	Care and Treatment Review Experts by Experience	Workforce Advisory Group Facilitator

### Board and Governance

Our long-standing Co-Chair Lisa Kelly stood down from her position as Co-Chair but remains on the Board as an Expert by Experience. We also thank Nick Herron who resigned this year but are pleased to welcome new members Sophie Swanston-Newbrook, Preddi Bononge, Jess Fielding and Matthew Bailey.

We wanted to strengthen our Board by diversifying the range of specialisms and experiences members have, so we carried out a robust recruitment process to ensure we appointed people who help us to do this. Sophie has extensive experience around charity boards and equality, diversity and inclusion and Preddi, Jess and Matthew bring invaluable lived experience of learning disabilities, autism and mental ill health. The field of candidates for our Expert by Experience Board roles was so strong that we also decided to develop a Lived Experience Reference Group to work alongside the Board to further strengthen the voices of people who use our services. We've invited the candidates to join this group which we plan to establish early next year.



Jess Fielding



Preddi Bononge

## Meet our new Co-Chair Matthew

Matthew has been involved with Your Voice Counts for many years after receiving support from us at one of our drop-in groups. Matthew went on to become a volunteer then joined our staff team as our first Learning Disabled Commissioning Officer working as part of South Tyneside Council's Joint Commissioning Unit.



Matthew went on to pursue other opportunities and we're delighted to welcome him back as he takes up the role of Co-Chair of our Board, using his lived experience to challenge and guide us.

## Fundraising



This year, for the first time ever, we entered a team of charity runners into the Great North Run who raised over £2000 in sponsorship. Eight runners, including staff and people who use our services, took part and we are incredibly grateful for their efforts.

We also held our first Your Voice Counts bake-a-thon where people from our regular Cooking with Confidence sessions took on a fundraising challenge to bake 300 cakes in one day.

## Award success

In the space of three weeks we won three national awards: a National Advocacy Award for our advocacy services, a Charity Governance Award for our approach to board diversity and inclusion, and a Weston Charity Award for our communities work. Not only were these awards fantastic recognition of our work at a national level, they provided us with valuable funding through prize money along with strategic business support from Pilotlight charity consultancy. We were incredibly proud of these awards and hope to build on this success in future.

A great day was had by all with £413 raised through sponsorship and the sale of the cakes at Boldon Community Association the following day.

We have also promoted digital ways of supporting us this year, including online shopping via Easyfundraising and Amazon Smile and our 'Donate now' button on our website.

## Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

We want to improve the diversity of our organisation and ensure our services are accessible to all of the communities we support so we have ensured EDI is high on the agenda across all of our services. We continue to run our EDI staff group so our colleagues can help steer this work, and we were pleased to recruit Sophie to our Board so her extensive EDI experience can support us to move forward.

This year we also joined the Connected Voice Haref Allies to support work happening across our region to tackle the health inequalities faced by ethnically minoritised communities.

## Volunteering

Ann Henderson joined us this year as our new Volunteer Coordinator, helping us to develop the volunteering opportunities we offer and supporting the people who volunteer with us to get the most out of their roles. Successes have included increasing the number of volunteers from four to 14, recruiting volunteers with lived experience and supporting two volunteers into paid employment with Your Voice Counts. Ann has also been developing our links with other organisations, local colleges and universities and attending jobs and recruitment fairs.



**2021/22**

Number of  
volunteers



**2022/23**

Number of  
volunteers



Lisa Kelly accepting our Charity Governance Award as YVC Co-Chair

# Our year in numbers

## Communities:



**198**

people supported  
in total

**137**

financial health  
interventions

**123**

people supported with  
vaccinations



## Advocacy:



**1,215**

people supported  
in total

**14,466**

hours spent providing  
advocacy

**228**

incapacitated people had  
their views represented  
during decision-making



## Community fundraising:



**£2,413**

raised

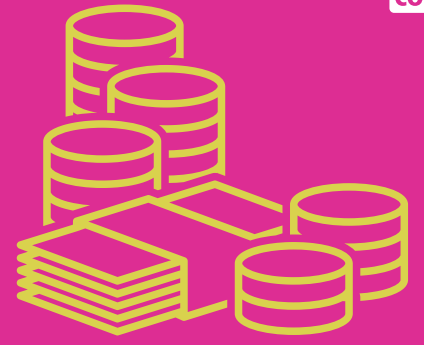
**8**

Great North Run entrants

**445**

cakes baked and sold at  
the YVC Bake-a-thon





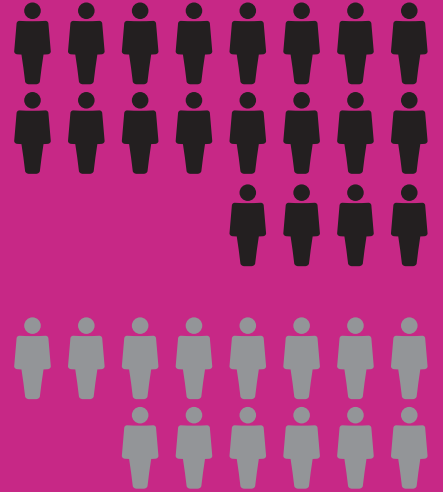
Our team:

20

members of staff with lived experience

14

volunteers



Our finances:



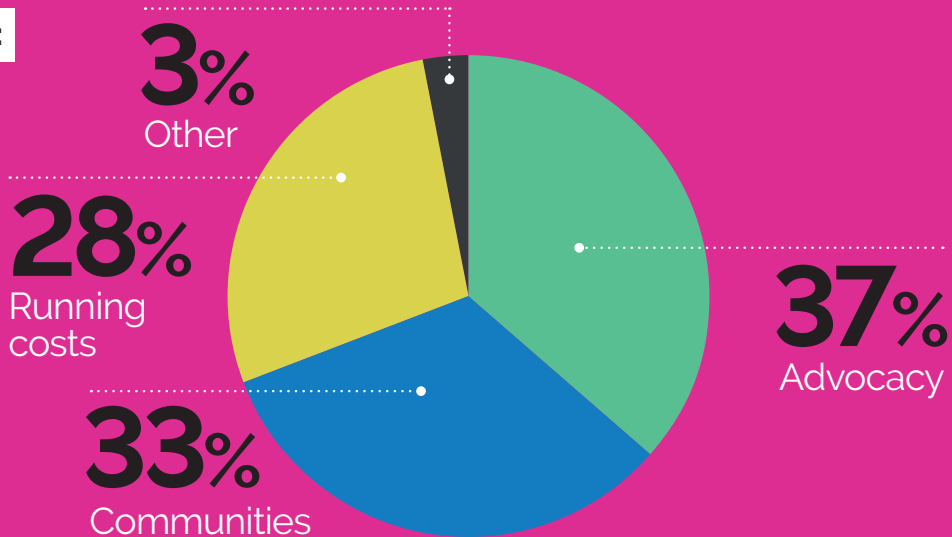
£1,417,746

Income

£1,287,642

Expenditure

How we spent it:





# REVIEW OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Your Voice Counts aims to maintain a robust financial position in the face of continuing economic uncertainty in order to continue delivering much needed services to the people we support.

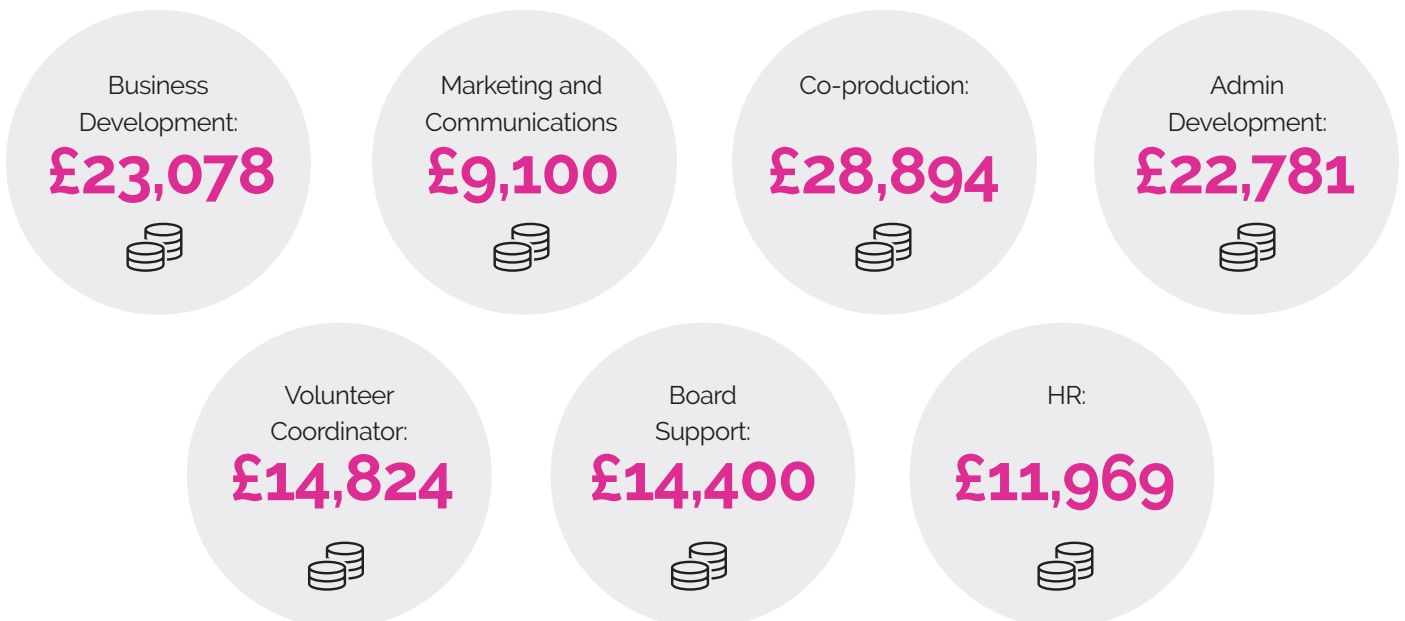
The charity receives most of its funding from statutory sources and grants from foundations and charitable trusts. Our internal structure comprises Advocacy, Communities and Operations and is aligned to our funding sources. We seek to recover our full costs from all projects.

This year, we have been pleased to continue to benefit from contract and services income and from the generosity of grant funders, allowing us to continue to grow our income despite the challenging economic environment: £1,417,746

(2022: £1,144,157). We are extremely grateful to our existing funders, including Lloyds Foundation and The Lottery, to new funders who have supported us this year, and to the trusts and foundations that have supported us through a cost-of-living uplift. We have continued to control our costs and are reporting expenditure of £1,287,642 (2022: £1,061,641).

Trustees continue to monitor financial controls, performance and stewardship via a bi-monthly Finance Committee. Review of treasury and investment management and review of business development remain standing agenda items and we have continued to invest in our Business Development function in order to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Due to this additional income and cost control, we have produced a surplus of £130,104 this year (2022: £82,516). This leaves us with overall reserves of £714,304 (2022: £584,200). Trustees take a forward-looking and proactive approach to financial management and so have again taken the decision to designate funds this year. These funds are for projects we are undertaking over the next two years to improve the infrastructure and capacity of the organisation for the benefit of our clients. The areas we are investing in are:



We hold between three and six months necessary operating expenses as a minimum reserve. Based on the accounts for the year to 31 March 2023, three months would equate to £116,168 and six months to £317,336. Our free reserves (unrestricted funds not invested in tangible fixed assets) stand at £151,216 (2022: £158,592). Our reserves policy is reviewed annually by the Finance Committee.

# FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY



Your Voice Counts takes a proactive and structured approach to fundraising and complies with 'Charity fundraising: a guide to trustee duties (CC20)'. A fundraising strategy is in place and is updated each year and reviewed by trustees. A donations policy is also in place. These were developed using Charity Commission, Fundraising Regulator and Institute of Fundraising guidance.

Your Voice Counts undertakes minimal public fundraising as most of our funding comes from statutory sources and grant funders. The charity does not use a professional fundraiser. The charity has a Business Development function which is managed by the Head of Finance. Fundraising is a standing agenda item on the Finance Committee and this sub-committee of the Board scrutinises all fundraising activity on a bi-monthly basis.

The charity regularly seeks input and advice from Experts by Experience and Advocates by Experience, including those on the Board, on the impacts of all its activities, including

fundraising, on vulnerable people and no issues with its fundraising activity have been raised.

Core funding from Lloyds Foundation supported us to strengthen our operations and to increase our co-production activity, including delivering training across our staff team on embedding co-production approaches.

Funding from Henry Smith enabled our Financial Health Team to provide vital casework and training to people with learning disabilities to improve their financial resilience and address specific financial issues they are facing.

With a three year grant from the Charity of Sir Richard Whittington, we have also launched our new Voice For Families service that helps parents with learning disabilities in Newcastle and South Tyneside to navigate the challenges they face, to have their voices heard when it comes to decision making about their family circumstances, and to improve their support networks.

## Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment. In particular, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have been considered. Based on these assessments, the trustees have concluded that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.



# PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

We have ambitious plans to grow Your Voice Counts over the coming year and are developing our growth and organisational strategies to guide us.

We will focus on key areas of work including:

## **Growing our advocacy offer**

As well as mobilising our new Community Mental Health Advocacy project, we want to position ourselves to expand our advocacy offer by delivering our current services in new areas while also increasing the independent advocacy services we provide across the region.

This will require an organised and thorough approach to tendering and bidding where we can share our impact and demonstrate our experience and expertise in the sector.

## **Establishing and embedding our new Co-Production team**

This year the Board approved investment from our reserves that will enable us to establish a new team that will be dedicated to developing our approach to co-production and supporting even more colleagues with lived experience to gain paid employment with us. We want to get this team up and running and making a difference as soon as possible.

## **Sharing our expertise**

We are approved lead trainers for the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training programme that is being rolled out across NHS and social care staff. We want to share our learning and experience of employing people with lived experience of autism and of learning disability across the sector, and make the most of this opportunity to be involved in delivering this training at scale.

## **Delivering our People Plan**

Our new People Plan sets out our goals for how we will develop and support our staff. This is a substantial and ongoing piece of work so we want to invest in our HR and people management capacity so we have the resources and expertise needed to better support and develop our staff.

## **Governance**

Our Board is committed to being innovative and inclusive and we're proud of the ways we ensure Experts by Experience are a genuine part of our governance. We will continue to invest in our Board support function so that we can ensure lived experience will always be at the heart of our decision-making.



# Your Voice Counts

# TRUSTEES' REPORT

## Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Your Voice Counts for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Disclosure of information to auditor

Each trustee has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information. The trustees confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and of which they know the auditor is unaware.

## Reappointment of auditor

In accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006, a resolution for the re-appointment of Azets Audit Services as auditors of the charity is to be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 24/10/2023 and signed on its behalf by:

*Christina Gates*

.....  
C D Gates  
Trustee



## Your Voice Counts

### Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Your Voice Counts

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Your Voice Counts (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising Charities SORP - FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### Basis for opinion

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

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

#### Other information

The 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.

## Your Voice Counts

### Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Your Voice Counts

#### 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 for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

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

In the light of our 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' 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 trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities (set out on page 27), the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

#### Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

- enquiries of management about any known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their significant accounting estimates;
- reviewing board minutes;

## Your Voice Counts

### Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Your Voice Counts

- auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias; and
- reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to support documentation.

Because of the field in which the charity operates, we identified the following areas as those most likely to have a material impact on the financial statements: Health and Safety; employment law; and compliance with both the UK Companies Act and UK Charities Act.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with the ISAs (UK). For instance, the further removed non-compliance is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the auditor is to become aware of it or to recognise the non-compliance.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://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 trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Simon Brown BA ACA DChA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of

Azets Audit Services

Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditor

Bulman House

Regent Centre

Gosforth

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE3 3LS

Date:

26-10-2023

Azets Audit Services is a trading name of Azets Audit Services Limited

## Your Voice Counts

### Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2023 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	3	12,898	-	12,898	10,135
Charitable activities	4	974,600	423,999	1,398,599	1,130,273
Investment income	5	3,588	-	3,588	1,355
Other income	6	2,661	-	2,661	2,394
Total Income		<u>993,747</u>	<u>423,999</u>	<u>1,417,746</u>	<u>1,144,157</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Charitable activities	7	<u>(1,033,253)</u>	<u>(254,389)</u>	<u>(1,287,642)</u>	<u>(1,061,641)</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>(1,033,253)</u>	<u>(254,389)</u>	<u>(1,287,642)</u>	<u>(1,061,641)</u>
Net (expenditure)/income		<u>(39,506)</u>	<u>169,610</u>	<u>130,104</u>	<u>82,516</u>
Net movement in funds		(39,506)	169,610	130,104	82,516
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		<u>317,108</u>	<u>267,092</u>	<u>584,200</u>	<u>501,684</u>
Total funds carried forward	19	<u><u>277,602</u></u>	<u><u>436,702</u></u>	<u><u>714,304</u></u>	<u><u>584,200</u></u>

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.



## Your Voice Counts

### Comparative Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2022 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2022 £
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>				
Donations and legacies	3	10,135	-	10,135
Charitable activities	4	734,036	396,237	1,130,273
Investment income	5	1,355	-	1,355
Other income	6	2,394	-	2,394
Total income		<u>747,920</u>	<u>396,237</u>	<u>1,144,157</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Charitable activities	7	<u>(799,612)</u>	<u>(262,029)</u>	<u>(1,061,641)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(799,612)</u>	<u>(262,029)</u>	<u>(1,061,641)</u>
Net (expenditure)/income		<u>(51,692)</u>	<u>134,208</u>	<u>82,516</u>
Net movement in funds		(51,692)	134,208	82,516
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward		<u>368,800</u>	<u>132,884</u>	<u>501,684</u>
Total funds carried forward	19	<u>317,108</u>	<u>267,092</u>	<u>584,200</u>

## Your Voice Counts

### (Registration number: 06654142) Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	12	1,651	7,006
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	13	194,250	367,328
Investments	14	80,226	79,287
Cash at bank and in hand	15	497,881	318,831
		<u>772,357</u>	<u>765,446</u>
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	16	<u>(59,704)</u>	<u>(188,252)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>712,653</u>	<u>577,194</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>714,304</u>	<u>584,200</u>
<b>Funds of the charity:</b>			
<b>Restricted</b>			
		<u>436,702</u>	<u>267,092</u>
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>			
Designated funds		125,522	151,510
Unrestricted funds		<u>152,080</u>	<u>165,598</u>
Total unrestricted funds		<u>277,602</u>	<u>317,108</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	19	<u>714,304</u>	<u>584,200</u>

The financial statements on pages 31 to 46 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on ~~24/10/2023~~ and signed on their behalf by:



.....  
M Ife  
Trustee

## Your Voice Counts

### Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash income		130,104	82,516
<b>Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items</b>			
Depreciation		5,355	4,844
Investment income	5	(3,588)	(1,355)
Current asset investment income		(939)	-
		<u>130,932</u>	<u>86,005</u>
<b>Working capital adjustments</b>			
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	13	173,078	(295,762)
Increase in creditors	16	6,452	719
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income		<u>(135,000)</u>	<u>135,000</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities		175,462	(74,038)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Interest receivable and similar income	5	<u>3,588</u>	<u>1,355</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		179,050	(72,683)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April		<u>318,831</u>	<u>391,514</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		<u><u>497,881</u></u>	<u><u>318,831</u></u>

All of the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the above two periods.

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### 1 Charity status

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

The address of its registered office is: 14-16 Greenesfield Business Centre Mulgrave Terrace, Gateshead, England, NE8 1PQ

#### 2 Accounting policies

##### Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

##### Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). They also comply with the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011.

##### Basis of preparation

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

These financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the entity and rounded to the nearest £.

##### Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charity.

##### Estimation uncertainty and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported.

There are considered to be no significant judgements (apart from those involving estimations) that management has made in the process of applying the entity's accounting policies which effect the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

##### Income and endowments

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 the income receivable can be measured reliably.



## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### ***Donations and legacies***

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the charity before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

#### ***Grants receivable***

Grants are recognised when the charity has an entitlement to the funds and any conditions linked to the grants have been met. Where performance conditions are attached to the grant and are yet to be met, the income is recognised as a liability and included on the balance sheet as deferred income to be released.

#### ***Deferred income***

Deferred income represents amounts received for future periods and is released to incoming resources in the period for which, it has been received. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting periods; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

#### ***Investment income***

Investment income is included when receivable.

#### ***Expenditure***

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

#### ***Charitable activities***

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

#### ***Support costs***

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, for example, allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and trustees's meetings and reimbursed expenses.

#### Government grants

Government grants are recognised based on the performance model and are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

#### Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

#### Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

#### Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

<b>Asset class</b>	<b>Depreciation method and rate</b>
Fixtures and fittings	25% reducing balance
Computer equipment	33% straight line

#### Current asset investments

Current asset investments are included at the lower of cost and net realisable value / market value.

#### Trade debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

#### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### Trade creditors

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charity does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

#### Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside for specific purposes at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

#### Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided.

#### Agency accounting

The charity acts as an agent in distributing funds under the NHS Charities Together Community Partnership Grants Programme. Payments received and subsequently disbursed are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities as the charity does not have control over the charitable applicable of the funds.

### 3 Income from donations and legacies

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Regular giving and capital donations	12,898	12,898
	<u>12,898</u>	<u>12,898</u>
	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
Regular giving and capital donations	9,311	9,311
Government grants - HMRC furlough claims	824	824
	<u>10,135</u>	<u>10,135</u>

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### 4 Income from charitable activities

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Advocacy	861,289	39,184	900,473
Grants	113,311	384,815	498,126
	<u>974,600</u>	<u>423,999</u>	<u>1,398,599</u>
	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
Advocacy	679,873	49,715	729,588
Grants	54,163	346,522	400,685
	<u>734,036</u>	<u>396,237</u>	<u>1,130,273</u>

#### 5 Investment income

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Interest receivable and similar income; Interest receivable on bank deposits	<u>3,588</u>	<u>3,588</u>
	<u>3,588</u>	<u>3,588</u>
	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
Interest receivable and similar income; Interest receivable on bank deposits	<u>1,355</u>	<u>1,355</u>
	<u>1,355</u>	<u>1,355</u>



## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### 6 Other income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2023 £
Other income	2,661	2,661
	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2022 £
Other income	2,394	2,394

Other income relates to reimbursed expenses.

#### 7 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Activity undertaken directly £	Activity support costs £	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries and related costs	851,890	241,929	1,093,819	921,839
Premises costs	-	18,562	18,562	19,697
Insurances	-	3,848	3,848	2,370
Light and heat	-	13,016	13,016	3,923
Telephone and internet	9,953	7,073	17,026	10,102
Postage and stationery	35	1,647	1,682	1,788
Bank charges	34	402	436	524
Legal and professional services	-	14,882	14,882	11,413
Training costs	11,100	2,140	13,240	9,137
Subscriptions	-	732	732	727
Room hire	4,058	2,249	6,307	5,701
Travelling expenses	13,434	3,232	16,666	9,840
Repairs and maintenance	-	2,795	2,795	720
Volunteer expenses	309	-	309	205
Accountancy/audit fees	-	7,300	7,300	5,500
Depreciation	3,446	1,909	5,355	4,844
Other costs	37,351	34,316	71,667	53,311
Total for 2023	931,610	356,032	1,287,642	1,061,641

#### 8 Analysis of governance and support costs

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### Governance costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Audit fee	7,300	5,500
	<u>7,300</u>	<u>5,500</u>

#### 9 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

#### 10 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
<b>Staff costs during the year were:</b>		
Wages and salaries	962,071	818,579
Social security costs	75,997	58,860
Pension costs	50,994	42,565
	<u>1,089,062</u>	<u>920,004</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
	No	No
Management	3	3
Finance	1	1
Advocacy, Communities and Operations	50	44
	<u>54</u>	<u>48</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £60,421 (2022 - £58,678).

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### 11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

#### 12 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 April 2022	<u>7,879</u>	<u>21,930</u>	<u>29,809</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>7,879</u>	<u>21,930</u>	<u>29,809</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 April 2022	5,513	17,290	22,803
Charge for the year	<u>715</u>	<u>4,640</u>	<u>5,355</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>6,228</u>	<u>21,930</u>	<u>28,158</u>
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 31 March 2023	<u>1,651</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,651</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>2,366</u>	<u>4,640</u>	<u>7,006</u>

#### 13 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	192,420	365,490
Prepayments	1,385	-
Other debtors	<u>445</u>	<u>1,838</u>
	<u>194,250</u>	<u>367,328</u>

#### 14 Current asset investments

	2023 £	2022 £
Short term deposits	<u>80,226</u>	<u>79,287</u>

#### 15 Cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash on hand	64	75
Cash at bank	<u>497,817</u>	<u>318,756</u>
	<u>497,881</u>	<u>318,831</u>

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### 16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	20,982	15,931
Other taxation and social security	19,871	16,902
Other creditors	-	584
Accruals	18,851	19,835
Deferred income	-	135,000
	<u>59,704</u>	<u>188,252</u>
	2023 £	2022 £
Deferred income at 1 April 2022	135,000	-
Resources deferred in the period	-	135,000
Amounts released from previous periods	(135,000)	-
Deferred income at year end	<u>-</u>	<u>135,000</u>

#### 17 Obligations under leases and hire purchase contracts

##### Operating lease commitments

Total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Other</b>		
Within one year	5,520	37,020
Between one and five years	12,477	49,440
	<u>17,997</u>	<u>86,460</u>

#### 18 Pension and other schemes

##### Defined contribution pension scheme

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge for the year represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £50,994 (2022 - £42,565).

Contributions totalling £4,422 (2022: £3,304) were payable to the scheme at the end of the year and are included in creditors.

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### 19 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<b>General</b>					
General	165,598	993,747	(969,430)	(37,835)	152,080
<b>Designated</b>					
Business development	45,866	-	(22,312)	-	23,554
Finance development	12,463	-	(12,463)	-	-
Communities team	23,268	-	(11,634)	(11,634)	-
Marketing and communications	10,080	-	(9,256)	8,276	9,100
IT infrastructure	8,158	-	(8,158)	-	-
Co-production	28,894	-	-	-	28,894
Admin development	22,781	-	-	-	22,781
Volunteer Coordinator	-	-	-	14,824	14,824
Company Secretary	-	-	-	14,400	14,400
HR Manager	-	-	-	11,969	11,969
	<u>151,510</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(63,823)</u>	<u>37,835</u>	<u>125,522</u>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<u>317,108</u>	<u>993,747</u>	<u>(1,033,253)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>277,602</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Operations	534	-	-	-	534
Community	216,053	384,815	(232,857)	-	368,011
Advocacy	50,505	39,184	(21,532)	-	68,157
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>267,092</u>	<u>423,999</u>	<u>(254,389)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>436,702</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u><u>584,200</u></u>	<u><u>1,417,746</u></u>	<u><u>(1,287,642)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>714,304</u></u>



## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<b>General</b>					
General	265,607	747,920	(758,075)	(89,854)	165,598
<b>Designated</b>					
Business development	50,949	-	(17,628)	12,545	45,866
Finance development	15,476	-	(3,013)	-	12,463
Communities team	23,268	-	(11,634)	11,634	23,268
Marketing and communications	7,500	-	(5,420)	8,000	10,080
IT infrastructure	6,000	-	(3,842)	6,000	8,158
Co-production	-	-	-	28,894	28,894
Admin development	-	-	-	22,781	22,781
	<u>103,193</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(41,537)</u>	<u>89,854</u>	<u>151,510</u>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<u>368,800</u>	<u>747,920</u>	<u>(799,612)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>317,108</u>
<b>Restricted</b>					
Operations	534	-	-	-	534
Community	128,044	346,522	(258,513)	-	216,053
Advocacy	4,306	49,715	(3,516)	-	50,505
	<u>132,884</u>	<u>396,237</u>	<u>(262,029)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>267,092</u>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>132,884</u>	<u>396,237</u>	<u>(262,029)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>267,092</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>501,684</u>	<u>1,144,157</u>	<u>(1,061,641)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>584,200</u>

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

Transfers are made due to capital expenditure in the period.

Designated Funds:

YVC has designated additions funds in the year of £37,835.

Restricted Funds:

Restricted funds represent funds received from statutory sources and grant funders where use of the funds has been specified by the funder. YVC classifies these by business area.

- Advocacy reserves are mainly from statutory sources and are predominantly to be used for advocacy in Newcastle and South Tyneside.
- Communities reserves are mainly from grant funders and are to be used in a variety of individual projects in areas such as Gateshead and South Tyneside.
- Operations reserves are predominantly for core costs.

## Your Voice Counts

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

#### 20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 March 2023 £
	General £	Designated £		
Tangible fixed assets	1,661	-	-	1,661
Net current assets/ (liabilities)	150,419	125,522	436,702	712,643
Total net assets	<u>152,080</u>	<u>125,522</u>	<u>436,702</u>	<u>714,304</u>
	Unrestricted			Total funds at 31 March 2022 £
	General £	Designated £	Restricted £	
Tangible fixed assets	7,006	-	-	7,006
Net current assets/(liabilities)	158,592	151,510	267,092	577,194
Total net assets	<u>165,598</u>	<u>151,510</u>	<u>267,092</u>	<u>584,200</u>

#### 21 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.

#### 22 Agency arrangements

The charity distributed funds to partners under the NHS Charities Together Community Partnership Grants Programme in 2022. In the accounting period ending 31 March 2022, the charity received £47,433 and disbursed £47,433. An amount of £nil was included in creditors at the year end. This arrangement has not continued in the period ending 31 March 2023.



**Thank you to all  
of our partners  
and funders who  
supported us  
during 2022/2023.  
We are grateful for  
your support and  
look forward to more  
joint-working so  
we can continue to  
support the people  
who need us.**

Barbour Foundation  
Charity Governance Awards  
County Durham Community Foundation,  
NHS Charities Together  
Heart Research UK, Healthy Hearts  
grants  
Henry Smith Foundation  
Leeds Community Foundation  
LGA Foundation  
Lloyds Bank Foundation  
Lottery Community Fund  
Morrisons Foundation  
Oliver Ford Foundation  
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington  
Weston Charity Awards

[www.yvc.org.uk](http://www.yvc.org.uk)



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