

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 02453081
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 702419

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee
Financial Statements
31 March 2024

MCABA Limited t/a Mitchells
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor
91-97 Saltergate
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S40 1LA

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee
Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

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Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Charity registration number	702419
Company registration number	02453081
Principal office and registered office	1 Rose Hill East Chesterfield Derbyshire S40 1NU

The Trustees

Ms J Flood (Chair)	
Mr R Busby (Vice Chair)	
Mr H Borrell	(Resigned 5 May 2023)
Mr J Duncan	
Mr C Hampton	(Resigned 7 December 2023)
Mr D McGregor	
Mr A Powell	(Resigned 5 May 2023)
Mr D Shaw	
Ms J Skill	(Resigned 7 December 2023)
Ms E Tidd	
Ms A Webster	
Ms S White (Treasurer)	
Mr M Wilson	
Mr R Redfern	(Died 21 June 2023)
Mr J Woolley	
Ms K Gurney	(Resigned 16 August 2023)
Mr A Rouse	(Served from 16 August 2023 to 7 December 2023)
Ms K Rouse	(Appointed 22 May 2023)
Ms M Jones	(Resigned 24 May 2023)
Mr N Redihough	(Served from 15 May 2023 to 1 May 2024)
Mr M Stone	(Appointed 7 December 2023)

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Workers Group

Mrs S Allard
Mrs H Bagley
Mr M Brown
Mrs S Challands
Miss Mae Elsmore-Renshaw (from 28 June 2023)
Mr T Fletcher
Mrs L Haythorne
Mrs S Hible (from 31 July 2023)
Mrs H Lawes (from 7 May 2024)
Mr P Macken
Mr A McIlveen (until 30 April 2023)
Mr S Oliver (from 2 August 2023)
Mr A Pearce (until 4 July 2023)
Miss S Preece
Mrs R Priest
Mr L Ridge (until 7 July 2023)
Mr S Shah (from 12 April 2023)
Mr G Steel
Mrs E Taylor (until 30 June 2023)
Mrs N Tugby
Mrs C Yates (until 31 August 2023)

Company Secretary

Mick Wilson

Auditor

MCABA Limited t/a Mitchells
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor
91-97 Saltergate
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S40 1LA

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
30 Rose Hill
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S40 1LR

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 15 December 1989 and registered as a charity on 10 January 1990. 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. The Law Centre reviewed and revised its Articles of Association to reflect current legislation and to more fully reflect the direction of the Law Centre. This was approved at the Annual-General Meeting on 18 November 2015. All Governance documents are to be reviewed in 2024.

The change of name from Chesterfield Law Centre to Derbyshire Law Centre was approved by Special Resolution on 13 November 2013 and has subsequently been approved by both the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Methods of appointment or election of Trustees

The Directors of the company are also Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Committee. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees (who form the Management Committee) are elected to serve for a period of 1 year after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting.

Currently there are 12 members and no co-opted members, with 8 elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and a further 4 members nominated as representatives by core funders. During the year there were 4 resignations prior to the AGM, 2 resignations at the AGM and 1 resignation since the AGM in December 2023. Councillor Redfern died in June 23. We currently have 8 unfilled places on the Committee but this is intentional as revised Governance documents are looking to reduce the overall numbers on the Committee. There is a full list of Trustees on page 2 of the Trustee's report.

The Trustees seek to ensure that the diversity of membership of the Management Committee reflects the diversity of the local communities and any imbalance is addressed by way of co-options. The Trustees seek to maintain a broad skills mix. Currently personnel, finance, communication and community liaison skills are well represented.

Organisational structure and decision-making policies

The Management Committee meets every two months and is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The Management Committee includes a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (also the Company Secretary) and Treasurer. Jenny Flood has been chair since June 2022.

The Management Committee has two sub committees; Personnel Sub-Committee and Finance Sub-Committee. Each Sub-Committee consists of at least four Management Committee members, with two staff normally in attendance, and meet at least on a quarterly basis. The Management Committee devolves the responsibility for the operational running of the charity to a staff management collective, known as Workers Group.

Workers Group is currently made up of solicitors (7), caseworkers (3) and co-ordinators (6) and has responsibility for the smooth running of the services, the day to day operational management of the centre, individual supervision of the staff team and also ensuring that the team continues to develop skills and working practices in line with best practice. A review of the role and make up of the Workers Group is currently being undertaken. Our team of 7 admin workers, a communications worker, a

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Year ended 31 March 2024

session supervisor and 6 paralegals provide administrative support to all Workers Group staff as well as providing service delivery and support on a number of projects. We also have 2 trainee solicitors and an outreach worker.

Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

New and existing Trustees are invited to meet with Co-ordinator, Helen Bagley. At this meeting, the Co-ordinator works through an induction pack with the trustee covering:

- The rights and responsibilities of Management Committee members.
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity including the Memorandum of Articles (which are currently under review).
- Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
- Future plans and objectives.

All Management Committee members have access to SharePoint in M365 to access all relevant information online and are provided with one to one training on how to access this information.

In addition, members are required to complete a skills audit form so that training can be identified to ensure that they are able to participate fully in their role.

All new staff and members of the Management Committee are now required to undertake training on Equality and Diversity (EDI) as well as GDPR at the start of their employment/term. Existing staff and Management Committee members renew their GDPR training every year and EDI every two years.

Workers Group and Trustees are required to complete an annual Declaration of Interests form and are reminded at every meeting to consider any potential declarations at the meeting.

All Management Committee members are also included in strategic events with staff and volunteers as a way of developing the Law Centre's business strategy.

The Management Committee, at least annually, reviews the 3-year financial strategy and 3-year business plan document. Progress against these is reported to both Workers Group and the Management Committee on at least a 6 monthly period.

Pay policy for key management personnel

The charity's definition of senior management is staff on the Workers Group and the Trustees on the Management Committee. Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits with the exception of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the undertaking of their duties as Trustees, and as agreed by the Committee. The Workers Group currently consists of 16 members of staff. Their salaries are reviewed annually by the Trustees and are set by reference to "Pay Scales and Allowances" published by the National Joint Council for local Government Services.

Pay structures are currently being reviewed with a benchmarking exercise being undertaken.

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(continued)

Related party relationships

The Law Centre is a member of the Law Centres Network (LCN). The LCN is a Company Limited by Guarantee and registered in England and Wales under number 2433492. Established in 1978, the LCN acts as a co-ordinating body and the voice for Law Centres. It has a catchment area covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The LCN staff team provide an initial point of contact for those seeking information about the work of Law Centres, both within the movement, outside agencies and to the general public. The LCN also works with nationwide funders, working to help Law Centres obtain new funding for specific projects and represents Law Centres at all levels of government and in national forums.

Law Centres provide free legal advice and representation to the poorest and most disadvantaged members of society. They mainly practice in what is loosely termed Social Welfare Law. There are at present 41 Law Centres nationally.

Derbyshire Law Centre has representatives on the Board of Trustees at the LCN, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre, Citizens Advice Chesterfield, Citizens Advice Derbyshire Districts, Derbyshire Voluntary Action, The Elm Foundation and Links CVS.

Risk management

The "Quality Manual" sets out all the policies and procedures in relation to Risk Management. This is kept constantly under review. The Management Committee has taken steps to mitigate risks identified in its Risk Assessment document which is reviewed at least on an annual basis.

Our solicitors are members of the Law Society of England and Wales. Legal Executives are members of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX). Solicitors and Legal Executives are subject to the regulatory requirements of the Solicitors Regulatory Authority and CILEX respectively, including responsibility for the supervision of non-qualified staff. The Finance Coordinator is a member of the Association of Accounting Technicians and the finance admin staff are all student members. The Law Centre is also registered with the Financial Conduct Authority and the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC).

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and activities

Our mission

Our mission as a peer led organisation is working to increase access to justice for disadvantaged individuals and communities through the provision of quality assured, accessible, free and low-cost legal advice, 1-2-1 support services, information and representation to individuals and groups across our geographical area

Our core values

These are the values and principles that guide us:

Respect

To treat everyone with integrity and respect. To value and respect each other's expertise and diversity. To take responsibility for what we do and support each other to succeed.

Create

To respond to changing needs. To be innovative and resourceful.

Collaborate

To collaborate internally and externally. To listen and share. To work as a team using all of our expertise and skills together to get the best outcomes.

Care

To promote personal wellbeing and to adopt safe and healthy working practices.

Our Strategic Themes

The Law Centre's key strategic themes for the next three financial years are:

- 1) Clients and their needs - To provide a service that meets the needs of clients and is welcoming, non-judgemental and accessible for all, including an accessible initial assessment and signposting service to all enquirers;
- 2) Service delivery - To provide and increase the provision of quality assured specialist legal advice, assistance and representation in social welfare law, supported by the provision of wrap around support services;
- 3) Visibility and presence - To extend awareness of the rights and remedies available to individuals and communities and the work of the Law Centre through user involvement, information, publicity and promotional work;
- 4) Partnerships and collaboration - To continue to work in partnership with other organisations, both existing and new to identify need, enhance support for clients and maximise resources;
- 5) Culture and people - To ensure that the Law Centre has well-trained and supported staff and volunteers to deliver high quality services, guided by a well-trained board of trustees, reflective of the community to ensure good governance;
- 6) Financial sustainability - To increase and diversify the financial and other resources of the Law Centre to ensure its future sustainability.

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Achievements and performance

Clients and their needs

Understanding what our clients need is paramount to our organisation's development and progress. During the year we feel that we did this through listening to clients and organisations that work with residents and communities in the area we serve.

We have achieved this through our work in obtaining feedback through client questionnaires and client feedback calls, undertaken by our volunteers.

We have ensured that our services reach those who need them through working with new partners and delivering services in new locations such as Gussie Super Kitchen and increasing our direct referrals with partners. We continue to look at digital options to improve accessibility.

Our welcoming, non-judgmental, accessible service for all has encouraged people to contact us. The new "Step Into Work" project has recruited new volunteer assessors, enabling us to expand our assessment team.

We have been proud to promote fairness and equality of opportunity throughout all of our services. This is backed with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy, along with mandatory EDI training for all staff and the Management Committee.

Service Delivery

Our aim is to provide and increase the provision of quality assured specialist legal advice, assistance and representation in social welfare law, supported by the provision of wrap around services. We continue to achieve quality status through a number of ways:

- Lexcel Quality Mark - Once again, we were pleased that we were still able to retain our Lexcel Quality Mark with high praise. We believe that this shows that DLC is a quality organisation providing a specialist advice service which is as important to us as it is for our clients and our funding partners. It also enables us to continue with a Legal Aid Contract and our EMMA Project work. The Lexcel Auditor reported "the Centre should continue to be highly commended for sustaining an extremely high level of compliance against the Lexcel Standard".
- EMMA Quality Assessments - Along with our monthly and quarterly data information, we also have quarterly quality assessments which we have passed with almost perfection at over 99%.
- Financial Stewardship Audit and Peer Review - We achieved Level 2, "Competent Plus" through the Legal Aid Agency.
- All charged for services are done in compliance with the Solicitors Accounts Rules, and debt work in compliance with the Financial Conduct Authority.
- During the year, we looked to expand our areas of work and have been successful in obtaining a new Legal Aid contract for Immigration work which started in September 2023. In the current round of Legal Aid Agency tenders, we have also been offered a Family Law contract.

The Law Centre continues to offer full wrap around services where a client's need is assessed enabling us to deliver a holistic service aimed at prevention as well as cure. We have continued to seek funding to expand this holistic service.

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Partnerships and collaboration

Partnership working has always been of great importance to the work of Derbyshire Law Centre. As a member of the Law Centres Network (LCN), we work with other Law Centres, to increase access to justice. This is through common practices, participation in partnership working and undertaking training. The LCN also works on obtaining funds for Law Centres on a national basis.

Local Government partnership working is also essential. By working together, we have been able to increase funding and services at the Law Centre whilst helping the local authorities to achieve their objectives.

We have found that our work with the County Council and health related commissioning agencies has resulted in increased GP/Health referrals throughout the year.

With the start of our Justice Together Initiative project, we continued to work with St James' Centre and Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre at Shirebrook.

The Barings Foundation project has also fed into this priority. Our new Outreach Worker has been working with local community organisations to increase understanding and information around discrimination law.

Measuring impact has been an important step in working with other organisations. We have found that our Annual Report and the Housing Annual Report have been really useful in showing our partners what we are doing for the local community and the impact we are having.

Culture and People

It goes without saying that our staff are our biggest investment. We work together to ensure progression, continued personal development and the wellbeing of our staff.

We offer good terms and conditions and have flexible, family friendly working policies, including hybrid working. We have started the process of a staffing review, which we hope to conclude in 2024.

Two members of staff became qualified solicitors in July 2023 and we have now started two further staff members on the road to qualification as solicitors through our trainee solicitor scheme. We have also applied for Justice First Foundation funding towards another trainee solicitor for later in 2024.

We continue to work on succession planning to ensure a seamless service delivery.

Through our new volunteers project we have looked at new volunteer roles within the organisation. We now have several volunteers roles including assessment and client feedback.

Technology is key to allow us to work effectively and efficiently. Since our transfer to M365 and the LCN Tenant, we have developed SharePoint platforms for staff information, volunteers and management committee. This has helped keep our information safe and easy to access. We achieved the Cyber Essentials Plus certificate in May 2023.

In March 2024, we started to consider our structure and decision making. This will all be tied into the updated governance documents currently being worked on by the Management Committee. This should help modernise our organisation and make it even more efficient in decision making.

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Financial Sustainability

We have continued to work on our financial sustainability through effective financial procedures and developing our successful funding and financial strategies.

We were successful in obtaining "Cost of Living Funds" which helped to maintain our core services. At the beginning of March, we were successful in obtaining "ITLAS" funding from the National Lottery and Access to Justice. These funds are aimed at funding our core services as funders are now recognising the importance of core funding.

Specialist Services - Housing

We have continued to provide specialist housing services throughout the year. This included operating and successfully re-tendering for our Housing and Debt Legal Aid contract from the Legal Aid Agency. Due to the loss of a member of staff and difficulty in recruiting to the post, the number of cases opened during the year under the contract reduced by almost 50%. In addition, with all the homelessness prevention work that we do, less tenants are getting to the stage of being served with a notice for eviction.

Fortunately, this did not affect the higher level casework under the contract and all income targets were achieved.

In October, we also started our new HLPAS (Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service) Legal Aid service. This replaced the County Court Duty Scheme and overall, we achieved all our targets. We saw 68 clients on the day, in court. Down just over 4% on the previous year.

We have provided outreach services at Pathways and Gussies. We regularly attended Homelessness Forum meetings with the local authorities.

Homelessness prevention work remains at the centre of our housing work. Local authorities have continued to fund our work, allowing us to continue with our Mortgage Rescue (Court Work) project and Homelessness Prevention Project (HPP). Alongside Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council, the Amber Valley Borough Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Erewash Borough Council and High Peak Borough Council have all contributed funding to this work.

The HRA and HPP projects combined in May 2023 and the new HPP continues to be an important project within the housing unit. This is staffed by 3 homelessness prevention paralegals who work to support those at risk of eviction and those who need support securing new or alternative accommodation. Following the departure of one of our paralegals, we now have Shauna Snelling and Chloe Bloor job-sharing the post. It continues to work to provide holistic support to enable its clients to gain further independence in their accommodation and seek to reduce the numbers of households becoming homeless. Examples of help provided include: advice accessing accommodation or waiting lists; securing grants to pay for essential appliances/furniture; applying for Discretionary Housing Payments and securing grants for clients to secure permanent accommodation, The project also benefits clients who, whilst still on a low income, are unable to access Legal Aid services but still require professional advice regarding their housing. With 65 clients assisted, advisers have also continued to secure funds for clients, achieving a total of £41,067 in financial gains for these clients from charitable grants and DHPs for the prevention of homelessness or to secure permanent accommodation. This is in addition to advice and support provided.

Our Housing Repairs Support Service, funded by 3 local authorities (CBC, NEDDC and BDC) has continued beyond the original expected end date of December 2023. This service is to support and expedite the repair of rental properties within the 3 districts. 37 cases were opened during the year

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and of those closed, we achieved £4270 in settlements for our clients.

We continue to manage a number of "Welfare Funds", which have been made available by some local authorities and are administered by the Law Centre to help secure tenancies or for essential items such as washing machines. Local Authorities have recognised the cost effectiveness of assisting tenants in this way. We also apply for funds from other third parties on an individual basis, again, as a means of assisting those tenants with housing risk issues that can be quickly addressed by a small amount of funding.

Derbyshire County Council continues to recognise our homelessness prevention work and continues to fund an increase in staffing levels for additional eviction work. We continue to hand hold our clients to help them retain or obtain new homes. However, the future of this project is that it is likely to end in March 2025.

Amber Valley Borough Council has continued to fund housing advice in Ripley and the surrounding areas. We work closely with the council through our positive referrals scheme so that the residents of the Amber Valley Borough area can access all our housing advice services quickly and with ease. We continue to have some staff based at the Amber Valley Borough Council offices in Ripley on various days throughout the week and making home visits in that area.

Our work within Bolsover, with the Lloyds Bank funded project to provide housing advice work to the residents of Bolsover District Council ended in December 2023. This saw our caseworkers helping vulnerable people with complex needs just prior to eviction. These clients usually have issues around many of our specialisms, for example, debt or employment. Other local authorities have seen this project as part of a solution to assist their local residents and we now cover the Amber Valley Borough Council, Erewash Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council areas in a similar way.

The Rough Sleeper Initiative, funded by a joint local authority project, allows us to obtain appropriate experts evidence to support for clients who are homeless.

Specialist Services - Employment

During the first quarter, there were big changes in the unit. Long term employee, Ellen Taylor left and Patrick Macken qualified as a Solicitor. Stepping back into his full employment role meant the departure of Gemma Grant to pastures new. Patrick now specialises in employment and employment discrimination law, alongside Gary Steel, with Tom Fletcher concentrating on employment law.

Whilst our core funding from the local authorities allows us to give a limited employment service, this is enhanced through external funding for focused work. However, during the year, funding ceased for the two main employment projects (The Employment Advice Rapid Referral Scheme and Help Accessing Legal Support).

Through our core services, we have provided specialist employment advice 3 days per week on the telephone on issues such as loss of termination of contracts, earnings, redundancy and sickness.

Our specialist employment services in the south of the County continues, funded by Derbyshire County Council.

Our Employment Advice Rapid Referral Service (EARRS), funded by Derbyshire County Council ended in December 2023. This enabled us to support those who are either on long-term health related absence from work or at risk of long-term absence. During the 9 months, we assisted 61 clients.

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The Access to Justice Foundation also approved our application for funds from the "Help Accessing Legal Support Grant", focusing on employment work. This enabled the retention of employment specialists to continue until June 2023, following a 3 month extension.

We continue to provide the charged for service, principally aimed at clients who are not eligible for free advice. We also advise on Settlement Agreements, where the cost of advice is funded by employers. With the lack of other funding, some of our employment advisers have been concentrating on this area of work.

Specialist Services - Discrimination

Our discrimination work is mainly funded through our Legal Aid Contract. This covers goods and services discrimination and employment discrimination. We continued at a similar level to the previous year in terms of casework. Following the departure of Ellen Taylor in June 2023, Patrick Macken qualified as our Area of Law Supervisor in discrimination.

In April 2023, we were successful in obtaining funding from Barings Foundation, via a partnership with the Law Centres Network. As a result, we were able to employ a new Outreach Worker, Tracy Keepings-Crummack who has spent her time talking to other organisations about discrimination and educating them about how we may help in the future, particularly around challenging group discrimination.

Additional funding for discrimination casework still proves to be illusive but we continue to seek opportunities to develop this service further.

Specialist Services - Debt

During the year we said goodbye to Carmen Yates and Sally Preece was on maternity leave until January 2024. Despite these absences, Sue Allard and Kate Morgan were able to continue to meet EMMA targets.

Our specialist debt services have been predominantly funded through MaPs (Money and Pension Service). MaPs contract out funding for debt advice to various regional organisations, one of which is Community Advice and Law Service, who lead on the EMMA (East Midlands Money Advice), and they, in turn, contract out to providers such as DLC.

The partnership is now looking forward to refine the debt services they provide and make it the best so that they can go forward positively with the procurement process in 2025. New software has been developed, which DLC took part in testing during early 2024. The procurement was due to start in 2024 but contracts have been extended by a year to March 2025.

The unit exceeded EMMA targets by over 5%. Quality assessments were undertaken by EMMA visiting the Law Centre and inspecting files and observing advice appointments. We achieved a pass rate of over 99%.

We have also been fortunate to receive funds from the Institute of Money Advisers to help increase the provision for advice on Debt Relief Orders.

Work often involves assessing individual's total debt and providing solutions, including Debt Relief Orders and applications for Breathing Space (A Government Scheme that puts debt enforcement on hold for 60 days). The debt unit also works very closely with the other units at DLC as debt is often an issue when dealing with housing, immigration or employment issues.

The unit is always looking to work in partnership with others and we recently hosted a debt information session with the local council tenancy support team.

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Specialist Services - Immigration

Tony McIlveen, our Senior Solicitor, retired in April 2023 after working at the Law Centre for 22 years.

Sagar Shah joined the team in April 2023, followed by Mae Elsmore-Renshaw in June 2023. Sagar is a newly qualified solicitor who is our Area of Law Supervisor in immigration and joined us with Level 2 Immigration Asylum Accreditation Scheme qualification. He has successfully achieved his Level 3. Mae successfully completed her Immigration and Asylum Accreditation Scheme training and is due to take her Level 1 exam during 2024.

We are the only advice agency in Derbyshire to provide immigration legal advice. Our telephone and email advice service for residents in Derbyshire continued during the year.

We were successful in obtaining a Legal Aid Immigration contract from the Legal Aid Agency and, since its start in September 2023, 23 cases have been opened.

AB Charitable Trust continued their core funding support with our immigration unit in mind. Alongside other core funding, this allowed us to keep at least a minimum level services operating during the year. Funding continued from the Home Office project with Nottingham Law Centre, to assist vulnerable EU citizens with complex applications to the Home Office EU Settlement Scheme but this ended in June 2023.

The Justice Together Initiative funding, started at the beginning of April and is aimed at building a community of people and organisations with diverse backgrounds, strengths and experience to transform access to justice in the UK immigration system. DLC's role has been to provide training opportunities in immigration for partner organisations. This has seen Sagar travelling to Derby to train advisers at St James' Centre.

DLC remains registered with the OISC, enabling us to offer a fee-paying service. The applicability of VAT depends on the client's usual residence. If the client resides in the UK or is deemed stateless, VAT will be charged.

Support Services

Behind our solicitors, caseworkers and project staff, we have a dedicated administration team, Co-ordination Unit and Volunteers team. These staff provide our front-of-house services, casework support, premises management, financial administration and management as well as funding bids, IT development, communications and strategic lead.

In June 2023, Jess Wright joined the finance team alongside our finance apprentice, Kyle Gudgeon. Jess achieved her level 3 AAT qualification and Kyle passed his Level 2. Kyle is now studying his level 3 and hopes to achieve that by early 2025.

Richard and Liz continue to provide a friendly face at our reception and Jane, Michelle and Tracey provide casework support to our caseworkers and coordinators.

More movement in the Coordination Unit with the recruitment of Siobhan Hible as Volunteers Coordinator in July 2023. The National Lottery has funded a 4 year project to help us recruit and train volunteers. New and existing roles have been available, including

- Admin
- Debt
- Assessment
- Publicity
- Quality feedback roles and assessment roles.

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In addition, we have had work experience students looking at how we work. A total of 32 volunteers have been helping DLC since September. We are continually looking to improve our use of the case management system, Advice Pro. This has moved forward well for improving statistical information as well as using it more to store our files electronically.

During 2023 we achieved Cyber Essentials Plus which proves that our information is secure and appropriate.

We have continued to work with our Management Committee to develop new governance documents and have started to consider our structure and decision making processes.

We have continued to increase our presence at appropriate venues, working in partnership with various organisations. We have developed extensive merchandise to hand out to potential, new and existing clients, along with referral partners. We have also improved our internal communications with the resurrection of the internal newsletter, which gives updates on news and events within the organisation.

We have ensured that Equality Diversity and Inclusion was a thread through all our work and policies and all staff and management committee members are required to undertake training on joining the organisation and then on a biannual basis.

Project Work

Project work helps our organisation expand our existing services, try out pilot projects, respond to new needs and give our clients a fuller service by providing a "wrap around service". Some of our projects have already been mentioned in our specialist services but other projects we deliver are:

Project Work - Help is Here

Working with Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre (DUWC), we have been providing legal advice services to clients referred from DUWC. We primarily advised through three methods, specialist telephone advice, a casework service and outreach clinic. We regularly visited the DUWC Shirebrook office to provide specialist immigration advice.

All enquiries are assessed by our specialist team to identify the needs of the clients and how the Law Centre can advise.

Project Work - Derbyshire BSL Helpline Project

Working with the British Deaf Association, we work with them on their National Lottery Community Fund project and facilitate training and offer legal advice, particularly around discrimination issues.

Trainee Solicitors

Patrick Macken qualified as a solicitor in July 2023, moving back to his casework position.

In January 2024, Madison Aspinall and Kate Morgan started their roles as Trainee Solicitors. Kate's role is part funded by the Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service.

We have also been successful in obtaining Justice First Foundation funds to a new trainee solicitor to join us in April 2025 and we will be working with the Foundation on recruitment during 2024.

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Financial review

Reserves policy

The Trustees have set a policy to maintain reserves at the minimum requirements if the Law Centre was to cease operations. These reserves cover redundancy costs, salaries at levels to satisfy notice periods and lease notices on rent and equipment. At current levels, this equates to £181,621 (2023: £202,088). Of this requirement, £69,043 (2023: £99,085) has already been set aside in the designated Staff Contingency Fund, the required level of free reserves is £112,578 (2023: £103,003) if the organisation was to immediately cease. With a managed closure, this would be reduced to £81,981 (2023: £102,286).

As at 31 March 2024, free reserves are £340,079 (2023: £230,992), after designated funds of £99,043 (2023: £106,137), which is above the target level. The Trustees have set a financial strategy to 2027 which outlines the financial risks and actions being taken to continue to maintain free reserves to the required level.

A new designated fund has been created for the development of new offices for the organisation. This is based on the possibility of the organisation having offices big enough to house all the staff in one location, rather than the two locations at present. It is hoped that this will develop further in 2024/25.

At present, the Trustees assess the charity as a going concern, and therefore do not envisage that reserves will be used to cease operations in the near future.

Going concern

We continue to be successful in maintaining grants from Chesterfield Borough Council, North East Derbyshire District Council and Bolsover District Council. All have been secured at least at the same rate as 2023/24 until 31 March 2025, with the exception of the grant from CBC who, through financial difficulties, have proposed a 50% cut from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2026.

Two years ago, the delayed Community Grants Review undertaken by Derbyshire County Council was identified by us as a risk. We can confirm that full funding was continued in 2023/24 and has been confirmed to be extended at the same rate until 31 March 2025. A consultation is currently taking place until August 2024, which is proposing to cease all our grant funding from Derbyshire County Council from 1 April 2025. We shall obviously campaign to keep our funding but are aware of financial challenges at DCC. We expect the proposed cuts to go ahead.

Again, last year another risk was identified in respect of VAT. Due to staff shortages, we have taken longer to submit this to HMRC but this has now been concluded and the amount payable has been included in the cashflow.

Our current budget does show a significant deficit (around £122,000), but given the large surplus over the last 3 years, we feel the organisation can withstand this and consider this an investment. This being said, we are not idly standing by doing nothing to reduce the deficit and if, under review, it was felt that the service could not carry this level of deficit, reductions in costs would likely be made through redundancy.

We have been successful in re-tendering for our Legal Aid contracts which will start in September 2024. Although we were successful in also obtaining a contract for Family Law, unfortunately, due to the size of the contract and LAA requirements on supervision, we were unable to accept the contract. However, we shall continue to look for funding to start family law work.

The Home Loss Prevention Advice Service (HLPAS) contract with the Legal Aid Agency is due to end

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

on 31 August 2024. A new tender has been submitted and we shall find out the outcome in July 2024. We are expecting to be successful.

In terms of confirmed continuation funds, we have:

- East Midlands Money Advice - secured until 31 March 2025 for 2.6 caseworkers funded at £49,100 each.
- Mortgage Rescue (Court Desk) - confirmed until 31 March 2025 and no indication of ceasing after that date. £36k per annum.
- Amber Valley Independent Advice - Continuing at 5 days provision project and confirmed until 31 March 2025. £53k per annum.
- Our Homelessness Reduction Act project and Homelessness Prevention project has been amalgamated and funding agreed until 31 March 2025. This is funded by 6 local authorities and has a value of £149,000 per annum.
- The DUWC Big Lottery Project is a five-year project which started 1 April 2020. Funding is halved during 2024/25 to just over £5,000 as the project winds down. There is no indication, at this point whether it will be funded beyond the 5 years.
- Derbyshire County Council Local Resilience Funding until 31 March 2025 - A reduction on previous levels, it is now £42,000 for the year instead of £84,000.
- AB Charitable Trust confirmed £20,000 per year for 3 years until 31 March 2025.
- Disrepair Project, now funded by 2 local authorities, is in place for another year at £25,000 per year and is likely to continue. We are currently in discussions with a third local authority to extend this project further.
- National Lottery funding for a 4 year volunteers project from 1 July 2023. We now have a volunteers coordinator on this project and overall funding is over £311,000. This is developing well and helps with capacity within staff resources as we will now have a volunteers team assisting at all levels of work in the organisation.
- Erewash Borough Council has indicated that their housing advice contract will continue from August 2024 until March 2025.
- NEDDC has also confirmed that their housing advice grant will continue from 1 April 2024.
- The Barings Foundation funded discrimination project will continue until 31 March 2026.
- The immigration training project, funded by the JTI will continue until 31 March 2025.
- New funding in 2024/25 is
- The Access to Justice and Community Fund has awarded us £500,000 (£100,000 for the next 5 years) restricted funds towards core funded activities. This is a great achievement and we are particularly pleased to have been 1 of the 42 organisations awarded these funds out of over 300 initial applications.
- Allen and Overy has awarded £7,500 for core costs and is unrestricted.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

- Derbyshire County Council has agreed step funding towards additional immigration advice. This will be specifically targeting Ukrainian clients.

Charged services income is a small part of our funds (approximately 1%). We intend to keep this going at this level unless there is a significant drop in other funding.

We have a comprehensive funding strategy, identifying short and long term aims and objectives. Our success rate to date has been good.

We care about the welfare of our staff and organisation as a whole. We regularly undertake business planning with staff, volunteers and trustees being involved, the last one being 13 March 2024.

We are constantly reviewing our monitoring systems which will enable us to provide data easily and have input into the future developments and funding aims of some of our partners.

Given these circumstances, the Trustees believe it is appropriate for the financial statements to be prepared on a going concern basis. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing financial statements. Additionally, our financial strategy has been successful in recent years, and the current strategy extends until 2027.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The main financial risks faced by the charity are:

- Loss or reduction of Legal Aid contracts, project funds, and core funding from Local Authorities.
- Lack of staff due to poor retention and recruitment issues

The processes and strategies for managing these risks are:

- Promoting the positive impact of the Law Centre services
- Working with the local community groups providing education and training on social welfare law
- Producing an Annual Report
- Building relationships with funders and responding actively to funders
- Ensuring funding streams are varied to reduce the impact of funding loss
- Campaigning through LCN
- Demonstrating the effectiveness of joint working and avoidance of duplicate advice services
- Ensuring that "legal advice" is part of key strategies
- Meeting the aims in our Communications Strategy and the use of social media to raise awareness of the work we do

In addition, we are undertaking a review of recruitment policies, recruiting a HR coordinator and performing a salary benchmarking comparison.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Plans for future periods

We are always looking to provide the best for our clients. During last year, we looked at the possibility of having local advice services together in the same building. At the moment, that has taken a step backwards. However, we are keen to look at other opportunities and will work with the other advice agencies and third parties to see where this may be possible.

We shall continue to offer all our existing services to clients whilst developing new lawyers and solicitors.

We shall complete our review of governance, leadership and management arrangements to ensure that the organisation is fit for the future.

A high priority is staff recruitment and retention and we shall continue to look at what Derbyshire Law Centre has to offer existing and new staff and we shall ensure that continued professional development will be given to all staff.

We shall continue to encourage our trainee solicitors to complete their training successfully and will look forward to welcoming a new trainee in April 2025. We shall encourage our caseworkers to become Area of Law Supervisors qualified, to ensure that we can maintain our legal aid contracts.

We shall continue to work in partnership with local authorities, other advice agencies and funders to enable us to continue to offer the high quality services that meet the needs of clients. It is likely that due to reduced core funding from Chesterfield Borough Council, our priorities will be less focused on Chesterfield Borough residents.

We shall continue our involvement as Trustee Board Members on Links CVS, LCN, Citizens Advice Derbyshire Districts, Citizens Advice Chesterfield, DUWC, Derbyshire Voluntary Action and The Elm Foundation to show support and encourage joint working.

We will ensure that our services consider external factors, such as the cost of living crisis and population changes (increasingly elderly population) as well as ensuring that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is central to all our actions.

The need to be agile and being able to embrace change is paramount if we are to maintain our current levels of service and indeed grow to meet new and emerging needs. We are actively seeking and securing funding to facilitate this.

We shall continue to meet the Lexcel Quality Standard, ensuring all our legal aid contracts continue and that clients are receiving a quality service.

Housing and Homelessness

We will continue to offer a housing advice service across the county and develop our relationships with key partners, including local authorities and other advice agencies in tackling homelessness.

We shall continue to look for new staff to fill existing vacancies, especially Area of Law Supervisors.

We will work with local authorities to ensure that tenancies are sustained by continuing to develop our holistic approach to helping tenants, mortgagees and their families in crisis, developing this service across Derbyshire.

2023/24 saw an increase in complex housing legal advice, particularly due to the "cost of living crisis",

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

and we expect this to continue throughout 2024/25, especially in relation to possession cases. Derbyshire County Council has continued to fund additional staff hours to cope with this.

We shall continue to operate our legal aid contract for housing. We aim to increase the number of new cases, although this is dependent on staffing resources.

We will continue to be able to assist clients with our wrap around services, including the allocation of various welfare funds provided by Local Authorities. We shall attend court whenever necessary to fulfil the needs of our clients and the HLPAS contract.

We will continue to offer housing advice in Ripley and Erewash, working with our local authority partners to reduce homelessness.

Our Homelessness Prevention Project is currently funded till at least March 2025 and we shall continue to work with our partners to make this work a priority.

We shall seek the continuation of our Local Authority funded Housing Repairs Support Service projects. Although this will no longer cover Bolsover, it is hoped that other areas in Derbyshire will be covered.

Employment

We will continue to offer free specialist employment advice to residents in Derbyshire, adapting delivery methods to meet client's needs, using our core funds.

Our charged for service will continue, at not-for-profit rates, to those who can afford to pay.

Our work in South Derbyshire will also continue.

Funding for this area of law is less available and more competitive but we will continue to investigate and apply for sources of short and long term funding both for project work and for the core service.

Debt

The Law Centre shall provide high quality debt advice across Derbyshire, funded by MaPs. Our top priority will be to work with partners to ensure that funding continues beyond March 2025.

We will continue to work holistically with other specialists both within the Law Centre and with other agencies to increase financial resilience and debt awareness.

We shall continue to seek funding for other money guidance work to increase financial resilience and debt awareness, which will allow for a more holistic service for our clients.

Discrimination

We will continue to build on the work done so far for discrimination in employment and for goods and services. We shall aim to maximise the use of our Legal Aid Agency Contract for discrimination.

We will continue to publicise this service with equality groups across East Midlands particularly across Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire utilising our contacts.

We shall continue to work on our new Barings Foundation "Hub" work having our Outreach Worker to work with local community organisations, raising awareness of discrimination issues through drop-in and training sessions and leading on accessibility campaigns.

Other funding opportunities for supporting discrimination work will be sought and form part of the funding strategy.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

Immigration

We shall continue to provide high quality free immigration advice across Derbyshire, part core funded by local authorities and AB Charitable Trust, as part of our new Legal Aid Contract and project funded when available.

We shall continue to offer a charged for casework service, at not-for-profit rates, to those who can afford to pay.

We shall work on the Justice Together Initiative funded service building a community of people and organisations with diverse backgrounds, strengths, and experience to transform access to justice in the UK immigration system. This will connect lived experience, front-line advice and influence strategies to create lasting change.

Our OISC level one solicitor will work towards level two during the year and level three sometime soon after that. This again is part of our succession planning.

Our telephone advice work on all types of immigration issues shall continue at current levels. We shall also continue to do outreach work, particularly in Shirebrook as part of the Help is Here project.

Volunteers

We shall continue to work with volunteers as part of our National Lottery funded volunteers project, Step into Work.

Our Volunteers Coordinator will work on helping people to volunteer with us, design appropriate training and identify any new volunteer positions within the organisation.

We shall have further recruitment opportunities for volunteers during the year and will publicise these widely.

We will continue to work with local Universities and Colleges, to offer placements and other volunteering opportunities for students.

Assessment Service

Our Assessment Service will continue from 10am to 2pm each weekday, signposting clients either externally (where DLC cannot help) or internally to one of our services.

Volunteers will be trained to increase provision for this busy service.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We shall continue to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion remains at the core of all our work and ethos and our website shall reflect our EDI policies.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

(continued)

Awareness Raising

We now have volunteer, Howard Borrell, helping our Communications Worker to work on publicising our services. We have regular social media output and will continue to do this, along with attending open events such as May Day, Pride (Chesterfield) and ThinkFest.

We aim to undertake the work identified by the new Communications Strategy and Strategic Plan.

This will entail:

- Increasing engagement on our social media channels as a method of discovery and self enquiry
- create a calendar of education campaigns for specific issues
- increase our levels of referrals from, and build long-term relationships with, community groups and formal agency partners
- raise overall brand awareness in target regions through media engagement
- increase engagement with those who have no digital access or low literacy rates

Digital

We aim to further develop our use of Microsoft 365. This will require the further development of policies around digital inclusion and also enable both staff, volunteers and Trustees to make better usage of the systems at hand through further training.

We will continue to achieve Cyber Essentials certification.

Governance

During 2024, we hope to conclude the review our Memorandum and Articles to ensure that they are still current with today's services and good governance.

We shall undertake a review of governance, leadership and management arrangements.

We shall ensure that all governance tasks are completed in order to maintain our Charity status, including appropriate financial management, insurance and good management.

We shall ensure the board is representative of the community/clientele.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

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

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 March 2024

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

Small company provisions

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

04 September 2024

The trustees' annual report was approved on and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Signed by:

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Ms J Flood (Chair)
Trustee

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Year ended 31 March 2024

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including 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 charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 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 charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

(continued)

Year ended 31 March 2024

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' 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 trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees 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 directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

(continued)

Year ended 31 March 2024

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor'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.

Auditor's responsibilities for detecting irregularities, including fraud The objectives of our audit are: to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud or error; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud or error; and to respond appropriately to those risks. Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with the ISAs (UK).

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

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks applicable to the charity and the sector in which they operate. We determined that the following laws and regulations were most significant; the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and UK corporate taxation law. The charity is also subject to the regulations of the Financial Conduct Authority and the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC).
- We obtained an understanding of how the charity is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making inquiries to relevant members of the management team. We corroborated our inquiries through our review of board minutes (where applicable) and inquiry into legal fees incurred in the year.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd (continued)

Year ended 31 March 2024

- We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:
 - Identifying the controls management has in place to prevent and detect fraud and assessing the operation of these controls
 - Understanding how those charged with governance considered and addressed the potential for override of controls or other inappropriate influence over the financial reporting process
 - Identifying and testing journal entries, in particular any journal entries that were large or unusual in nature
 - Assessing the extent of compliance with the relevant laws and regulations governing the charity and the sector it operates within. This included a review of any potential breaches during and since the year end; and
 - Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements the less likely we would become aware of it. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery, intentional misrepresentations or collusion.

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

DocuSigned by:

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Andrew McDaid BFP FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of
MCABA Limited t/a Mitchells
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor
91-97 Saltergate
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S40 1LA

04 September 2024

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)
Year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted funds	2024 Restricted funds	Total funds	2023 Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments					
Donations and grants	5	202,916	694,884	897,800	856,152
Charitable activities	6	154,751	157,382	312,133	291,768
Investment income	7	9,492	–	9,492	593
Other income	8	1,990	–	1,990	1,180
Total income		<u>369,149</u>	<u>852,266</u>	<u>1,221,415</u>	<u>1,149,693</u>
Expenditure					
Expenditure on charitable activities	9	237,354	906,829	1,144,183	1,056,684
Total expenditure		<u>237,354</u>	<u>906,829</u>	<u>1,144,183</u>	<u>1,056,684</u>
Net income		<u>131,795</u>	<u>(54,563)</u>	<u>77,232</u>	<u>93,009</u>
Transfers between funds		(29,803)	29,803	–	–
Net movement in funds		<u>101,992</u>	<u>(24,760)</u>	<u>77,232</u>	<u>93,009</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		337,129	104,521	441,650	348,641
Total funds carried forward		<u>439,122</u>	<u>79,761</u>	<u>518,882</u>	<u>441,650</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 29 to 48 form part of these financial statements.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Position
31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	15	4,997	7,216
Current assets			
Debtors	16	135,604	186,969
Cash at bank and in hand		578,995	560,258
		<u>714,599</u>	<u>747,227</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	200,714	312,793
Net current assets		<u>513,885</u>	<u>434,434</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>518,882</u>	<u>441,650</u>
Net assets		<u><u>518,882</u></u>	<u><u>441,650</u></u>
Funds of the charity			
Restricted funds		79,761	104,521
Unrestricted funds		439,122	337,129
Total charity funds	20	<u><u>518,882</u></u>	<u><u>441,650</u></u>

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

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 04 September 2024 and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Signed by:

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Ms J Flood (Chair)
 Trustee

The notes on pages 29 to 48 form part of these financial statements.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Cash Flows
Year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income	77,232	93,009
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	5,303	7,592
Other interest receivable and similar income	(9,492)	(593)
Interest payable and similar charges	306	191
<i>Changes in:</i>		
Trade and other debtors	65,821	8,964
Trade and other creditors	(126,535)	102,969
Cash generated from operations	12,635	212,132
Interest paid	(306)	(191)
Interest received	9,492	593
Net cash from operating activities	<u>21,821</u>	<u>212,534</u>
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible assets	(3,084)	(3,870)
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(3,084)</u>	<u>(3,870)</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	18,737	208,664
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>560,258</u>	<u>351,594</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	<u>578,995</u>	<u>560,258</u>

The notes on pages 29 to 48 form part of these financial statements.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is 1 Rose Hill East, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S40 1NU.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

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

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

Going concern

The Trustees are of the opinion that the charity can continue to meet its obligations as they fall due for the foreseeable future due to the current level of financial reserves and expectations of future income. As a consequence, the Trustees have prepared the financial statements on the going concern basis.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the charitable company's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. The trustees do not consider there to be any estimates or associated assumptions that would give rise to a significant risk of causing a material misstatement in the carrying values of assets and liabilities in these financial statements.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Incoming resources

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

- Income from donations is recognised when the donation is received.
- Income from donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- Investment income is included when it becomes receivable.
- Grant income is recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to that income. Where entitlement to grant income is subject to performance-related or other conditions, income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in line with the achievement of performance and satisfaction of those conditions.

Income is recognised excluding Value Added Tax (VAT) where applicable. The primary sources of income include the Amber Valley Housing Advice Service, which generates income from providing housing advice within the Amber Valley area, and the Erewash Borough Housing Advice Service, which derives income from offering housing advice in the Erewash Borough. Additionally, income is received from all Legal Aid Agency (LAA) contracts, and from services rendered where charges are applied as appropriate.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Resources expended

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

- Expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, and non-charitable trading activities.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- Governance costs include those associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include statutory audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

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

Operating leases

Lease payments are recognised as an expense over the lease term on a straight-line basis.

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

All assets costing more than £500 are capitalised.

Depreciation

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

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| Fixtures and fittings | - | 20% straight line |
| Computer equipment | - | 33% straight line |

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Impairment of fixed assets

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

For the purposes of impairment testing, when it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

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.

Defined contribution plans

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for the benefit of its employees. Contributions payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year they are payable.

4. Limited by guarantee

The charity is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the trustees named on page 2. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

5. Donations and grants

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Donations and grants			
Donations	2,595	–	2,595
Chesterfield Borough Council	41,697	114,867	156,564
Derbyshire County Council	90,124	42,000	132,124
N E Derbyshire District Council	21,000	75,003	96,003
Bolsover District Council	18,000	39,001	57,001
Amber Valley Borough Council	–	71,500	71,500
British Deaf Association	–	5,000	5,000
National Lottery Community Fund	–	151,053	151,053
Community Advice and Law Service (CALs)	–	36,780	36,780
Advice Nottingham	–	–	–
Allen & Overy Foundation London Grants Committee	7,500	–	7,500
HLPAS Trainee Solicitor	–	4,336	4,336
Legal Education Foundation	–	–	–
Derbyshire Dales District Council	–	25,667	25,667
Nottingham Law Centre	–	3,000	3,000
DUWC	–	10,613	10,613
Access to Justice	–	50,529	50,529
Law Centres Network	–	40,000	40,000
Lloyds Bank Foundation	–	–	–
High Peak Borough Council	–	16,500	16,500
IMA Provision of Debt Advice	–	9,035	9,035
AB Charitable Trust	22,000	–	22,000
	<u>202,916</u>	<u>694,884</u>	<u>897,800</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

5. Donations and grants *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations and grants			
Donations	1,572	–	1,572
Chesterfield Borough Council	41,697	65,500	107,197
Derbyshire County Council	90,124	196,000	286,124
N E Derbyshire District Council	21,000	58,376	79,376
Bolsover District Council	18,000	50,500	68,500
Amber Valley Borough Council	–	69,500	69,500
British Deaf Association	–	–	–
National Lottery Community Fund	–	–	–
Community Advice and Law Service (CALs)	–	–	–
Advice Nottingham	–	11,497	11,497
Allen & Overy Foundation London Grants Committee	–	–	–
HLPAS Trainee Solicitor	–	–	–
Legal Education Foundation	–	26,815	26,815
Derbyshire Dales District Council	–	16,500	16,500
Nottingham Law Centre	–	33,000	33,000
DUWC	–	10,404	10,404
Access to Justice	–	86,618	86,618
Law Centres Network	–	–	–
Lloyds Bank Foundation	2,250	–	2,250
High Peak Borough Council	–	16,500	16,500
IMA Provision of Debt Advice	–	20,299	20,299
AB Charitable Trust	20,000	–	20,000
	<u>194,643</u>	<u>661,509</u>	<u>856,152</u>

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
LSC: Legal Help Contract (Block Contract)	35,018	–	35,018
LSC: Disbursement Repayment (Block Contract)	3,081	–	3,081
LSC - County Court Duty Scheme	8,228	–	8,228
LSC: Legal Representation Profit Costs	41,592	–	41,592
LSC: Disbursement Repayment (Legal Representation)	22,167	–	22,167
Casework fees recovered	27,034	–	27,034
Charged services income	17,631	–	17,631
EMMA Project	–	126,664	126,664
Erewash Borough Council	–	30,718	30,718
	<u>154,751</u>	<u>157,382</u>	<u>312,133</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

6. Charitable activities *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
LSC: Legal Help Contract (Block Contract)	38,252	–	38,252
LSC: Disbursement Repayment (Block Contract)	3,223	–	3,223
LSC - County Court Duty Scheme	8,586	–	8,586
LSC: Legal Representation Profit Costs	36,921	–	36,921
LSC: Disbursement Repayment (Legal Representation)	18,750	–	18,750
Casework fees recovered	11,663	–	11,663
Charged services income	9,740	–	9,740
EMMA Project	–	151,985	151,985
Erewash Borough Council	–	12,648	12,648
	<u>127,135</u>	<u>164,633</u>	<u>291,768</u>

7. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Bank interest receivable	<u>9,492</u>	<u>9,492</u>	<u>593</u>	<u>593</u>

8. Other income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Miscellaneous income	200	200	180	180
Training income	1,790	1,790	1,000	1,000
	<u>1,990</u>	<u>1,990</u>	<u>1,180</u>	<u>1,180</u>

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities undertaken directly £	Support costs £	Total funds 2024 £	Total fund 2023 £
Legal services	651,645	472,283	1,123,928	1,040,100
Governance costs	–	20,255	20,255	16,584
	<u>651,645</u>	<u>492,538</u>	<u>1,144,183</u>	<u>1,056,684</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

10. Analysis of support costs

	Legal services £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Staff costs	365,651	365,651	311,905
Premises	65,562	65,562	64,763
Communications and IT	7,920	7,920	7,623
General office	33,150	33,150	23,482
Governance costs	20,255	20,255	16,584
	<u>492,538</u>	<u>492,538</u>	<u>424,357</u>

11. Net income

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>5,303</u>	<u>7,592</u>

12. Auditors remuneration

	2024 £	2023 £
Fees payable for the audit of the financial statements	<u>10,500</u>	<u>10,000</u>

13. Staff costs

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	810,598	759,003
Social security costs	61,525	64,658
Employer contributions to pension plans	72,113	60,670
	<u>944,236</u>	<u>884,331</u>

The total amount of employee benefits received by key management personnel, including employer's NI and pension is £565,222 (2023: £627,171). The charity considers its key management personnel comprise the staff on the Workers Group and the Trustees on the Management Committee.

The number of employees to whom retirement benefits were accruing under a defined contribution scheme during the year was 32 (2023: 31).

The average head count of employees during the year was 32 (2023: 31). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Charity staff	<u>32</u>	<u>31</u>

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2023: Nil).

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

14. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No trustee received any remuneration during either year.

For committee members, travelling and other expenses are reimbursed in respect of expenses incurred on the company's business. In the year ended 31 March 2024 £328 was reimbursed (2023: £112). The number of committee members that had expenses reimbursed was 2 (2023: 2).

15. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 Apr 2023	12,171	46,305	58,476
Additions	–	3,084	3,084
At 31 Mar 2024	<u>12,171</u>	<u>49,389</u>	<u>61,560</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 Apr 2023	11,961	39,299	51,260
Charge for the year	210	5,093	5,303
At 31 Mar 2024	<u>12,171</u>	<u>44,392</u>	<u>56,563</u>
Carrying amount			
At 31 Mar 2024	<u>–</u>	<u>4,997</u>	<u>4,997</u>
At 31 Mar 2023	<u>210</u>	<u>7,006</u>	<u>7,216</u>

16. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	57,524	126,270
Prepayments and accrued income	18,846	21,355
Other debtors	59,234	39,344
	<u>135,604</u>	<u>186,969</u>

17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	7,469	14,389
Accruals and deferred income	156,242	198,550
Social security and other taxes	14,502	98,312
Other creditors	22,501	1,542
	<u>200,714</u>	<u>312,793</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

18. Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April 2023	164,931	55,667
Amount released to income	(164,931)	(55,667)
Amount deferred in year	108,167	164,931
At 31 March 2024	<u>108,167</u>	<u>164,931</u>

Deferred income relates to project funding received in advance for projects in 2024/25.

19. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £72,113 (2023: £60,670).

20. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 Apr 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 Mar 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	230,992	369,149	(217,567)	(42,495)	340,079
Staff contingency	78,164	–	–	(9,121)	69,043
Equipment renewals	10,000	–	–	–	10,000
Lloyds Bank Foundation					
Project Costs	17,973	–	(19,787)	1,814	–
Premises	–	–	–	20,000	20,000
	<u>337,129</u>	<u>369,149</u>	<u>(237,354)</u>	<u>(29,802)</u>	<u>439,122</u>

	At 1 Apr 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 Mar 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	161,639	321,301	(184,122)	(67,826)	230,992
Staff contingency	99,085	–	–	(20,921)	78,164
Equipment renewals	10,000	–	–	–	10,000
Lloyds Bank Foundation					
Project Costs	43,621	2,250	(27,898)	–	17,973
Premises	–	–	–	–	–
	<u>314,345</u>	<u>323,551</u>	<u>(212,020)</u>	<u>(88,747)</u>	<u>337,129</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Designated funds

Staff Contingency Fund

Staff redundancy costs are covered in the contingency fund. This designated fund will consist of 100% of staff redundancy costs at statutory minimum levels.

Office and Equipment Renewals

This is a capital fund which allows for the replacement of office and capital equipment as required.

Lloyds Bank Foundation Project Costs

These funds have been set aside to fund a housing caseworker for the 2023/24 financial year.

Premises

Development of new offices to house all staff in one location.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Restricted funds	At 1 Apr 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 Mar 2024 £
Access to Justice - LSLIP Employment Project	–	–	–	–	–
Homelessness Prevention Project	–	9,568	(9,568)	–	–
Local Resilience Fund	44,821	42,000	(85,833)	–	988
EMMA Project	–	126,664	(137,056)	10,392	–
Mortgage Rescue (Court Desk)	–	36,000	(38,625)	2,625	–
Amber Valley Independent Advice	170	53,000	(59,210)	6,040	–
Building Better Opportunities - Opportunity and Change Programme	–	–	–	–	–
Homelessness Reduction Act	–	4,475	(4,475)	–	–
DUWC - Help is Here	–	10,613	(12,355)	1,742	–
Justice First Fellowship Scheme - Trainee Solicitor	–	–	–	–	–
Emergency Welfare Fund - NEDDC	–	–	–	–	–
EUSS (Nottingham Law Centre)	–	3,000	(3,143)	143	–
Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Housing Law Group	412	–	–	–	412
Housing Repair Support Service	5,578	31,000	(38,155)	1,577	–
NED Emergency Welfare Grants	455	2,000	(614)	–	1,841
AVBC Emergency Welfare Grants	1,732	2,000	(1,763)	–	1,969
Community Grant Fund CBC	2,633	–	(2,568)	–	65
Court Travel Expenditure Fund	–	–	–	–	–
IMA Provision of Debt Advice	6,928	9,035	(11,409)	–	4,554
EARRS Project	36,859	–	(41,547)	4,688	–

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Chesterfield Financial Inclusion Group					
Homeless Prevention	2,231	–	(600)	–	1,631
Erewash Housing Advice	2,702	30,718	(33,803)	383	–
North East Derbyshire Housing Advice	–	27,003	(27,677)	674	–
Access to Justice (HAL's Project)	–	42,196	(42,303)	107	–
Homelessness Prevention 2024	–	134,124	(126,585)	–	7,539
Rough Sleeper Initiative	–	37,389	(11,873)	–	25,516
Justice Together Initiative Project	–	36,780	(37,360)	580	–
Step Into Work - Volunteers Project	–	76,127	(47,827)	–	28,300
Barings Hub Project	–	40,000	(39,590)	–	410
HLPAS Trainee Solicitor	–	4,336	(4,436)	100	–
Cost of Living Fund - National Lottery	–	74,926	(75,677)	751	–
Access to Justice - Improving Lives through Advice	–	8,333	(7,777)	–	556
British Deaf Association	–	5,000	(5,000)	–	–
CBC Community Grants/FIG Network	–	5,979	–	–	5,979
	<u>104,521</u>	<u>852,266</u>	<u>(906,829)</u>	<u>29,802</u>	<u>79,761</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

	At 1 Apr 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 Mar 2023 £
Access to Justice - LSLIP Employment Project	–	26,618	(27,642)	1,024	–
Homelessness Prevention Project	4,943	99,000	(101,091)	(2,852)	–
Local Resilience Fund	5,121	126,000	(86,300)	–	44,821
EMMA Project	–	151,985	(198,799)	46,814	–
Mortgage Rescue (Court Desk)	–	36,000	(36,642)	642	–
Amber Valley Independent Advice	443	53,000	(53,273)	–	170
Building Better Opportunities - Opportunity and Change Programme	–	11,497	(11,497)	–	–
Homelessness Reduction Act	–	40,000	(51,114)	11,114	–
DUWC - Help is Here	–	10,404	(10,594)	190	–
Justice First Fellowship Scheme - Trainee Solicitor	3,479	26,815	(30,294)	–	–
Emergency Welfare Fund - NEDDC	164	–	(165)	1	–
EUSS (Nottingham Law Centre)	–	33,000	(51,714)	18,714	–
Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Housing Law Group	412	–	–	–	412
Housing Repair Support Service	2,314	36,000	(32,736)	–	5,578
NED Emergency Welfare Grants	3,397	–	(2,942)	–	455

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

AVBC Emergency Welfare Grants	3,110	–	(1,378)	–	1,732
Community Grant Fund CBC	4,000	–	(1,367)	–	2,633
Court Travel Expenditure Fund	40	–	–	(40)	–
IMA Provision of Debt Advice	–	20,299	(13,371)	–	6,928
EARRS Project	6,873	70,000	(40,014)	–	36,859
Chesterfield Financial Inclusion Group Homeless Prevention	–	5,000	(2,769)	–	2,231
Erewash Housing Advice	–	12,648	(9,946)	–	2,702
North East Derbyshire Housing Advice	–	7,876	(9,539)	1,663	–
Access to Justice (HAL's Project)	–	60,000	(71,477)	11,477	–
Homelessness Prevention 2024	–	–	–	–	–
Rough Sleeper Initiative	–	–	–	–	–
Justice Together Initiative Project	–	–	–	–	–
Step Into Work - Volunteers Project	–	–	–	–	–
Barings Hub Project	–	–	–	–	–
HLPAS Trainee Solicitor	–	–	–	–	–
Cost of Living Fund - National Lottery	–	–	–	–	–
Access to Justice - Improving Lives through Advice	–	–	–	–	–
British Deaf Association	–	–	–	–	–
CBC Community Grants/FIG Network	–	–	–	–	–
	<u>34,296</u>	<u>826,142</u>	<u>(844,664)</u>	<u>88,747</u>	<u>104,521</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Restricted funds

Access to Justice Litigation in Person Employment Project (LSLIP)

Funding from Access to Justice to enable a service to assist clients in taking their own claims to Employment Tribunal. - Ended September 2022.

Homelessness Prevention Project

Funded jointly by North East Derbyshire District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Bolsover District Council, Amber Valley Borough Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council, this work focuses on the prevention of homelessness through legal advice - Ended April 2023.

Derbyshire County Council Local Resilience Fund Project

This tranche of the funding is to provide an increase in housing advice and eviction prevention support in the north of the county. To increase staff capacity in advising residents threatened with illegal eviction and as the moratorium court action is lifted there is set to be an increase in landlord action against tenants in rent arrears/homeowners threatened with mortgage re-possession.

East Midlands Money Advice (EMMA) Project

The Law Centre is a partner of this regional project, funded by the Money Pensions Service, through East Midlands Money Advice. This project allows us to employ specialist debt caseworkers who deliver a quality assured debt service to people who are struggling to maintain essential payments for their home (rent or mortgage) because of other debts.

Mortgage Rescue (Court Desk)

Funded jointly by Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council, this project allows DLC to assist clients that are facing mortgage repossession.

Amber Valley Independent Advice

This work is funded by Amber Valley Borough Council and is for housing work that is out of scope in Ripley.

Building Better Opportunities - Opportunity and Change Programme

The programme is part of the national Building Better Opportunities programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund and The European Union through its European Social Fund. This funds the Opportunity and Change project and the Money Sorted in D2N2 projects - Ended March 2022.

Homelessness Reduction Act

This project is funded by three local authorities - Chesterfield Borough Council, North East Derbyshire District Council and Bolsover District Council. The project employs a Paralegal that works very intensively with clients to try and help them maintain current tenancies or find new homes - Ended April 2023.

Help is Here Project

Funded by the Big Lottery and led by Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre, we have been providing legal advice services to clients referred from DUWC. We primarily advised through three methods, specialist telephone advice, a casework service and outreach clinic.

Trainee Solicitor (Justice First Fellowship)

These are funds from the Legal Education Foundation for the placement of a Justice First Fellowship Trainee solicitor at Derbyshire Law Centre for 2 years - Ended January 2023.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Emergency Welfare Fund - NEDDC

Provided by North East Derbyshire District Council, this fund is used for clients who are in crisis and need help to get rehoused or keep off the streets - Ended March 2023.

European Union Settlement Scheme Project (EUSS)

Funded by the Home Office via the Nottingham Law Centre, the project provides immigration advice and referral pathways for vulnerable EU citizens - Ended September 2022.

Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Housing Law Group

Subscription based group. Legal practitioners from the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire areas meet to exchange information on Housing. Formal housing training has also been undertaken by the group.

Housing Repair Support Service

Funded by Chesterfield Borough Council, Bolsover District Council and North East Derbyshire District Council, this service is to support and expedite the repair of rental properties within the 3 districts.

North East Derbyshire District Council Residents Emergency Welfare Payments Fund

Provided by North East Derbyshire District Council, this fund is used for clients who are in crisis and need help to get rehoused or keep off the streets.

Amber Valley Borough Council Residents Emergency Welfare Payments Fund

Provided by Amber Valley Borough Council, this fund is used for clients who are in crisis and need help to get rehoused or keep off the streets.

Chesterfield Borough Council Community Grant Fund

This is funded by Chesterfield Borough Council and is used for clients who are in crisis and need help to get rehoused or kept off the streets.

Institute of Money Advisers

The grant is awarded from funding provided by the Money and Pensions Service to maintain and/or increase access to Debt Relief Orders for vulnerable clients.

Employment Advice Rapid Referral Service

Funded for 2 years by Derbyshire Public Health, the project aims to respond to rapid referrals from medical professionals and support workers to access employment advice - Ended December 2023.

Chesterfield Financial Inclusion Group Homeless Prevention Fund (HPF)

The HPF has been developed to support a preventative approach to homelessness and has been created with the view that relatively small spends can have a big impact - potentially saving Local Authorities large amounts of money on bed and breakfast or other temporary accommodation. Any private sector tenants in Chesterfield who are clients of DLC and who are at risk of homelessness can be considered eligible for the HPF.

Erewash Residents Housing Advice

Funded by Erewash Borough Council, this enables a housing caseworker to work with EBC to help their residents in respect of housing issues by providing residents with independent housing advice - Ended December 2023.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

North East Derbyshire District Residents Housing Advice

Funded by North East Derbyshire District Council, this enables a housing caseworker to work with EBC to help their residents in respect of housing issues by providing residents with independent housing advice.

Help Accessing Legal Support

Funded by the Access to Justice Foundation, this has enabled our employment work to be fully funded and enable employment casework through to tribunal - Ended June 2023.

Homelessness Prevention Project 2024

The HRA and HPP projects were amalgamated in May 2023. The project is funded jointly by North East Derbyshire District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Bolsover District Council, Amber Valley Borough Council, High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council. This work focuses on the prevention of homelessness through legal advice. The project employs 3 FTE Paralegals that work very intensively with clients to try and help them maintain current tenancies or find new homes.

The Rough Sleeper Initiative

Funded by a joint local authority project, we are able to obtain experts support evidence for homeless people.

The Justice Together Initiative

This project started in April 2023 and is aimed at building a community of people and organisations with diverse backgrounds, strengths and experience to transform access to justice in the UK immigration system. DLC's role has been to provide training opportunities in immigration for partner organisations.

Step Into Work - Volunteers Project

This is a development project in partnership with the Law Centres Network to develop hub models of legal action within our community through peer-to-peer learning, capturing and sharing learning and ensuring sustainability through embedding new ways of working within those communities.

Barings Hub Project

An Outreach Worker has been employed to work with local community organisations to increase understanding and information around discrimination law and to undertake strategic litigation where appropriate.

HLPAS Trainee Solicitor

These funds are to provide part payment of salaries for a new trainee solicitor. This started in January 2024.

National Lotteries Cost of Living Fund

These are funds to help sustain law centre services through bridging the gaps in funding. This fund ceased on 31 March 2024.

Improving Lives Through Advice Project

Funded by Access to Justice and the Community Fund, this fund is designed to provide funding for core services. Starting March 2024, the fund will last for 5 years.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

20. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

British Deaf Association Project

Working with the British Deaf Association, we work with them on their National Lottery Community Fund project and facilitate training and offer legal advice, particularly around discrimination issues.

Chesterfield Borough Council Community Grants and Financial Inclusion Group Network Funds

This joint project is designed to increase our reach into areas of high demand through a publicity campaign targeting specific areas in Chesterfield.

21. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	4,998	–	4,998
Current assets	526,670	187,928	714,598
Creditors less than 1 year	(92,547)	(108,167)	(200,714)
Net assets	<u>439,122</u>	<u>79,761</u>	<u>518,882</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	7,217	–	7,217
Current assets	477,775	269,452	747,227
Creditors less than 1 year	(147,863)	(164,931)	(312,794)
Net assets	<u>337,129</u>	<u>104,521</u>	<u>441,650</u>

22. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 Apr 2023 £	Cash flows £	At 31 Mar 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>560,258</u>	<u>18,737</u>	<u>578,995</u>

23. Operating lease commitments

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Not later than 1 year	11,310	30,028
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	–	3,346
	<u>11,310</u>	<u>33,374</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

24. Pension commitments

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for its employees.

The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the company to the fund and amounted to £72,113 (2023: £60,670). At the year end, £nil (2023: £nil) of contributions were outstanding and included within creditors.

25. Related parties

Any trustee remuneration or expenses have been disclosed in note 14.

There are no other related party transactions which require disclosure in the accounts.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee
Management Information
Year ended 31 March 2024

The following pages do not form part of the financial statements.

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
Year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Income and endowments		
Donations and grants		
Donations	2,595	1,572
Chesterfield Borough Council	156,564	107,197
Derbyshire County Council	132,124	286,124
N E Derbyshire District Council	96,003	79,376
Bolsover District Council	57,001	68,500
Amber Valley Borough Council	71,500	69,500
British Deaf Association	5,000	–
National Lottery Community Fund	151,053	–
Community Advice and Law Service (CALS)	36,780	–
Advice Nottingham	–	11,497
Allen & Overy Foundation London Grants Committee	7,500	–
HLPAS Trainee Solicitor	4,336	–
Legal Education Foundation	–	26,815
Derbyshire Dales District Council	25,667	16,500
Nottingham Law Centre	3,000	33,000
DUWC	10,613	10,404
Access to Justice	50,529	86,618
Law Centres Network	40,000	–
Lloyds Bank Foundation	–	2,250
High Peak Borough Council	16,500	16,500
IMA Provision of Debt Advice	9,035	20,299
AB Charitable Trust	22,000	20,000
	<u>897,800</u>	<u>856,152</u>
Charitable activities		
LSC: Legal Help Contract (Block Contract)	35,018	38,252
LSC: Disbursement Repayment (Block Contract)	3,081	3,223
LSC - County Court Duty Scheme	8,228	8,586
LSC: Legal Representation Profit Costs	41,592	36,921
LSC: Disbursement Repayment (Legal Representation)	22,167	18,750
Casework fees recovered	27,034	11,663
Charged services income	17,631	9,740
EMMA Project	126,664	151,985
Carried forward	<u>(281,415)</u>	<u>(279,120)</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Brought forward	(281,415)	(279,120)
Erewash Borough Council	30,718	12,648
	<u>312,133</u>	<u>291,768</u>
Investment income		
Bank interest receivable	9,492	593
	<u>9,492</u>	<u>593</u>
Other income		
Miscellaneous income	200	180
Training income	1,790	1,000
	<u>1,990</u>	<u>1,180</u>
Total income	<u><u>1,221,415</u></u>	<u><u>1,149,693</u></u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd**Company Limited by Guarantee****Detailed Statement of Financial Activities (continued)****Year ended 31 March 2024**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Expenditure		
Expenditure on charitable activities		
Wages and salaries	810,598	759,003
Employer's NIC	61,525	64,658
Pension costs	72,113	60,670
Rent	23,598	25,835
Light and heat	1,233	1,170
Repairs and maintenance	36,355	33,647
Insurance	4,376	4,111
Storage costs	1,931	–
Other motor/travel costs	3,903	3,869
Legal and professional fees	19,949	16,393
Telephone	7,920	7,623
Other office costs	13,056	10,406
Depreciation	5,303	7,592
Other interest payable and similar charges	306	191
Recruitment costs	1,367	2,334
Practising certificates	1,737	3,050
Provision for doubtful debts	(13,699)	–
Books/subscriptions	4,772	4,008
Welfare fund expenditure	6,582	10,377
Interpretation costs	92	395
Trustee expenses	1,536	770
Disbursements and casework costs	45,376	29,078
Participant expenses	–	520
Irrecoverable VAT	5,710	(8,290)
Training	6,356	9,826
Publicity and promotion	15,874	3,618
Affiliations	6,314	5,830
	<u>1,144,183</u>	<u>1,056,684</u>
Total expenditure	<u>1,144,183</u>	<u>1,056,684</u>
Net income	<u>77,232</u>	<u>93,009</u>

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Detailed Statement of Financial Activities

Year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Expenditure on charitable activities		
Legal services		
<i>Activities undertaken directly</i>		
Wages/salaries	494,626	490,172
Employer's NIC	37,584	42,735
Pension costs	46,375	39,519
Storage costs	1,931	–
Travel costs	3,903	3,869
Depreciation	5,303	7,592
Recruitment costs	1,367	1,376
Practising certificates	1,737	3,050
Provision for doubtful debts	(13,699)	–
Books/Subscriptions	552	38
Welfare fund expenditure	6,582	10,377
Interpretation costs	92	395
Trustee expenses	1,536	770
Disbursements and casework costs	45,376	29,078
Participant expenses	–	520
Irrecoverable VAT	5,710	(8,290)
Training	6,356	9,293
Affiliations	6,314	1,833
	<u>651,645</u>	<u>632,327</u>
<i>Support costs</i>		
Wages/salaries	315,972	268,831
Employer's NIC	23,941	21,923
Pension costs	25,738	21,151
Rent	23,598	25,835
Light & heat	1,233	1,170
Repairs & maintenance	36,355	33,647
Insurance	4,376	4,111
Telephone	7,920	7,623
Other office costs	13,056	10,406
Recruitment costs	–	958
Books/Subscriptions	4,220	3,970
Training	–	533
	<u>456,409</u>	<u>400,158</u>
Carried forward	456,409	400,158

Derbyshire Law Centre Ltd**Company Limited by Guarantee****Notes to the Detailed Statement of Financial Activities** *(continued)***Year ended 31 March 2024**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Brought forward	456,409	400,158
Publicity and promotion	15,874	3,618
Affiliations	—	3,997
	<u>472,283</u>	<u>407,773</u>
Governance costs		
Governance costs - audit fees	10,500	10,000
Governance costs - legal and other professional fees	3,569	4,896
Governance costs - management committee expenses	5,880	1,497
Governance costs - bank/debit charges	306	191
	<u>20,255</u>	<u>16,584</u>
Expenditure on charitable activities	<u>1,144,183</u>	<u>1,056,684</u>