

Company number: 03110908

Charity number: 1050358

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023



The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux

Contents

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Reference and administrative information 1

Trustees’ annual report.....2

Independent auditor’s report 23

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)..... 27

Balance sheet..... 28

Statement of cash flows 29

Notes to the financial statements 30

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Company number	03110908	
Country of incorporation	United Kingdom	
Charity number	1050358	
Country of registration	England & Wales	
Registered office address	Suite LG 03, Bridge House, 181 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4EG	
Operational address	Royal Courts of Justice Strand LONDON, WC2A 2LL	
	Central London Family Courts 4th Floor, First Avenue House 42–49 High Holborn LONDON, WC1V 6NP	
	Islington Council 222 Upper Street LONDON, N1 8JH	
Directors	The Directors, who are also trustees under charity law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report are detailed within the directors' report.	
Company secretary	Bridgehouse Company Secretaries Suite LG 03, Bridge House, 181 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4EG	
Bankers	C Hoare & Co Limited 37 Fleet Street LONDON, EC4P 4DQ	
Solicitors	Linklaters One Silk St, London LONDON, EC2Y 8HQ	Clifford Chance 10 Upper Bank Street LONDON, EC2V 7JD
Auditor	Sayer Vincent LLP Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor Invicta House 108–114 Golden Lane LONDON, EC1Y 0TL	

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

The directors present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

The Charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of those having business at the Royal Courts of Justice and others living or working throughout England and Wales, in particular in the London Borough of Islington and surrounding areas.

The principal activities of the Charity are:

- Legal advice to litigants in person in civil law funded by the Ministry of Justice Litigant in Person (LIP) strategy until 30th September 2022 then through a Helping Access Legal Support (HALS) Grant and donations from law firms. Other services include:
 - Immigration consultancy advice to Local Citizens Advice through a grant from national Citizens Advice, the Legal Education Foundation and the Kessler Charitable Trust
 - Housing advice to individuals facing or threatened with homelessness, possession of their home, disrepairs or matters relating to anti-social behaviour who are eligible for funding under Legal Aid Agency Contracts in Westminster and Islington.
 - Employment Legal Advice Service (ELAS) funded by Trust for London and the Community Justice fund.
 - Advice and support to victims of miscarriages of justice funded by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).
 - Specialist bankruptcy and debt at the Central London County Court up to 31st August 2022 funded through additional funding from the Ministry of Justice Litigant in Person funding .
- Legal advice to litigants in person in family law (including Time Together child contact centre) primarily funded by the Ministry of Justice through its Litigant in Person funding to 30th September 2022; HALS Grant; by donations from law firms and income from our family legal aid contract. Other services include:
 - A legal aid contract in family law which is confined to complex domestic abuse cases

- A national consultancy service FLOWS (Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors), a domestic abuse legal advice service targeted at front line workers and individual women, including the award winning CourtNav FL401, funded by the Ministry of Justice
- The only child contact centre based within a court, Time Together, which offers supported and supervised child contact from within the Central London Family Court
- Delivering a course that help parents understand how they can put their children first whilst separating through a contract from CAFCASS to deliver Separated Parent Information Programmes (SPIP) across London
- **Citizens Advice Islington** funded by Islington Council and delivering social welfare advice to Islington residents. Services provided by Citizens Advice Islington include:
 - Advice line delivery as a first point of access
 - Generalist advice appointments
 - Specialist advice in welfare benefits, housing and debt
 - Our debt team (funded as part of the Debt Free Advice London partnership) is based in Islington
 - Outreach services across the borough funded through Cripplegate Foundation.

We continued to host the Development Manager for London Local Citizens Advice (LCA), funded through donations from LCAs, overseen by a Steering Group and reporting to the London LCA Chief Officers Group. During this year London LCA were successful in securing £1.2 million from the Greater London Authority for a London-wide Cost of Living Project, which we host and distribute the funds for.

Achievements and Performance

This year, following the HALS funding decision, we have had to move away from a funding model where the Ministry of Justice covers the cost of our core civil and family legal services. Trustees and our Senior Management Team (SMT) spent time devising our long term strategy whilst staff and volunteers continued to deliver against performance targets and respond to the cost of living crisis.

Our mission remains:

We exist to tackle inequality and poverty through the delivery of national and local legal advice, support and information, that ensures people resolve the issues that affect their lives.

We set the following aims in a strategic plan for this current financial year:

Aim 1: Help more Litigants in Person across England & Wales to access civil and family legal advice through a variety of channels which meets and matches their needs and enables them to have access to justice;

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Aim 2: We will ensure vulnerable people are able to have access to justice through advice, information and complementary support, and we will draw attention to the barriers they face;

Aim 3: Citizens Advice Islington will enhance access to quality advice by working collaboratively in the community to ensure local residents receive the holistic support packages they need;

Aim 4: We will be a stronger, more efficient organisation where staff and

volunteers receive the resources they need to do a good job and we are recognised as providing responsive, quality-assured service to clients

Under the “access civil and family legal advice” aim:

- We delivered legal advice, support and representation to 5,399 (3,872 21/22) individuals through our civil and family rotas with pro bono volunteers delivering advice by phone, Zoom and email, addressing 15,309 (14,112 21/22) enquiries across England and Wales.

Civil legal advice

- Our civil legal rota assisted 3,180 people with 6,350 enquiries (2,995 people with 5,728 enquiries 2021/22).

Immigration consultancy

Our immigration legal advice assisted with 3,049 queries from Local Citizens Advice across England and Wales through a consultancy phone line which reached all LCAs (3,017 queries 2021/22). Alongside this service, our immigration solicitor takes on complex OISC level 2 and 3 cases. At the 2022 National Citizens Advice Conference our team won the Most Outstanding Achievement award for the consultancy line.

Housing legal aid

Our Housing and Debt contract from the Legal Aid Agency has responded to housing queries through contacts based in Westminster and Islington. Our team has worked on 36 Legal Help case and 43 Certification cases. Our team have continued to assist people by working on non-legal aid cases for 190 people. The total number of clients helped during the year was 269.

Employment Legal Advice

Our Employment Legal Advice Service (ELAS) reduced to one worker in September 2022. This year they assisted 479 people. ELAS has successfully reached people in low paid work, living in deprived communities. 34% of our clients are white British, 66% represent very diverse ethnicities and 31% are disabled.

Miscarriage of Justice Support Scheme (MCJSS)

For over 20 years, we have delivered advice and support to individuals referred by the Criminal Cases Review Commission to the Court of Appeal resulting in a miscarriage of justice.

Our achievements this year have included:

- The Miscarriage of Justice Support Service has delivered the project in London, East Midlands, West Midlands, North East, North West, Yorkshire and Humber, East of England, South Central, Wales and Northern Ireland Probation Areas
- We worked with 36 very vulnerable clients throughout the year: an increase from 22 in 2021/22. Contact was regular and consisted of 5,976 phone calls, texts and letters providing social welfare advice resulting in increased benefit entitlement, rehousing and grants obtained (2,645 contacts 2021/22) The service delivers a high level of emotional support and provides social welfare casework for clients (96 in 2022/23). Additionally, four of our Local Citizens Advice partners continued to remain in contact with clients during this year.
- We have extensive contact with other agencies such as the DWP, Local Authorities, health services (including GPs, dentists and mental health services) as well as charities, energy providers and local services.

Bankruptcy and debt advice

- A further 73 enquiries were dealt with by our London County Court desk which includes bankruptcy and debt advice. This service was only funded up to the end of August 2022.

Family Legal Advice

- Our family legal rota gave advice to 2,219 clients (2,877 2021/22) and responded to 8,959 enquires (8,384 enquiries 2021/22)
- Our family legal aid contract helped 14 clients during the year with 15 legal help matters and 9 clients were assisted with Legal Aid Certificate funding under the Legal Aid Contract

FLAWS

- FLOWS continue to experience an exceptional increase in demand for their services and assisted 7,238 women with legal advice (7,247 women 2021/22) through our phone and email service and responded to 15,803 enquiries (14,567 2021/22) enquiries which cover domestic abuse, child cases, divorce and finances, and housing and immigration.
- FLOWS worked with University Law Clinics to enhance our phone resources

Volunteers

- We maintained our volunteer workforce of 170 voluntary Honorary Legal Advisers and 30 CAB volunteers who all moved to phone appointments. We found:
 - Pro bono volunteers remain positive about the move to phone appointments
 - Our civil and family front line teams responded by producing processes and tools to aid remote working such as online rota booking, reviewing documents in advance of appointments and having encrypted document sharing
 - Service users responded well, and non-attendance was rare
 - We increased the geographical reach

Under the “achieve justice through advice, information and complementary support” aim

The Charity responded to an increased need for people to access advice through different channels. We designed in-person and digital support packages to complement our legal advice and meet the needs of our clients.

Time Together Contact Centre

Court referrals to Time Together, our child contact service, have increased from 11 the previous year to 20. This year, 152 contact visits took place and the team also responded to 608 enquiries regarding contact. Time Together excels at encouraging positive contact in what are often very challenging situations.

CourtNav

CourtNav FL401 is the award-winning FLOWS tool which supports survivors to complete a domestic abuse injunction application and have this checked by a legal aid provider. During the financial year 10,353 survivors were made safer through CourtNav preparing non molestation and occupation orders, and the initial statement (8,758 2021/22). Solicitors from 125 legal aid firms across England & Wales reviewed 9,214 applications and submitted successful applications (7,768 2021/22). For some women they produced a warning letter. Anyone not wanting to access legal aid is referred back to our RCJ Advice FLOWS team – this team assisted 1,139 women with domestic abuse injunction applications (990 2021/22)

SupportNav

SupportNav, a web resource that delivers information on all areas of advice affecting domestic abuse survivors including housing and immigration. Frontline practitioners are currently the main users of SupportNav. They report they are using SupportNav:

- To guide a survivor through information and advice that enhances the support they give

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

- To signpost survivors to other organisations that can assist them
- To check their own knowledge of a subject area

Separated Parent Information Programme (SPIPS)

Our SPIPS team delivered 507 SPIP sessions over Zoom (485 zoom SPIP sessions 2021/22) to 1,965 separated parents (1,836 separated parents 2021/22). CAFCASS revised the SPIP to a Planning Together for Children programme starting on 3rd April 2023. We were unsuccessful in the tender process and Action for Children deliver the new programme.

Under the "fairer and more accessible Islington" aim

- Adviceline remained the main point of access into Citizens Advice Islington (we have 16 new Adviceline volunteers since 2021/22) with referrals in from our LBI partners, Help on Your Doorstep, Tap, GLA community-based referrals from IBAA IFF, Brickworks, Choices & others) with all volunteers delivering advice safely from our office.
- Citizens Advice Islington continued to deliver generalist advice and casework in person in our office, remotely and by outreach across the Borough.
- We work closely with partners including Islington law Centre (TAP) and Help on Your Doorstep in delivering advice services to vulnerable clients including BSL in person and Zoom and Language Line interpretation.
- Our Citizens Advice Islington services assisted 5,910 people (6,914 people 2021/22) with 14,572 enquiries (14,142 enquiries 2021/22).
- Welfare benefits remains the most frequent type of enquiry and enquiries greatly increased due to Universal Credit. We helped 2,368 with (1,910 2021/22) welfare benefits enquiries and 873 Universal Credit enquiries (including help to claim) queries (3,666 2021/22) making a total of 3,241 welfare benefit enquiries. Our Debt team dealt with 2,327 enquiries (2,370 21/22), Housing responded to 2,215 enquiries (21,691 2021/22) and 1,469 employment enquiries (1,176 2021/22)
- Our team secured in total £326,142 income gain for clients, including £82,942 of Universal Credit entitlement (£81,985 of Universal Credit entitlement for clients in 2021/22) plus. £3,900 re-imbursements and £65,647 other gains.

Our overall achievements

- Across our legal advice and Citizens Advice services we have assisted 31,775 people with 62,480 enquiries (30,510 people with 57,921 enquiries 2021/22).
- We have increased our use of Language Line and British Sign Language interpreters to ensure that our service is widely accessible but know that face to face services are required by a lot of people.

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

- We are seeing an increasing number of people experiencing mental health issues and we are ensuring all staff and volunteers receive support in responding to the stressful situations that are encountered in delivering our services.
- We continue actively to seek client feedback to inform service developments.

Under the “strong and sustainable” aim

- We have held “Blue Sky” planning meetings with Trustees to inform developments.
- We continue to explore flexible working options and have introduced wellbeing support packages for staff and volunteers.
- We have achieved Lexcel accreditation for our legal services and are a London Legal Services Trust Centre of Excellence.
- We have retained our ‘Cyber Essentials’ accreditation. All staff and volunteers achieve GDPR awareness accreditation.
- We comply with, and receive high scores for, every component of our Citizens Advice membership scheme.
- We are providing a range of services to local Citizens Advice Services and advice agencies. Both our Citizens Advice Islington service and Miscarriages of Justice Support Service work with other Citizens Advice services.
- We generated a small amount of unrestricted income through fees for supervised child contact and private SPIP sessions.
- We have successfully maintained Casebook for our Citizens Advice Islington Services, Cross Data for our legal advice services, and Advicepro for our legal aid contract services.
- We maintain ‘Twitter’ accounts for RCJ Advice and Citizens Advice Islington.
- We continue to work actively on policy issues

Plans for the future

Our advice services face a perfect storm of increased demands and funding challenges.

In response to changes and challenges to our funding we continue to review and revise our service delivery specifically:

- To ensure our civil and family services retain the national reach we have achieved and build on this in collaboration with others, including Citizens Advice, national Litigant in Person partners, national networks.
- To expand our FLOWS reach through SupportNav and CourtNav and work more closely with our partner, Rights of Women, to respond to the changes arising from the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- We will build on our hybrid services (including face to face as well as other channels such as digital) in responding to the ongoing global economic challenges.

Public benefit

The directors have considered the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit in reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

The directors confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit.'

The directors confirm the following in relation to the two key principles of public benefit:

Principle 1: There must be an identifiable benefit or benefits

The Charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of those having business at the Royal Courts of Justice or living, visiting or working in the London area.

The directors review the activities of the Charity against its aims on an on-going basis and are satisfied that all activities continue to be related to its aims.

No detriment or harm arising from the activities undertaken by RCJ Advice, including Islington Citizens Advice, has been identified.

Principle 2: Benefit must be to the public or a section of the public

The beneficiaries are individuals from across England and Wales having business at the Royal Courts of Justice. Our debt work is under a London-wide contract for those or living, visiting or working in the London area. A number of clients who suffered a miscarriage of justice live outside London, as do a proportion of our Litigant in Person clients.

We charge a nominal fee for reports from our child contact centre supervised sessions and a small fee for private SPIP sessions. No fees are charged to individuals for our advice services to ensure maximum access. We promote our services widely in order to reach vulnerable sections of the community.

A number of private benefits arise from the activities of the Charity. Individual clients may benefit as a result of obtaining legal advice from the Charity. The Charity also employs and remunerates staff. These are incidental benefits arising from carrying out the Charity's aims.

Structure, governance & management

Governing document

RCJ Advice was formed in November 1978. We became a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 6 October 1995 and registered as a charity on 3 November 1995. The Charity commenced its operations on 7 November 1995. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

All directors give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the Charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the Charity are set out in note 6 to the accounts.

Appointment of directors

A number of the directors have historically been recruited from the law firms that were involved in the major reorganisation of service delivery of the Charity in the 1990s. The Chief Executive is responsible for delivering an induction programme to all new directors. Training opportunities are offered to all directors and a skills audit is conducted biannually.

Organisational structure

The directors of the company are also trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles. The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The Board of Directors ("the Board") meets quarterly and is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the Charity. At present the Board has 18 members from professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the Charity. A scheme of delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the operation of our services rests with the Chief Executive. Client services and delivery are the responsibility of the Director of Legal Services, Director of Family Services and the Director of Citizens Advice Islington. Personnel, ICT and finance matters are the responsibility of the Director of Finance.

The Charity carries out an annual review of salary levels across London Citizens Advice and other relevant organisations including key management posts. Any proposed amendments to salary scales or remuneration of key staff are taken to the Employment & Finance Sub-Committee meeting for initial consideration. Any decision to change salary scales or remuneration levels is then taken to the Board for final decision.

Connected organisations

The Charity is a member of Citizens Advice. Citizens Advice agencies delivering advice services are all individual charities and Citizens Advice itself is also a registered charity, as well as being the membership organisation.

Directors

The following people were directors of the Charity on the date of approval of the report or had been directors during the course of the year.

The Right Honourable Lord Justice Peter Jackson	(Chair)
Mona Vaswani	(Deputy Chair until 31 st January 2023 and resigned on 9 th March 2023)
Patrick Robinson	(Deputy Chair from 1st February 2023)
Nick Atkins	(Treasurer)
Alex Carruthers	
Jon Gale	
James Gilbey	
John Hine	
Paula Hodges KC	
Christine Howard	
Graham Huntley	
Mr Justice Robin Knowles CBE (resigned 28 th January 2023)	

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Roger Leese

Guy Pendell Andrew Denny

Saaman Pourghadiri

Ali Sallaway

Paul Thwaite

Holly Ware

Senior Management Team

Alison Lamb	Chief Executive
Jeanette Daly Mathias	Chief Operating Officer Citizens Advice Islington
Rebecca Scott	Director of Legal Services
Rita Suglani	Director of Family Services
Alex Lowry	Head of FLOWS
Janice Massingham	Director of Finance

Financial review

2022/23 has seen us face funding challenges. Hand in hand with this we continue to see an increase in demand for our services as clients grapple with the ongoing cost of living crisis and reduction in the availability of assistance across the legal advice sector. Our staff and volunteers have continued to deliver support and deliver outcomes for our clients under difficult circumstances, whilst they themselves are faced with the impact of the rising cost of living.

This year we saw a reduction in our main funding stream from the Ministry of Justice Litigant in Person funding which was replaced from the 1st October 2022 by the Help Accessing Legal Support (HALS) funding. Our annual grant of £422,976 from the Litigant in person funding stream reduced to an equivalent grant value of £150,000 per annum from HALS (£75,000 for the half year to 31st March 2023). We had already anticipated a potential reduction and delay in ongoing funding and in May 2022 launched an appeal to the City law firms which work with, and support, us to raise funds to cover a potential funding gap. The appeal was supported by the Master of the Rolls and the Chancellor of the High Court. We are extremely grateful to the firms which donated a total of £126,100 to the emergency appeal as well as those which continued to provide ongoing annual donations. This funding ensured we could continue to provide our core civil and family legal team services for the second half of the year, albeit with a reduced staff infrastructure, whilst we continued to work on plans to diversify our future income to continue to deliver and put planned developments of these services in place.

Despite the extremely challenging circumstances, we are pleased to report a good result for the year. We have managed to achieve a small surplus without having to draw on our reserves. The total surplus for the year was £624,180, with an increase in our unrestricted general reserves of £60,673 after transfers between funds. The net surplus on restricted reserves in the year is

£563,507 which relates almost entirely to the surplus on the London Citizens Cost of Living Project funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA). This surplus relates to a timing difference due to the delay in getting the project, which is delivered by 20 local citizens advice

services across London through grant payments, fully mobilised by the start date of August 2022.

During the year we secured: new funding of £166,573 per annum for two years from 1st December 2022 from the Kessler Foundation to fund the continuation of our successful 2nd tier immigration consultancy service supporting local citizens advice with immigration advice; £14,672 from Access to Justice Foundation to support employment advice during the cost of living crisis; HALS grant of £75,000 for our civil and family legal teams; £15,000 from Citizens Advice for a cost of living advice assistant for Islington Advice services; and a Cafcass grant of £2,500 to support costs of delivering the Time Together Child Contact Centre. In addition, the London Citizens Advice GLA cost of living project started in July 2022, which is hosted by RCJ Advice and received income of £960,000 in the year – most of which has or will be distributed as grants to other London Citizens Advice services delivering the project.

We have continued to be successful in retendering and securing ongoing funding from current funders for our established services including: renewal of Miscarriage of Justice funding totalling £300,000 for three years to 31st March 2026 for the Miscarriage of Justice Support service; renewal of our Debt Free Advice grant to 31st March 2024 from Toynbee Hall; FLOWS continues to be funded by the Ministry of Justice until 31st March 2025; Islington Advice is funded until 31st March 2024, with funding in place from Cripplegate Foundation for outreach advice services in Islington until October 2025; and renewal of funding for the London Citizens Advice Development project hosted by RCJ Advice which continued to be funded by 27 local citizens services.

The Legal Aid agency housing contract has performed well this year with a significant increase in income of £43,492 (after excluding an exceptional write-off of £19,382 for an old inter partes debt which was unrecoverable). This increase was achieved despite our second housing solicitor only joining in May 2022 and inevitably taking some time to build up a caseload.

Sadly, the SPIPS contract has now come to an end and the staff who worked on the project have been transferred by TUPE to the new provider. The SPIPS contract has been a considerable success both operationally and financially.

As we move forward our key funding risk continues to be securing longer term income for our core civil and family services as well as bridging gaps from the impact of standstill funding year on year in the current climate of a cost of living crisis where costs continue to rise without income keeping pace. Our Trustee Board held a Blue Sky planning meeting in November 2022 to firm up plans for future funding for our core legal services. We are currently working with firms to establish a committed funding stream to support our civil and family teams going forward alongside income from trusts and new earned income.

The Islington Advice service is funded by the Islington Council Voluntary Sector grant. This grant is being retendered in the summer of 2023 with new three year funding to be in place from 1st April 2024. We are optimistic a securing ongoing funding for our services. The grant from the Cripplegate Foundation to provide the three advice project outreach services in the borough, along with other Islington specific funding, complement the core service.

RCJ Advice & Islington Advice continues to monitor its supplier contracts and costs to ensure we achieve value for money and the most effective use of resources. Our largest non-salary spend continues to be IT Support both for our core systems as well as support and development of Courtnav and Supportnav. We have successfully completed and renewed our Information Assurance Small and Medium Enterprises and Cyber security accreditation.

We are sad to lose the services of Electric Putty, which is closing and which has been instrumental in working with us on the development and support of our award winning Courtnav module and Supportnav. Electric Putty have assisted us with finding a new provider Studio Republic who are well placed to carry on this work and provide a smooth transition of services.

The Charity's income for the year was £4,092,345 (compared to £3,316,822 in 2021/22). The net increase of £775,523 in income results from the net changes in funding streams across established service offset by new London Citizens Advice GLA Cost of Living Project and an increase in donation income of £122,229 relating principally to the emergency funding appeal.

Other specific project income changes are as follows:

- A decrease in Bankruptcy and Debt income of £58,874 compared to 2021/22 due to no performance bonus being payable on this year's contract.
- Civil and family legal services income decreased by a total of £193,560 compared to 2021/22 due to changes in different income streams starting or finishing during the year:
Reductions in income year on year relate to: the immigration project £33,425 as the average number of staff employed on the project in 2022/23 was less; a reduction in funding for the civil and family legal services Litigant in Person funding (£143,987); the end of the Support Through Court family solicitor funding at 30th September 2022 (£34,870) from LIPS; the Justice First Fellowship funding ended on 31st December 2022 (£14,015); and movement from funding streams which have ceased before or during this year including Enfield council housing (£11,545), and Kickstart placements (£3,069). Increases in income from 2021/22 relate to: family legal aid income (£4,206); Trust for London grant drawn down for the employment advice project in the year (£16,380 more); new income from the Access to Justice fund for employment advice £14,672; a one off grant of £2,500 for Time Together in 2022/23 and other income from Time Together fees; and student placement (£1,460).
- Income for the FLOWS project decreased by £14,900 due to a one off grant having been received in 2021/22.

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

- Housing legal aid income increased by £24,110 an increase in performance which we anticipate continuing in 2023/24.
- Islington Advice net income decreased by £69,809 reflecting changes in funding for additional services outside the core advice services funded by London Borough of Islington.
- Funding for the London Citizens Advice Development project decreased by £14,656 as a new payment structure for grants was introduced with higher contributions from larger Citizens Advice.
- Income from the GLA for the new London Citizens Advice Cost of Living project totalled £960,000 representing 80% of the total annual funding of £1.2million. Expenditure is lagging as a result of delays in mobilising the project and difficulties across citizens advice services in recruiting to the advice posts.
- The Separated Parents Information Service (SPIPS) income increased by £14,513 in 2022/23 due to an increased number of clients attending sessions in the year (1,974 in 2022/23 and 1,840 2020/21 after write off of unrecoverable fees).

We are enormously grateful for the continuing support of donors who have made donations to the annual appeal, as well as regular annual donations of funds and pro bono support.

Total services in kind this year from all donated services is valued at £376,939 (2021/22: £348,545) an increase of £28,394.

This change reflects:

- The pro bono hours for human resources consultancy support of £35,311 compared to £19,241 in 2021/22 provided by Herbert Smith Freehills LLP. This support is based on need and reflects the continuing work during the year on the review of our Staff Handbook and contracts of employment as well as routine advice on HR matters.

Total in-kind hours donated by Honorary Legal Advisers decreased slightly this year from 1,795 to 1,638 with sessions mainly delivered remotely by telephone and Zoom. Where requested or needed for vulnerable clients appointments are in person. The civil legal advisers delivered 863 (2021/22:863) sessions valued at 75 minutes per session. This reflects the additional time outside the appointment spend on preparation and follow-upwork for clients. For the family rota, HLAs delivered 822 appointments at one hour per appointment (932: 2021/22 at 45 minutes per appointment). The hourly rate used to value the services in kind is based on the level of experience of solicitors volunteering in the case of the civil rota costed at the published solicitors hourly rates and for the family rota the hourly rate reflects the market value of volunteers donating their time. The hourly rate for

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

civil solicitors changed in October 2021 and the family solicitors average time spent has increased to one hour compared to 45 minutes, hence the increase in monetary value of services in kind despite the number of hours decreasing year to year.

We continue to have an ongoing programme to recruit and train Honorary Legal Advisers from City legal firms to meet the demand of the civil rota and from family practices to meet the significant demand for our family legal advice service.

Services in kind continue to represent a significant and important contribution to the work of the Charity in meeting client need.

The Charity continues to benefit from a significant donation of time from volunteers who provide general advice to members of the public at Islington Advice or who volunteer in administrative roles or as a trustee of the Charity. In accordance with the SORP, this time is not included in the accounts, but the value of the contribution has remained unchanged and is estimated at £123,311(2022/23: £123,311).. We have a programme of continual recruitment and training of volunteers across the services as a significant number of our volunteers successfully move on to paid employment.

The Charity's total expenditure in 2022/23 was £3,468,165 (compared to £3,241,071 in 2021/22), a total increase of £227,094. Of this increase, £395,393 relates to the costs of the new London Citizens Advice GLA Cost of Living project and £34,952 to the increased costs of the London Citizens Advice Development project which had a full year of operation in 2022/23 compared to six months in 2021/22. The adjustment in the 2022/23 accounts for the movement of the annual leave accrual (£11,095) which accounts for staff annual leave entitlement at the year-end date accrued but not taken was £49,151 lower than in the 2021/22 accounts (£60,245). The movement was materially higher in 2021/22 as we held a high level of accrued leave from the Covid lockdown period 2020/2021, when staff had accumulated large balances of untaken annual leave that was reversed in 2021.

After accounting for these changes the balance of the net decrease in expenditure of £252,402 reflects the operational changes associated with the changing income streams across established projects. The significant changes in expenditure is related to:

- A net increase of £8,664 in bankruptcy and debt total spend. Of this increase, £12,408 relates to the increase in salary costs of which £6,347 is the reduction in the annual leave accrual; £3,606 one off costs of a debt advice assistant for four months and £1,904 annual leave costs for specialist debt adviser on leaving. The balance of the variance is explained by a

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

reduction in the support costs recharge as the project management moved from the Chief Executive to the Chief Operating Officer Islington Advice.

- Civil and family legal team costs reduced by £133,377 in 2022/23. The net change reflects: a reduction in costs for the civil and family legal team as a support worker vacancy was put on hold due to funding uncertainties; the specialist employment caseworker left in August 2022 and was not replaced due to funding constraints; the Support Through Court family solicitor project ended on 30th September 2022; and the Justice First Fellowship trainee solicitor qualified and moved to a new post in December 2022. The immigration team staff reduced in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 due to a reduction in the staff numbers in the team from July 2022 and the reduction in the annual leave accrual in 2022/23 was £24,321 less than in 2021/22.
- Expenditure on the FLOWS project decreased by £33,054 in 2022/2023. Of this £8,525 relates to the decrease in the annual leave accrual adjustment. There was no additional funding for the project this year above the core grant of £800,000 from the Ministry of Justice meaning we had to make savings in salary and direct project costs, including marketing and development costs, to ensure the project spend did not exceed the funding available.
- An increase in housing expenditure of £14,877 in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22. This change is due to the increased support costs of the Billing Clerk and Paralegal post which was partly covered by the Litigant in Person grant until 30th September 2022 but in the second half year was self-financing from income from the legal aid contracts.
- A net decrease in Islington Advice spend by £79,423 which mainly relates to the cessation of the Citizens Advice Universal Credit project at the end of 2021/22. The new cost of living project spend compensated for only a small amount of this change in expenditure. In August 2022 an advice session supervisor post which had supported outreach work for the Universal Credit project was redundant resulting in further savings.
- Expenditure on the Miscarriage of Justice project increased by £6,799 compared to 2020/21. Salary costs increased by £2,793 which relates to the increase in the annual leave accrual adjustment of £6,597 less savings on salary costs due to a two month recruitment gap for the Well-Being coordinator and caseworker. Support costs increased in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 due to more time spent on the project strategy and management by the Chief Executive.
- A small increase of £7,622 expenditure on the SPIPS projects compared to 2021/22 which is mainly related to the increase in staff costs of £2,819 as a result of payment of accrued annual leave paid to staff when the project was transferred and an increase in trainer fees due to more sessions being delivered in 2021/22.

Restricted reserves carried forward at 31st March 2023 include:

- In civil and family: £7,430 funding for the translation and interpreting costs for families attending the Time Together Child Contact Centre; £4,246 funding for the Immigration consultancy service in 2023/24; £(5,546) spend relating to the employment project which will be met from grants received in 2023/24 year.
- £25,178 towards the continuing development of the CourtNav and SupportNav online tools.
- £39,759 of Islington Council funding and £13,750 of an annual grant for the cost of living advice funded by Citizens Advice .
- £28,200 of funds provided by London Citizens Advice Services for the costs of the London Citizens Advice Development Manager in 2023/24
- £557,689 of funds for the GLA London Citizens Advice Cost of Living project to be spent in 2023/24.

The Charity held funds of £1,469,729 at 31st March 2023 of which £674,947 related to restricted funds (set out above) and £794,782 to unrestricted funds. Of the unrestricted funds, £6,916 was tied up in fixed assets and £176,597 in work in progress on legal aid family and housing contracts.

Fundraising

The Chief Executive leads on all fundraising activities and submits all bids for contracts and grants. RCJ Advice does not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators. We do not seek donations from individuals or use third parties to undertake fundraising activities on our behalf. The Charity has received no complaints in relation to fundraising.

Reserves Policy

The directors have reviewed the reserves of the Charity. The review encompassed an analysis of current and future income streams, the identification of the core services that are provided by the Charity and the likelihood of income continuing in the future. The directors have adopted a risk-based approach. An analysis was undertaken of our services alongside a review of committed expenditure for all service delivery areas, cash flow and consideration of the major risks to which the Charity is exposed.

Reserves levels have been reviewed based on the impact on funding in the charitable sector posed by the change in available funding levels to support litigant in persons, the cost of living crisis and the risk of a global economic downturn together with our current experience of a reduced funding available and delays in the agreement and receipt of established core funding grants. The directors consider that it would take at least three months to replace

funding for the Charity's core strategic services and/or to restructure or wind down the services

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

in response to a reduction or complete loss of funding. Accordingly, the reserve should represent the expenditure that would be incurred during such period in continuing to deliver and/or in restructuring the affected services and meeting any closure costs associated with winding down areas of services and notice and redundancy of staff. At current levels of activity, the prudent level of reserves required is £575,000 to protect key core purpose and essential legal advice services and infrastructure costs and if necessary transfer services to another provider.

The current level of free reserves is £611,269 the value of the general funds. Designated funds held of £183,513 are not included as they represent the fixed assets and work in progress reserve which are not easily realisable.

Risk Management

The Board carries out an annual risk management review to update its risk register.

The Charity's risk register is reviewed, monitored and updated quarterly by the Employment & Finance Sub-Committee. It is reported to all directors on a quarterly basis at the full Board meetings. The Board has assessed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Charity and is satisfied that systems are in place to manage our exposure to the major risks.

A summary of the major risks is set out below:

Principal risks / uncertainties	Actions in place to manage risk
Significant reduction or loss of income; delays in funding decisions and inability to replace funding for strategically important projects in the short term.	<p>Regular liaison and meetings with funders and stakeholders.</p> <p>Ongoing programme of promotion of new strategically important and national services to raise the profile of project work and embed importance of services as part of the organisations core offer.</p> <p>A fundraising plan is in place to identify and establish new funding streams for the medium to longer term and diversify income to reduce the risk of dependency on individual high value funders. This plan is reviewed quarterly by the Employment & Finance Sub-Committee. Ongoing development of service delivery is launched to meet changing client need.</p>

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Phasing out or end of funding for FLOWS and Litigants in Person funding generally in the future.	Maintain key contacts / communications re importance of FLOWS strategy, Litigant in person national strategy and what it is delivering. Ongoing relationship with HMCTS to embed FLOWS developments into the court service.
Risk of terrorist attack at main office sites – Royal Courts of Justice, Family Legal Centre & Islington council.	Staff and volunteers are consulted and advised on procedure in the event of terrorist attack. Provision is put in place to implement the procedure
Lack of time / resources to effectively plan and implement processes and procedures needed for SMART working including new projects.	Recruit skilled and experienced staff. Ensure budgets for new projects include appropriate costs to fully support the project and any extra resource implications for the whole organisation on full cost recovery basis. Behaviour beliefs are embedded and applied in recruitment and induction process for new staff. Introducing and enforcing processes with timely reviews.
Impact of operating with skeleton staff structure in an environment of uncertainty in respect of sustainable funding going forward.	Regular communication with staff on funding and finance Regular review of resources and procedures to ensure most effective use of budgets / funding.
System security and permissions compromised (virus, hackers, cyber-attack) Data compromised.	All main systems are cloud based delivered by providers with appropriate accreditations and cyber security. Quarterly review meetings in place with IT support provider. Permission and set up / deletion of cloud accounts is restricted to nominated authorised staff only. Multifactor Authentication or two factor sign is in place for all key systems. Homeworking data protection and acceptable use policies are in place. Information Assurance Small Medium Enterprises (IASME) and Cyber Essentials Combined Scheme Self

Assurance accreditation has been achieved and is renewed annually.

Data protection obligations not met resulting in loss of data

Data protection and security policies are in place and form part of the office manual which is accessible to all staff and volunteers.

Staff and volunteers undertake annual data protection training.

R Mail encrypted e-mail is in place. Cyber insurance is in place.

Home working policy is in place with restricted access to systems by mobile devices.

Audit of personal equipment used by staff for home working is carried out annually and as part of induction for new staff and volunteers.

A detailed complaints procedure is in place and clients are advised of this when their case is taken on. A full complaints report is presented to the Service Delivery Sub-Committee and to all directors on a quarterly basis.

Health and Safety is within the remit of the Director of Finance and key health and safety risks are identified and monitored as part of the organisation's risk assessment process.

Statement of directors' responsibilities

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

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2022

- 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 operation.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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.

So far as the directors are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the directors have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP was re-appointed as the charitable company's auditor during the year and has expressed its willingness to continue in that capacity.

The directors' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the directors on 26 July 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Nicholas Mark Atkins
Director

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux (the 'charitable company') 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 significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 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
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors 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 ability of The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux's to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the directors' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The directors are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- The information given in the directors' annual report, including the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The directors annual report, including the strategic report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' annual report including the strategic report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

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

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the statement of directors responsibilities set out in the directors annual report, the directors (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors 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 directors are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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 are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

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

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

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

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

Use of our report

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

Joanna Pittman (Senior statutory auditor)

31 July 2023

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	211,837	–	211,837	89,608	–	89,608
Charitable activities							
Bankruptcy & Debt	3a	13	178,091	178,104	58,385	178,593	236,978
Civil & family	3b	387,757	594,939	982,696	375,761	796,304	1,172,065
FLOWS	3c	100	800,000	800,100	–	815,000	815,000
Housing	3d	87,328	–	87,328	63,218	–	63,218
Islington Advice	3e	3,875	503,974	507,849	7,207	570,451	577,658
London Citizens Advice							
Development	3f	–	50,344	50,344	–	65,000	65,000
London Citizens Advice GLA Cost of Living Advice	3g	–	960,000	960,000	–	–	–
Miscarriage of Justice	3h	–	98,544	98,544	–	98,854	98,854
SPIPS	3i	212,889	–	212,889	198,376	–	198,376
Investments		2,654	–	2,654	65	–	65
Total income		906,453	3,185,892	4,092,345	792,620	2,524,202	3,316,822
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		737	–	737	356	–	356
Charitable activities							
Bankruptcy & Debt		13,496	178,091	191,587	4,330	178,593	182,923
Civil & family		499,939	600,837	1,100,776	381,610	852,543	1,234,153
Courtnav		–	4,363	4,363	–	103	103
FLOWS		4,589	800,000	804,589	8,734	828,909	837,643
Housing		124,771	–	124,771	109,894	–	109,894
Islington Advice		15,609	484,209	499,818	8,790	570,451	579,241
London Citizens Advice							
Development		4,401	62,030	66,431	1,385	30,094	31,479
London Citizens Advice GLA Cost of Living Advice		2,135	393,258	395,393	–	–	–
Miscarriage of Justice		4,905	98,544	103,449	(2,204)	98,854	96,650
SPIPS		176,251	–	176,251	168,629	–	168,629
Total expenditure	4a	846,833	2,621,332	3,468,165	681,524	2,559,547	3,241,071
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	6	59,620	564,560	624,180	111,096	(35,345)	75,751
Transfers between funds		1,053	(1,053)	–	(2,500)	2,500	–
Net movement in funds		60,673	563,507	624,180	108,596	(32,845)	75,751
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		734,109	111,440	845,549	625,513	144,285	769,798
Total funds carried forward		794,782	674,947	1,469,729	734,109	111,440	845,549

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17 to the financial statements.

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux

Balance sheet

Company no. 03110908

As at 31 March 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	11		6,916		30,083
Current assets:					
Work in progress		176,597		146,277	
Debtors	12	452,039		560,373	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,100,817		408,157	
			1,729,453	1,114,807	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(238,117)		(264,986)	
Net current assets			1,491,336		849,821
Total assets less current liabilities			1,498,252		879,904
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	15		(28,523)		(34,355)
Total net assets	17a		1,469,729		845,549
The funds of the charity:	18a				
Restricted income funds			674,947		111,440
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		183,513		30,083	
General funds		611,269		704,026	
Total unrestricted funds			794,782		734,109
Total charity funds			1,469,729		845,549

Approved by the trustees on 26 July 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Nicholas Mark Atkins
Director

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	624,180	75,751
Depreciation charges	26,960	28,347
Loss on disposal fixed assets	–	1,124
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	(2,654)	(65)
(Increase) in work in progress	(30,320)	(80,878)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	108,335	50,436
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(26,869)	(114,598)
Net cash provided by operating activities	699,632	(39,883)

	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities				
Net cash provided by operating activities		699,632		(39,883)
Cash flows from investing activities:				
Purchase of fixed assets	(3,793)		–	
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	2,654		65	
Net cash provided (used in) investing activities		(1,139)		65
Cash flows from financing activities:				
Net repayment of pensions deficit	5,833		3,907	
Receipt of endowment	–		–	
Net cash provided by / (used in) financing activities		(5,833)		(3,907)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		692,660		(43,725)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		408,157		451,882
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		1,100,817		408,157

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales.

The registered office address is C/O Waterstone Company Secretaries Ltd, Suite LG 03, Bridge House, 181 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4EG

b) Basis of preparation

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) (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

c) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The Trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

Sufficient funding is secured until 30 July 2024 with adequate reserves and cashflow in place to enable the organisation to continue operating for the foreseeable future.

Accordingly, the Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern and the going concern position is appropriate.

e) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

For donated legal services the value of the donated services is an estimated figure based on the average value the civil lawyers firm places on their time and the external market salary rate in the case of family lawyers.

g) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

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

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services and other activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1 Accounting policies (continued)**j) Allocation of support costs**

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time of the amount attributable to each activity

● Raising funds	0.08%
● Bankruptcy and Debt	7.90%
● Civil & Family	31.29%
● FLOWS	22.25%
● Housing	6.17%
● Islington Advice	16.62%
● Citizens Advice London Development Project	2.21%
● Citizens Advice London GLA Cost of Living Project	4.11%
● Miscarriage of Justice	5.42%
● SPIPS	3.95%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

k) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

l) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use. Major components are treated as a separate asset where they have significantly different patterns of consumption of economic benefits and are depreciated separately over its useful life.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

● Fixtures and fittings & Computer equipment	4 years
--	---------

m) Work in progress

Work in progress represents the value of casework earned and due on open Legal Help escape fees and Legal Aid cases in housing and family matters. The cases are opened under the Legal Aid Agency Contract and are not completed at 31st March 2023.

Work in progress is valued on the basis of the spent on the matter multiplied by the relevant legal aid or interpartes rate. While some WIP will be recoverable within 12 months and some over 12 months, it is not possible to calculate this split with accuracy. The charity accounts for WIP as a current asset as it aims to recover WIP within the shortest possible timeframe; however, WIP is excluded from the free reserves of the charity and shown as a designated fund as the asset cannot easily be converted into cash.

n) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

o) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

p) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

q) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

r) Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution scheme for its employees and contributes to the personal pension plan of employees. Contributions are charged to the financial statements as they become payable.

The charity previously participated in a defined benefit pension scheme where its contributions are affected by any surplus or deficit in the scheme but is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities in the scheme on a consistent and reliable basis. In accordance with FRS 102, the charity has therefore treated its pension contributions to the scheme as if they were paid to a defined contribution scheme. As the charity has an agreed deficit contribution scheme in place, a liability has been included for the value of these future payments, discounted to their present value.

The scheme is now closed and deficit contributions amount to £3,000 per annum in respect of the one remaining member of this scheme.

s) Partner payments

Partner payments in the form of grants are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects, specifically for the FLOWS project. Grants are accounted for quarterly on receipt of expenditure returns with supporting evidence of spend on the project.

t) Holiday pay accrual

Accruals for holiday pay are recognised at the year-end using the undiscounted costs of any unused paid annual leave expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

2 Income from donations and legacies

	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Allen & Overy LLP	10,000	10,000
Ashhurst LLP	10,000	
Central London Collaborative Forum	-	3,001
Clyde & Co LLP	10,000	-
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	25,000	25,000
Gowling WLG (UK) Charitable Trust	1,000	-
Herbert Smith Freehills LLP	10,000	6,000
Hogan Lovells LLP	10,000	-
Kingsley Napley LLP	5,000	-
Linklaters LLP	10,000	5,000
London Legal support Trust	10,000	10,000
London Legal walk	2,468	1,365
Mishcon De Raya LLP	10,000	-
Morrison & Foerster LLP	5,000	-
Signature Litigation LLP	5,000	-
Slaughter & May Charitable Trust	18,000	8,000
Stephenson Harwood LLP	10,000	-
Stewarts Law LLP	10,000	-
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP	10,000	-
Other donations & gifts	5,058	2,001
Donated services – Human resources & consultancy **	35,311	19,241
	211,837	89,608

All income from donations and legacies is unrestricted.

** The pro bono human resources services represents support and advice provided by Herbert Smith Freehills LLP totaling **£35,311** (2022: £19,241)

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £
Capitalise Money Advice Service (formally BIS)	-	178,091	178,091	58,385	178,593	236,978
CitA Project grants	13	-	13	-	-	-
Therium Access	-	-	-	-	-	-
3a Sub-total for Bankruptcy & debt	13	178,091	178,104	58,385	178,593	236,978
Access to Justice Foundation – Employment	-	14,672	14,672	-	-	-
CAFCASS– Time Together	-	2,500	2,500	-	-	-
Citizens Advice – Immigration Consultancy	-	105,034	105,034	2,925	75,000	77,925
Enfield Council	-	-	-	-	11,545	11,545
Kessler Foundation – Immigration Consultancy service	-	55,524	55,524	-	-	-
Kickstart placement – Charity Works	5,426	-	5,426	8,495	-	8,495
Legal Aid Agency	38,938	-	38,938	34,732	-	34,732
Legal Education Foundation – Immigration consultancy	-	-	-	-	116,058	116,058
Legal Education Foundation – Justice First Fellowship Trainee solicitor	-	39,048	39,048	-	53,063	53,063
London Metropolitan University placement fees	420	-	420	-	-	-
Ministry of Justice (Litigant in Person and HALS)	-	298,988	298,988	-	442,975	442,975
Pro Bono Legal Services*	341,628	-	341,628	329,304	-	329,304
Support through Court	-	31,566	31,566	-	66,436	66,436
Time Together Child Contact Centre fee	1,345	-	1,345	305	-	305
Trust for London Employment Advice	-	47,607	47,607	-	31,227	31,227
3b Sub-total for civil & family	387,757	594,939	982,696	375,761	796,304	1,172,065

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

3 Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £
Legal Education Foundation	-	-	-	-	15,000	15,000
Ministry of Justice	-	800,000	800,000	-	800,000	800,000
Other income	100	-	100	-	-	-
3c Sub-total for FLOWS	100	800,000	800,100	-	815,000	815,000
Legal Aid Agency	87,328	-	87,328	63,218	-	63,218
3d Sub-total for Housing	87,328	-	87,328	63,218	-	63,218
Cloudesely	-	2,368	2,368	-	-	-
Citizens Advice services	145	15,000	15,145	-	104,271	104,271
Cripplegate Foundation	-	36,606	36,606	-	16,180	16,180
Islington Council	-	450,000	450,000	-	450,000	450,000
Kickstart – Richmond Citizens Advice	3,730	-	3,730	7,207	-	7,207
3e Sub-total for Islington Advice	3,875	503,974	507,849	7,207	570,451	577,658
London Citizens Advice services	-	-	-	-	65,000	65,000
Sub-total for London Citizens Advice	-	-	-	-	-	-
3f Development Project	-	50,344	50,344	-	65,000	65,000
London Citizens Advice – Cost of living project	-	-	-	-	-	-
3g Greater London Authority (GLA)	-	960,000	960,000	-	-	-
	-	960,000	960,000	-	-	-
Ministry of Justice	-	98,544	98,544	-	98,854	98,854
3g Sub-total for Miscarriage of Justice	-	98,544	98,544	-	98,854	98,854
CafCASS	208,656	-	208,656	194,076	-	194,076
SPIPS fees individually funded	4,233	-	4,233	4,300	-	4,300
3h Sub-total for SPIPS	212,889	-	212,889	198,376	-	198,376
Total income from charitable activities	691,962	3,185,892	3,877,854	702,947	2,524,202	3,227,149

* The pro bono legal services represents services provided by lawyers working in approximately 60 London law firms who provide free legal advice to people who do not have solicitors representing them. The value of the donated services is an estimated figure based on the solicitors guideline hourly rates of pay for civil lawyers and the market rate salary scale in the case of family lawyers. The valuation used for the hourly rate of pay for civil lawyers and family lawyers has been adjusted to reflect the average level of the post qualification status of solicitors volunteering on the civil and family rotas.

Government grants received during the year include: The Ministry of Justice grant funds the civil & family legal advice service as part of the Litigants In Person Strategy and HALS ;the National Offenders Management Service (NOMS) office of the Ministry of Justice funds the Miscarriage of Justice support service; and the Finding Legal Options for Women (FLOWS) project provides legal advice and support to agencies supporting victims of domestic abuse.

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

4a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities														
	Cost of raising funds £	Bankruptcy & debt £	Courtnav £	Civil & family £	FLAWS £	Housing £	Islington Advice £	Citizens Advice London Development Project £	Citizens Advice London GLA Cost of Living Project £	Miscarriage of Justice £	SPIPS £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Staff costs (Note 6)	–	154,292	–	572,574	419,054	87,146	399,407	51,921	29,871	67,342	83,802	–	214,867	2,080,276	2,152,851
Pro bono services	409	2,819	–	350,705	7,729	1,303	10,825	630	411	1,018	1,090	–	–	376,939	348,545
Direct staff costs & volunteer expenses	–	–	–	4,553	3,829	1,081	2,415	–	364	2,072	509	–	32,651	47,474	44,979
Office, marketing, publications, IT & depreciation costs, website & Courtnav development costs	–	1,065	4,363	13,731	75,568	2,614	13,382	4,551	479	2,007	1,260	–	154,179	273,199	326,548
Client costs, consultant & professional fees, commissioned projects and other direct service costs	–	–	–	6,916	1,203	6,518	3,511	–	5,677	6,074	72,885	21,161	–	123,944	133,658
Grants payable	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	341,200	2,000	–	–	–	343,200	26,000
Partner payments	–	–	–	20,000	203,133	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	223,133	208,490
	409	158,176	4,363	968,479	710,516	98,662	429,540	57,102	378,002	80,513	159,546	21,161	401,697	3,468,165	3,241,071
Support costs	326	31,526	–	125,974	88,888	25,108	65,814	8,894	17,026	22,192	15,948	–	(401,697)	–	–
Governance costs	2	1,885	–	6,324	5,184	1,000	4,465	434	365	744	756	(21,161)	–	–	–
Total expenditure 2023	737	191,587	4,363	1,100,776	804,589	124,771	499,818	66,431	395,393	103,449	176,251	–	–	3,468,165	3,241,071
Total expenditure 2022	356	182,923	103	1,234,153	837,643	109,894	579,241	31,479	–	96,650	168,629	–	–	–	3,241,071

Partner payments relate to payments to agencies worked with us in delivering the FLOWs national consultancy service and our Immigration Consultancy service to local Citizens Advice within the civil legal team.

FLOWs partners are Rights of Women which deliver the FLOWs discussion forum and North East Law Centre where a FLOWs solicitor is in place. For the Immigration Consultancy service Bolton and Bury Citizens Advice service provided advice to clients.

Grants payable relates to annual grant payments to local citizens advice for advice and support to Miscarriage of Justice Support Service clients in their local community and grant to London Citizens Advice Services for delivering advice as part of the London Citizens Advice GLA Cost of Living Project.

4b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities												
	Cost of raising funds £	Bankruptcy & debt £	Courtnav £	Civil & family £	FLows £	Housing £	Islington Advice £	Citizens Advice London Development Project £	Miscarriage of Justice £	SPIPS £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2022 Total £
Staff costs (Note 6)	-	141,884		688,777	395,285	88,127	463,490	25,530	64,549	80,983	-	204,226	2,152,851
Pro bono services	172	1,529		335,843	3,962	748	4,887	180	612	612	-	-	348,545
Direct staff costs & volunteer expenses	-	-		7,161	3,462	2,946	4,778	175	491	360	-	25,606	44,979
Office, marketing, publications, IT & depreciation costs, website & Courtnav development costs		651	103	18,577	103,774	3,867	16,721	324	2,282	682	-	179,567	326,548
Client costs, consultant & professional fees, commissioned projects and other direct service costs	-	-		5,246	33,219	2,011	4,407		3,221	70,130	15,424		133,658
Grants payable	-	-		18,000	-	-	-		8,000	-	-	-	26,000
Partner payments	-	-		-	208,490	-	-		-	-	-	-	208,490
	172	144,064	103	1,073,604	748,192	97,699	494,283	26,209	79,155	152,767	15,424	409,399	3,241,071
Support costs	218	37,610		155,101	86,267	582	3,818	153	514	510	-	(409,399)	
Governance costs	(34)	1,249		5,448	3,184	11,613	81,140	5,117	16,981	15,352	(15,424)	-	-
Total expenditure 2022	356	182,923	103	1,234,153	837,643	109,894	579,241	31,479	96,650	168,629	-	-	3,241,071

Partner payments relate to payments to agencies worked with us in delivering the FLOWS national consultancy service and our Immigration Consultancy service to local Citizens Advice within the civil legal team.

FLOWS partners are Rights of Women which deliver the FLOWS discussion forum, North East Law Centre where a FLOWS solicitor is in place and Brighton & Hove Citizens Advice.

Grants payable relates to annual grant payments to local citizens advice for advice and support to Miscarriage of Justice Support Service clients in their local community and a grant to Bolton and Bury Citizens Advice service for advice provided to clients as part of the Immigration Consultancy service.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

5. Grants payable & Partner payments

	2023 £	2022 £
Rights of Women – FLOWS project	132,883	138,240
North East Law Centre – FLOWs project	70,250	70,250
Citizens Advice Bolton & Bury – Immigration Consultancy project	20,000	18,000
Local Citizens Advice Services – Miscarriage of Justice project	2,000	8,000
London Citizens Advice Services – London Citizens Advice GLA Cost of living project	341,200	–
	566,333	234,490

6 Net income resources for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation	26,960	28,347
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	–	1,123
Operating lease rentals:		
Other	4,200	5,852
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit (net of VAT)	9,300	7,125
Other services	–	–

7 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries and wages	1,802,573	1,889,585
Redundancy and termination costs	6,738	–
Social security costs	182,980	171,541
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	87,985	91,725
	2,080,276	2,152,851

The redundancy and termination costs were settled and paid at the balance sheet date.

One employee earned between £60,000 and £70,000 during the year (2022: 1).

The total employee benefits including pension contributions and employer's national insurance contributions of the key management personnel were £302,060 (2022: £298,735).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2022: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2022: £nil).

8 Staff numbers

The full time equivalent and average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2023 FTE	2022 FTE	2023 No.	2022 No.
Raising funds	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5
Bankruptcy & debt	4.1	4.0	4.3	4.0
Civil & family	13.3	17.1	16.8	19.6
FLOWs	11.3	10.4	10.9	11.0
Housing	1.9	2.0	2.7	2.0
Islington CAB	9.9	12.8	13.1	17.2
Citizens Advice London Development Project	0.9	0.5	0.9	0.5
Citizens Advice London GLA Cost of Living Project	0.6	0.0	0.6	0.0
Miscarriage of Justice	1.5	1.6	1.5	2.0
SPIPS	1.6	1.6	2.0	2.0
Support	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2
Governance	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
	49.1	53.9	56.8	62.1

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

9 Related party transactions

There were no donations or other transactions with related parties during the year (2022: Nil)

10 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At the start of the year	17,419	133,985	151,404
Additions in the year	1,379	2,414	3,793
Disposals in the year	0	(5,889)	(5,889)
At the end of the year	18,798	130,509	149,308
Depreciation			
At the start of the year	12,979	108,342	121,321
Charge for the year	3,083	23,877	26,960
Disposals in the year	–	(5,889)	(5,889)
At the end of the year	16,062	126,330	142,392
Net book value			
At the end of the year	2,736	4,180	6,916
At the start of the year	4,440	25,643	30,083

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

12 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	26,958	80,557
Other debtors	21,262	16,713
Prepayments	37,086	41,410
Accrued income	366,733	421,692
	452,039	560,372

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	55,258	90,044
Other creditors	30,949	29,380
Other taxes and social security costs	147	–
Accruals	135,793	145,562
Deferred income	15,970	–
	238,117	264,986

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

14 Deferred income

Deferred income at 31st March 2022 comprises grants received from National Citizens Advice to cover costs for Immigration Consultancy Advice Project in the quarter April to June 2022. There was £15,970 deferred income at 31st March 2023 relating to funding for the advisers costs for the Three Tap Advice outreach project in Islington for the period from 1st April 2023 to 20th September 2023.

	2023 £	2022 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	–	75,000
Amount released to income in the year	–	(75,000)
Amount deferred in the year	15,970	–
Balance at the end of the year	15,970	–

15 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Pension creditor	28,523	34,355
	28,523	34,355

The pension creditor is calculated on the basis of the annual contribution made toward the deficit of £3,000 (2022: £3,000) discounted over a committed period of xx years (2022: 15 years) .

16 Pension scheme

The RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux participates in the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux Pension and Assurance Plan (1991) which is a defined benefit arrangement. The pension charge for the year for the employees who are members of the scheme is £3,000 (2022: £3,000). A full actuarial valuation of the Plan was carried out as at 31 March 2023 by a qualified independent actuary, based upon membership data as at 31 March 2022, allowing for assumed membership movements over the period from this date, and any material membership movements significantly different from those assumed (e.g. transfers out).

The charity's contributions are affected by any surplus or deficit in the scheme but it is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities in the scheme on a consistent and reliable basis. In accordance with FRS 102, the charity has therefore treated its pension contributions to the scheme as if they were paid to a defined contribution scheme. As the charity has an agreed deficit contribution scheme in place, a liability has been included for the value of these future payments, discounted to their present value.

The major assumptions used by the actuary were (in nominal terms) as follows:

Assumptions

	2023 %	2022 %
Discount Rate	0.05	2.80
Inflation (RPI)	0.03	3.70
Inflation (CPI)	0.03	3.25
Revaluation of deferred pensions in excess of GMP	0.03	3.25
Allowance for pension in payment increases of RPI or 5% p.a. if less		n/a
Allowance for pension in payment increases of CPI or 5% p.a. if less	0.03	3.25
Allowance for pension in payment increases of CPI inflation since retirement or 5% p.a. compound if less	0.03	3.25
Allowance for pension in payment increases of – CPI or 3% p.a. if less	0.03	2.70
Allowance for commutation of pension for cash at retirement	75% of HMRC Maximum	75% of HMRC Maximum

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

16 Pension scheme (continued)

Assumed life expectancies on retirement at age 65 are:

	Life expectancy at age 65	
	(Years)	(Years)
Male retiring today	20.8	21.3
Female retiring today	23.6	24.2
Male retiring in twenty years time	22.0	22.6
Female retiring in twenty years time	24.7	25.7

The most recent formal actuarial valuation of the Plan was as at 31 March 2019 and revealed a funding deficit of £68,501,000. In the recovery plan agreed following the valuation, the Principal Employer and other participating employers agreed to pay deficit reduction contributions of £2,279,000 per annum with the view to eliminating the deficit by 31 March 2037. The 31 March 2022 valuation is currently underway.

The liabilities of the Plan are based on the current value of expected benefit payment cashflows to members of the Plan over the next 60 or more years. The average duration of the liabilities is approximately 12 years.

The charity expects to contribute £3,000 per annum.

17a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets		6916		6916
Net current assets	639,792	176,597	674,947	1,491,336
Long term liabilities	(28,523)	–	–	(28,523)
Net assets at 31 March 2023	611,269	183,513	674,947	1,469,729

17b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	–	30,083	–	30,083
Net current assets	738,381	–	111,440	849,821
Long term liabilities	(34,355)	–	–	(34,355)
Net assets at 31 March 2022	704,026	30,083	111,440	845,549

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

18a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds:					
Bankruptcy & debt					
Debt Free London (formally Capitalise Money Advice Service)	-	178,091	(178,091)	-	-
Civil & family					
Access to Justice Foundation	-	14,672	(14,672)	-	-
CAFF CASS	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
Citizens Advice – Immigration Consultancy	-	105,034	(105,034)	-	-
Kessler Foundation – Immigration Consultancy service		55,524	(47,038)		8,486
Legal Education Foundation – Justice First Fellowship	4,241	39,048	(43,289)		-
Ministry of Justice (Litigant in Person and HALS)		298,988	(298,988)		-
Ministry of Justice – Time Together Interpreting fund	9,416	0	(1,986)	-	7,430
Support through Court	2,612	31,566	(34,178)	-	-
Trust for London Employment Advice	-	47,607	(53,153)		(5,546)
CourtNav					
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	29,541	-	(4,363)		25,178
FLAWS					
Ministry of Justice	-	800,000	(800,000)		
Islington Advice					
Cloudesley		2,368	(2,368)		
Citizens Advice Service cost of living advice	-	15,000	(1,250)	-	13,750
Cripplegate Foundation		36,606	(36,606)	-	-
Islington Council	28,224	450,000	(435,985)	(2,480)	39,759
Citizens Advice GLA cost of living project			(8,000)	8,000	-
London Citizens Advice Development Service					
Local Citizens Advice Services – London	37,406	50,344	(62,030)	2,480	28,200
London Citizens Advice – Cost of living project					
Greater London Authority		960,000	(393,258)	(9,053)	557,689
Ministry of Justice	-	98,544	(98,544)	-	0
Total restricted funds	111,440	3,185,892	(2,621,331)	(1,053)	674,947
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Designated funds – Fixed Assets	30,083	-		(23,167)	6,916
Designated funds – Work in progress				176,597	176,597
Total designated funds	30,083	-	-	153,430	183,513
General funds	704,026	906,453	(846,833)	(152,377)	611,269
Total unrestricted funds	734,109	906,453	(846,833)	1,053	794,782
Total funds	845,549	4,092,344	(3,468,164)	-	1,469,729

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

18b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds:					
Bankruptcy & debt					
Debt Free London (formally Capitalise Money Advice Service)	-	178,593	(178,593)	-	-
Civil & family					
Access to Justice Foundation	7,212	-	(7,212)	-	-
CAFF CASS	-	-	-	-	-
Citizens Advice	39,231	75,000	(114,231)	-	-
Enfield Council	6,250	11,545	(17,795)	-	-
Legal Education Foundation – Immigration consultancy	4,460	116,058	(116,277)	-	4,241
Legal Education Foundation – Justice First Fellowship	-	53,063	(53,063)	-	-
Ministry of Justice	-	442,975	(433,559)	-	9,416
Pro Bono Legal Services	-	-	-	-	-
Support through Court	4,592	66,436	(68,416)	-	2,612
Therium Access	10,763	-	(10,763)	-	-
Trust for London	-	31,227	(31,227)	-	-
CourtNav					
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	37,577	-	(103)	(7,933)	29,541
FLAWS					
Ministry of Justice	-	800,000	(807,933)	7,933	-
Legal Education Foundation	5,976	15,000	(20,976)	-	-
Islington Advice					
Citizens Advice Service	-	104,271	(104,271)	-	-
Cripplegate Foundation	-	(16,180)	(16,180)	-	-
Islington Council	28,224	450,000	(450,000)	-	28,224
London Citizens Advice Development Service					
Local Citizens Advice Services – London	-	65,000	(30,094)	2,500	37,406
Miscarriage of Justice					
Ministry of Justice	-	98,854	(98,854)	-	-
Total restricted funds	144,285	2,524,202	(2,559,547)	2,500	111,440
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Designated funds – Fixed Assets	59,553	-	-	(29,470)	30,083
Total designated funds	59,553	-	-	(29,470)	30,083
General funds	565,960	792,620	(681,524)	26,970	704,026
Total unrestricted funds	625,513	792,620	(681,524)	(2,500)	734,109
Total funds	769,798	3,316,822	(3,241,071)	-	845,549

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

18 Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Bankruptcy and Debt

The Debt Advice Project funded by the Debt Free Advice is a London-wide partnership which aims to reduce debt and exclusion by improving peoples' capacity to manage their debts, help people to take control of their finances and make informed choices in the future.

Civil and Family

Legal advice to litigants in person in civil and family law matters and the Time Together Child contact centre funded by the Ministry of Justice through the Litigants in Person Strategy in the High Court, the Central London Family Courts, the Court of Appeal and the London County Court until 30.09.2022 then contribution to costs £75,000 in 22/23 through Helping Access to Legal Support funding. Access to Justice funding from the Community Justice Fund for employment advice in 2021.22 and again in 2022.23. The Legal Education Foundation provide funding for the Justice First Fellowship trainee solicitor. In 2022/23 CafCass contributed to the costs of salary costs of the coordinators in the Time Together child contact centre. Citizens Advice funded the EU Settlement Immigration advice service and separate Windrush advice until November 22 when Kessler Foundation funded the project. Support through Court funded a family solicitor who advises clients referred in from its service until 30.09.22. Trust for London funded the employment advice service from October 2021; the negative balance showing on the fund at 31st March 2023 has been covered from the balance of the grant which was received after the year end in June 2023. Enfield Council funded the Enfield Homelessness Prevention Solicitor until 30th September 2021.

CourtNav

CourtNav is a unique and innovative online application to support Litigants in Person to complete court forms. This has been developed through a working partnership with Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP.

Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors – FLOWS

FLAWS is delivered in partnership with Right of Women and Newcastle Law Centre and provides legal advice and tools to front line agencies across England to increase their confidence in ensuring women experiencing domestic abuse are aware of legal remedies. FLOWS further expands the modules available on CourtNav with the development of the FL401 non-molestation order and a new module called Support Nav to assist clients to navigate the legal procedures and direct them to the appropriate advice. FLOWS received funding from the Ministry of Justice to support victims of domestic abuse and the Legal Education Foundation. Funding from Legal Education Foundation in 2021.22 relates to costs of developing the Strategic Business plan.

Islington Advice

Islington Council funds the costs of running the Islington Citizens Advice service. Citizens Advice funded a cost of living advice assistant from March 2023 and in 2021/22 the Universal Support Help to Claim project. Cripplegate Foundation fund outreach generalist advice work in the London Borough of Islington. Cloudesley provide an ongoing grant of £3,000 per year to fund client welfare benefit payments and translation costs of advice sessions for vulnerable clients. Islington CA participates in the London Citizens Advice Development Project sharing an advice post with Camden Citizens Advice.

London Citizens Advice Development Service

Twenty seven London Citizens Advice Services contributed to the costs of the London Citizens Advice Development project during the year which was set up to promote the London Citizens Advice services and work collaboratively to bid for funding for London wide delivery of advice.

London Citizens Advice Cost of Living project

The Greater London Authority (GLA) Cost of Living Crisis Prevention project is a pan London project homed by RCJ Advice and delivered by local citizens advice across London. The project delivers preventative advice to those communities who are most severely impacted by the cost of living crisis.

Miscarriage of Justice

The Ministry of Justice funded support and advice to victims of miscarriages of justice whose cases are referred to the Court of Appeal by the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

Purposes of designated funds

Fixed assets

The fixed asset fund represents the net book value of assets held in the Charity for everyday use and is set aside to reflect the proportion of unrestricted funds which are not freely available to spend.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

18 Movements in funds (continued)

Transfer between funds

The transfers of £4,243 in 2022/23 and £7,933 in 2021/22 from the CourtNav fund to the FLOWS fund represents a subsidy to cover costs not met by the Ministry of Justice funding fund. The transfer from the Citizens Advice GLS Cost of Living project of £8,000 to Islington Advice relates to the first two grants payable for the cost of living adviser employed by Islington Advice to deliver the cost of living advice project. The transfer of £2,480 in 2022.23 and £2,500 in 2021.22 relates to the annual donation payable by Citizens Advice Islington (RCJ Advice general fund in 2021.22) to fund the London Citizens Advice Development Manager.

The transfer of £1,053 from the London Citizens Advice GLA Cost of Living project to the general fund reflects the remaining net book value of a fixed asset laptop purchased for the project manager. This will be written off in future years.

19 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Equipment 2023 £	2022 £
Less than one year	3,995	5,097
One to five years	2,482	6,965
	<u>6,477</u>	<u>12,062</u>

20 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.