

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

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DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE

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

Trustees	Ms J Flood, Chair
	Mr R Busby, Vice Chair
	Ms S White, Treasurer
	Mr M Wilson, Secretary
	Mr N Barker (appointed 24 February 2025)
	Ms J Calverley (appointed 30 January 2025)
	Dr S Joshi (appointed 30 January 2025)
	Mr D Shaw
	Mr D Skinner (appointed 5 December 2024)
	Mr P Smith (appointed 7 October 2024)
	Mr R Southwell (appointed 21 August 2024)
	Mr M Stone
	Ms E Tidd
	Ms A Webster
	Mr N Wood (appointed 5 December 2024)
	Mr B Youngs (appointed 30 January 2025)
	Mr J Duncan (resigned 5 December 2024)
	Mr D McGregor (resigned 7 October 2024)
	Mr N Redihough (resigned 1 May 2024)
	Ms K Rouse (resigned 30 January 2025)
	Mr J Woolley (resigned 1 May 2025)

Company registered number	02453081
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Charity registered number	702419
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Registered office	1 Rose Hill East Chesterfield Derbyshire S40 1NU
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Company secretary	Mr M Wilson
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Independent auditor	BHP LLP Chartered Accountants One Waterside Place Basin Square Brimington Road Chesterfield Derbyshire S41 7FH
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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc 30 Rose Hill Chesterfield Derbyshire S40 1LR
Workers Group until 2 January 2025	Mrs S Allard Mrs H Bagley Mr M Brown Mrs S Challands Miss Mae Elsmore-Renshaw Mr T Fletcher Mrs L Haythorne MBE Mrs S Hible Mrs H Lawes Mr P Macken Mr S Oliver Miss S Preece Mrs R Priest Mr S Shah Mr G Steel Mrs N Tugby
Senior Leadership Team from 2 January 2025	Ms S Allard Mrs S Challands Mrs L Haythorne MBE

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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

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

Structure, governance and management

a. 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 2025.

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.

b. 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 Board of Trustees. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees (who form the, now called, Board of Trustees) are elected to serve for a period of 1 year after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting.

At 31 March 2025, there were 10 members and 3 co-opted members, with 10 elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and a further 3 members nominated as representatives by core funders. During the year there were 2 resignations prior to the AGM, 1 resignations at the AGM and 2 resignations since the AGM in December 2024. We currently have 1 unfilled place on the Board of Trustees but this is intentional as revised Governance documents are looking to reduce the overall numbers on the Board of Trustees. There is a full list of Trustees on page 2 of the Trustee's report.

In the last 6 months of the year, we have taken a proactive approach to Trustee recruitment. We have been extremely fortunate to have attracted highly skilled Trustees, representing 6 organisations and 1 local authority.

By Board of Trustees decision on 28 March 2024, the number of Local Authority representatives have been reduced from 6 to 4. The Local Authorities have agreed to this change. There is currently 1 vacancy.

The Trustees seek to ensure that the diversity of membership of the Board of Trustees 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, governance, finance, communication and community liaison skills are well represented.

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

Structure, governance and management (continued)

c. Organisational structure and decision-making policies

The Board of Trustees meets every two to three months and is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The Board of Trustees includes a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (also the Company Secretary) and Treasurer. Jenny Flood has been chair since June 2021.

The Board of Trustees has two sub committees; People and Culture Sub-Committee and Finance Sub-Committee. Each Sub-Committee consists of at least four Board of Trustees members, with two staff normally in attendance, and meet at least on a quarterly basis. The Board of Trustees devolved the responsibility for the operational running of the charity to a staff management collective, known as Workers Group until 2 January 2025, when a restructure was completed and the organisation structure was changed to a Senior Leadership Team (of 3), with a hierarchy structure.

The new Senior Leadership Team (SLT) consists of the Senior Solicitor (Lisa Haythorne MBE), Deputy Senior Solicitor (Susan Allard) and Finance and Resource Manager (Sharon Challands). They have the responsibility for the smooth running of the services, the day to day operational management of the centre, individual supervision of the staff teams and also ensuring that the team continues to develop skills and working practices in line with best practice.

In addition to the SLT, our staff team currently consists of 5 solicitors, 2 caseworkers, 5 Paralegals, a Communications and Strategy Partner, a Funding Coordinator, a Human Resources Partner, a Volunteers Coordinator, a session supervisor and 7 admin provide reception cover, administrative support to all staff as well as providing service delivery and support on a number of projects. We also have 3 trainee solicitors and an outreach worker.

d. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

New and existing Trustees are invited to meet with Finance and Resources Manager, Sharon Challands. At this meeting, they will work through an induction pack with the trustee covering:

- The rights and responsibilities of Board of Trustees 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 Board of Trustees 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 Board of Trustees 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 Board of Trustees members renew their GDPR training every year and EDI every two years.

Workers Group/SLT 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.

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

Structure, governance and management (continued)

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

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

e. Pay policy for key management personnel

The charity's definition of senior management is staff on the Workers Group/SLT and the Trustees on the Board of Trustees. 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 Board. The Workers Group/SLT currently consists of 16/3 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 were reviewed in 2024.

f. 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 40 Law Centres nationally.

Derbyshire Law Centre currently has representatives on the Board of Trustees at the LCN, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre, Citizens Advice Derbyshire Districts and The Elm Foundation.

g. Risk management

The "Quality Manual" sets out all the policies and procedures in relation to Risk Management. This is kept constantly under review. The Board of Trustees 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 and Resource Manager is a member of the Association of Accounting Technicians and the finance apprentice is a student member. Our Debt caseworkers are members of the Institute of Money Advisers and we are a "Competent Authority" as DRO Intermediaries. The Law Centre is also registered with the Financial Conduct Authority and the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC).

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

Objectives and activities

a. Mission, Values and Strategy

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.

In setting objectives and planning for activities, the Trustees have given due consideration to general guidance published by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit, including the guidance 'Public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

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;

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

6) Financial sustainability - To increase and diversify the financial and other resources of the Law Centre to ensure its future sustainability.

b. Clients and their needs

Our clients are at the centre of the work that we do. Their voice is important at shaping our services and move it forward. We have done this through the year in different ways.

- Client feedback form which is given in paper and electronic format
- Contact Volunteers who telephone clients to obtain feedback
- Working with grass roots community organisations, such as Gussie's Super Kitchen and increasing our direct referrals with partners
- Having organisational members on our Board of Trustees who feed into the decision making process

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 Board of Trustees.

c. Service delivery

Our aim continues to be 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".
- MaPs Quality Assessments - Along with our monthly and quarterly data information, we also have quarterly quality assessments.
- 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.
- We have maintained our OISC Accreditation for Immigration Advice.

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.

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 Board of Trustees. This has helped keep our information safe and easy to access for those authorised to do so. We achieved the Cyber Essentials certificate in September 2024.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Objectives and activities (continued)

Our Assessment Service has continued to grow, thanks to the Volunteers who are trained to provide an assessment service, supervised by the Assessment Supervisor.

d. 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 and other funders to achieve their objectives.

Derbyshire Districts Citizens Advice and North East Derbyshire Citizens Advice have become key partners in moving forward advice provision in Derbyshire.

Our work as a partner within the East Midlands Money Advice partnership is key to our debt service provision.

The Justice Together Initiative funding, 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, Immigration Solicitor, travelling to Derby and Shirebrook to train advisers at St James' Centre and Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre.

DLC remains registered with the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA formerly OISC), enabling us to offer a fee-paying service.

The Barings Foundation project has also fed into this priority. Our 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.

e. 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. Thanks go to all the staff and volunteers for the incredible work that they continue to do every day and make this organisation the successful service it is.

We offer good terms and conditions and have flexible, family friendly working policies, including hybrid working.

We have a thorough Learning and Development programme to plan an individuals progression and use the services of MBL Seminars for cost effective training, along with other providers.

During the year, we undertook a pay review and a structure review. Staff were involved at all stages and it resulted in a more efficient decision making structure and salaries that are comparable to other organisations.

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

After recognising that we needed human resources expertise within the organisation, we recruited a HR Coordinator in May 2024. She has proven invaluable, especially within our work during the pay and structure review process.

Two members of staff started their Trainee Solicitor journey in January 2024 with a view to qualifying in January 2026. We have also been successful in applying for Justice First Foundation funding towards another trainee solicitor who will start in April 2025.

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, admin and client feedback.

During the year, we took on additional room at the Town Hall. This has enabled our two offices in Chesterfield to merge back into the one office. This has been a really good move both financially and as part of the team development.

f. 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 2024 which has given some security over the next 5 years. These funds are aimed at funding our core services as funders now recognise the importance of core funding.

g. Specialist services

Specialist Services - Housing

We have continued to provide specialist housing services throughout the year. Our new Legal Aid contract started in September 2024. 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.

We continue with the HLPAS (Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service) Legal Aid service. This replaced the County Court Duty Scheme and overall, we achieved all our targets. We are now able to provide Early Legal Advice as part of the HLPAS contract. This has seen a massive increase in the number of people we have been able to assist.

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). 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.

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

This 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. 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.

We continued our outreach work for the project at The Arc in Clowne, where clients would meet our Homeless Prevention Paralegal.

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 nearly 200 clients assisted, advisers have also continued to secure funds for clients, achieving a total of almost £99,000 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 2024. This service is to support and expedite the repair of rental properties within the 3 districts. 35 cases were opened during the year and of those closed, we achieved £8,722 in settlements for our clients. We have now secured additional funding from High Peak Borough Council to expand the service to that area of Derbyshire.

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 continued to recognise our homelessness prevention work, funding an increase in staffing levels for additional eviction work. This enabled us to hand hold our clients to help them retain or obtain new homes. This service ended 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 staff based at the Amber Valley Borough Council offices in Ripley on various days throughout the week and making home visits in that area.

During the year we also received funding from High Peak Borough Council and Erewash Borough Council and now provide outreach services in Ilkeston and new outreach started in summer 2025.

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

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. Unfortunately, we were unable to obtain specialist employment funding during the year but the service has been supplemented by our charged for service. Overall, our casework increased by 11% over the same period.

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

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 continued, funded by Derbyshire County Council but finished in March 2025. 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 and it exceeded its income target for the year.

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. Discrimination enquiries increased by 72%, with casework increasing by 25% overall.

The Barings Foundation project, via a partnership with the Law Centres Network, continues at a pace. Our Outreach Worker, Tracy Keepings-Crummack continues to work in partnership with community organisations on educating them on discrimination issues but has also focused on access to train services for those with disabilities. This has meant working with local politicians, community groups and Network Rail to improve access at stations and on trains.

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

Specialist Services – Debt

Our specialist debt services have been predominantly funded through the national 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 East Midlands Money Advice (EMMA) Project and they, in turn, contract out to providers such as DLC.

The partnership is continually working to refine debt advice provision so that they can go forward positively with the, now delayed recommissioning process. The recommissioning was due to start in 2025 but will now take place in 2026/27, which means that contracts have been extended by 3 years to March 2028.

The unit exceeded MaPs targets by 7%. Quality assessments were undertaken by EMMA visiting the Law Centre and inspecting files and observing advice appointments. Our KPI average rate was 90% for the year, exceeding the target by nearly 5%. In addition, we achieved 100% on the Data Quality Spot Check for quarter 4 24/25.

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.

Specialist Services - Immigration

Sagar Shah is our Area of Law Supervisor in Immigration work.

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

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.

The service is compiled of unfunded, Legal Aided and charged for services and during the year, the number of new cases increased by nearly 29%. Enquiries have increased by over 50%.

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.

The Justice Together Initiative funding, 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 and Shirebrook to train advisers at St James' Centre and Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre.

DLC remains registered with the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA formerly 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, Coordinators and Volunteers team. These staff provide our front-of-house services, casework support, premises management, financial administration, human resources and management as well as funding bids, IT development, communications and strategic lead.

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.

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.

In addition, we have had work experience students looking at how we work. Over 30 volunteers have been helping DLC during the year. 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 2024 we achieved Cyber Essentials which proves that our information is secure and appropriate.

We have continued to work with our Board of Trustees to develop new governance documents and completed our structure review.

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

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 internal newsletter, which gives updates on news and events within the organisation.

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

h. 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. This work ended in September 2024.

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

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 have been working with the Foundation on recruitment during early 2025.

Financial review

a. 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 24/25 until 31 March 2026. However, from 1 April 2026, unless things change in the meantime, Chesterfield Borough Council will be stopping all core funding – a total of nearly £21,000.

With the loss of core funds from Derbyshire County Council in April 2025 (some £91,000), this will impact cashflow and non-project funded services. We have responded to this by cutting our employment service accordingly. With each project, we aim for full cost recovery and this contributes to our core funds to pay for core staff.

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

Our current budget does show a significant deficit (around £211,096), but given our current reserves, 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.

Our success in re-tendering for our Legal Aid contracts meant that we could continue Legal Aid work beyond 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 was also renewed. This now includes Early Legal Advice for all clients and has meant that we have been able to help more clients than previously.

In terms of confirmed continuation funds, we have as follows:

- East Midlands Money Advice – secured until 31 March 2025 for 2.6 caseworkers funded at £52,468 each. Now extended to 31 March 2028 with recommissioning taking place during 2026/27.
- Mortgage Rescue (Court Desk) – confirmed until 31 March 2026 at £27,000.
- Amber Valley Independent Advice – Continuing at 5 days provision project and confirmed until 31 March 2026. £63k per annum.
- Our Homelessness Prevention project has been agreed until 31 March 2026. This is funded by 6 local authorities and has a value of £161,000 per annum.
- Disrepair Project, now funded by 2 local authorities, is in place for another year at £31,000 per year until 31 December 2025.
- 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 now have a volunteers team assisting at all levels of work in the organisation.
- Erewash Borough Council Housing project has been approved at over £53,000 until the end of March 2026.
- Barings Foundation – funded through LCN - £44,000 per annum until 31 March 2026.
- HLPAS Trainee Solicitor – part funded trainee until 31 December 2025.
- Justice First Fellowship, through the Legal Education Foundation – fully funding a trainee solicitor from 1 April 2025 for 2 years.
- Access to Justice – Improving Lives Through Advice - £100,000 per year until 31 March 2029.
- Home Office – eVisa Applications – funded until 31 August 2025 (£9,890 25/26).
- High Peak Housing Project – started 1 January 2025 until 31 March 2026 at £50,000 per year.
- British Deaf Association - £5,000 per year until 31 March 2026.

Charged services income is a small part of our funds but this has increased over the year (approximately 1% to 2.8%). 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 19 March 2025.

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.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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.

b. 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 £203,803 (2024: £181,621). Of this requirement, £112,021 (2024: £69,043) has already been set aside in the designated Staff Contingency Fund, the required level of free reserves is £116,738 (2024: £112,578) if the organisation was to immediately cease. With a managed closure, this would be reduced to £90,302 (2024: £81,981).

As at 31 March 2025, free reserves are £275,997 (2024: £340,078), after designated funds of £118,888 (2024: £99,043), 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.

The designated fund for the development of new offices for the organisation was created for costs relating to the possibility of the organisation having offices big enough to house all the staff in one location, rather than the two locations at present. The offices have now all combined and so the designated fund has been closed.

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.

c. 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

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

- Meeting the aims in our Communications Strategy and the use of social media to raise awareness of the work we do

In addition, we have recruited a HR Coordinator and are undertaking a review of recruitment policies and have undertaken a salaries review during the year.

As always, we are extremely thankful to our funders for their ongoing support to our services and the vulnerable residents of Derbyshire.

d. Plans for future periods

An important part of our future work is to keep advice provision at least at the existing level. With the drop in funding (especially core funding), this is proving a challenge and we have already reduced our employment advice service by 50%.

However, it is not all bad news. We shall continue to offer our services to clients whilst developing new lawyers and solicitors. By the end of 2025, we are hopeful that two of our trainee solicitors will qualify and that we will be able to offer them positions within the organisation. We look forward to our new Justice First Fellowship trainee starting in April 2025.

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

Our new Senior Leadership Team structure will have bedded in and decision making will be more efficient and effective.

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.

We shall continue our involvement as Trustee Board Members on Law Centres Network, Citizens Advice Derbyshire Districts, Citizens Advice Chesterfield, DUWC 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.

We will look towards achieving Cyber Essentials Plus to allow us to tender for contracts that require this as a minimum.

We shall watch carefully the development of devolved government in Derbyshire, working with partners to ensure that funding is not lost as a result of these changes.

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.

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

We are looking forward to having an additional housing caseworker later in the year and are pleased to move forward with our housing work in Buxton and Bolsover.

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.

2024/25 saw an increase in complex housing legal advice, particularly due to the "cost of living crisis", and we expect this to continue throughout 2025/26, especially in relation to possession cases.

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 Ilkeston, with new areas of Bolsover and Buxton, working with our local authority partners to reduce homelessness.

Our Homelessness Prevention Project is currently funded till at least March 2026 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.

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. The service will be reduced from April 2025 due to a cut in core funds. Our employment work in South Derbyshire ceased in April 2025.

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

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 2028.

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.

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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 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, whilst looking for funding to continue this work beyond April 2026.

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

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
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

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.

We will develop new policies and IT strategies around the use of AI and improved accessibility to advice through IT.

Governance

During 2025, 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 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.

e. Fundraising standards information

The charity does not carry out significant fundraising activities and is therefore not a participant of a voluntary scheme for regulating fundraising.

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

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

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

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

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

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

Auditor

The auditor, BHP LLP, were appointed in the year and has indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditor at a meeting of the Trustees.

In preparing this report, the trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

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



Signer ID: CFLJ60DXXP...

Ms J Flood

(Chair of Trustees)

Date: 17/09/2025 GMT

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE

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

In our opinion the financial statements:

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

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE (CONTINUED)

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, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within 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 charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within 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.

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE (CONTINUED)

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

- the senior statutory auditor ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable group through discussions with management and trustees and from our knowledge and experiences of the sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charitable company, including Charities Act 2011, Companies Act 2006, GDPR, employment law and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and trustees;
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management and trustees as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risks of fraud through management bias and override controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

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

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

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE (CONTINUED)

Use of our report

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

Nicola O'Sullivan (Senior statutory auditor)

BHP LLP

Signer ID: MMITLPRPJQ...

for and on behalf of

BHP LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors
One Waterside Place
Basin Square
Brimington Road
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S41 7FH

Date: 19/09/2025 GMT

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	As restated Total funds 2024
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	4	173,211	613,571	786,782	816,800
Charitable activities	5	217,525	258,227	475,752	393,133
Investments	6	11,566	-	11,566	9,492
Other income	7	3,124	-	3,124	1,990
Total income		405,426	871,798	1,277,224	1,221,415
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	8	383,273	945,472	1,328,745	1,144,183
Total expenditure		383,273	945,472	1,328,745	1,144,183
Net income/(expenditure)		22,153	(73,674)	(51,521)	77,232
Transfers between funds	16	(58,067)	58,067	-	-
Net movement in funds		(35,914)	(15,607)	(51,521)	77,232
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		439,121	79,761	518,882	441,650
Net movement in funds		(35,914)	(15,607)	(51,521)	77,232
Total funds carried forward		403,207	64,154	467,361	518,882

The Statement of financial activities complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006 and includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	8,322	4,997
		<hr/> 8,322	<hr/> 4,997
Current assets			
Debtors	13	191,244	135,604
Cash at bank and in hand		463,713	578,995
		<hr/> 654,957	<hr/> 714,599
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(195,918)	(200,714)
		<hr/> 459,039	<hr/> 513,885
Total assets less current liabilities		<hr/> 467,361	<hr/> 518,882
Total net assets		<hr/> 467,361	<hr/> 518,882
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	16	64,154	79,761
Unrestricted funds	16	403,207	439,121
		<hr/> 467,361	<hr/> 518,882

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 02453081

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

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

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



Signer ID: CFLJ60DXXP...

Ms J Flood

(Chair of Trustees)

Date: 17/09/2025 GMT

The notes on pages 29 to 49 form part of these financial statements.

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash used in operating activities	19	(119,408)	12,635
		_____	_____
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest from investments		11,566	9,492
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(7,080)	(3,084)
		_____	_____
Net cash provided by investing activities		4,486	6,408
		_____	_____
Cash flows from financing activities			
Interest paid		(360)	(306)
		_____	_____
Net cash used in financing activities		(360)	(306)
		_____	_____
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(115,282)	18,737
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		578,995	560,258
		_____	_____
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	20	463,713	578,995
		_____	_____

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

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. The members of the company are the trustees named on page 1. 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.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

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

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity and rounded to the nearest £1.

2.2 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.

More details on going concern can be found in the Trustees' Report.

2.3 Income

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

Grants are included in the Statement of financial activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of entitlement of receipt, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

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.

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent.

Some expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT due to partial exemption.

2.5 Interest receivable

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

2.6 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £500 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

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

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

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

2.7 Debtors

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

2.8 Cash at bank and in hand

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

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.9 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised in the Statement of financial activities as a finance cost.

2.10 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.

2.11 Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the pension charge represents the amounts payable by the charity to the fund in respect of the year.

2.12 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.

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

3. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

Estimates and judgments are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The trustees do not consider there to be any estimates or associated assumptions that would give rise to a significant risk of causing material misstatement in the carrying values of assets and liabilities in these financial statements.

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

4. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	As restated Total funds 2024
<i>Donations</i>				
Donations	1,229	-	1,229	2,595
Chesterfield Borough Council	20,849	49,500	70,349	134,564
Derbyshire County Council	90,124	82,000	172,124	132,124
N E Derbyshire District Council	21,009	58,627	79,636	87,003
Bolsover District Council	18,000	36,590	54,590	57,001
Amber Valley Borough Council	-	21,500	21,500	21,500
British Deaf Association	-	5,000	5,000	5,000
National Lottery Community Fund	-	78,640	78,640	151,053
Community Advice and Law Service (CALS)	-	38,609	38,609	36,780
Allen & Overy Foundation London Grants Committee	-	-	-	7,500
HLPAS Trainee Solicitor	-	19,971	19,971	4,336
Derbyshire Dales District Council	-	26,500	26,500	25,667
Nottingham Law Centre	-	-	-	3,000
DUWC	-	5,412	5,412	10,613
Access to Justice	-	100,000	100,000	50,529
Law Centres Network	-	42,000	42,000	40,000
High Peak Borough Council	-	16,500	16,500	16,500
IMA Provision of Debt Advice	-	930	930	9,035
AB Charitable Trust	22,000	4,000	26,000	22,000
Chesterfield General Charitable Fund	-	1,000	1,000	-
Justice First- Trainee Solicitor	-	5,697	5,697	-
Civil Action Fund	-	1,000	1,000	-
Home Office -eVisa	-	20,095	20,095	-
	173,211	613,571	786,782	816,800
Total 2024 as restated	202,916	613,884	816,800	

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE

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

5. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	As restated Total funds 2024
	£	£	£	£
LAA: Legal Help Contract (Block Contract)	49,596	-	49,596	35,018
LAA: Disbursement Repayment (Block Contract)	12,891	-	12,891	3,081
LAA: County Court Duty Scheme	13,381	-	13,381	8,228
LAA: Legal Representation Profit Costs	72,572	-	72,572	41,592
LAA: Disbursement Repayment (Legal Representation)	16,666	-	16,666	22,167
Casework fee recovered	26,032	-	26,032	27,034
Charged services income	26,387	-	26,387	17,631
EMMA Project	-	123,050	123,050	126,664
Erewash Borough Council	-	26,747	26,747	30,718
Amber Valley Borough Council	-	63,094	63,094	50,000
Chesterfield Borough Council	-	22,000	22,000	22,000
North East Derbyshire District Council	-	11,250	11,250	9,000
High Peak Borough Council	-	12,086	12,086	-
Total 2025	217,525	258,227	475,752	393,133
Total 2024 as restated	154,751	238,382	393,133	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	£	£	£
Bank interest receivable	11,566	11,566	9,492
Total 2024	9,492	9,492	

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

7. Other income

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	£	£	£
Miscellaneous income	164	164	200
Training income	2,960	2,960	1,790
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,124	3,124	1,990
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total 2024	<hr/>	1,990	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

8. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£
Legal services	610,819	677,556	1,288,375	1,123,928
Governance costs	40,370	-	40,370	20,255
Management fees (see below)	(267,916)	267,916	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	383,273	945,472	1,328,745	1,144,183
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total 2024	<hr/>	<hr/>	1,144,183	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Management fees relate to apportionment of core costs which are allowable under the terms of the funding.

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Activities undertaken		Total funds	Total funds
	directly	Support costs	2025	2024
			£	£
Legal services	747,640	540,735	1,288,375	1,123,928
Governance costs	-	40,370	40,370	20,255
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	747,640	581,105	1,328,745	1,144,183
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total 2024	651,645	492,538	1,144,183	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds	Total funds
	2025	2024
	£	£
Staff costs	440,683	365,651
Premises	71,670	65,562
Communications and IT	7,222	7,920
General office	21,160	33,150
Governance costs	40,370	20,255
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	581,105	492,538
	<hr/>	<hr/>

9. Auditor's remuneration

	2025	2024
	£	£
Fees payable to the charity's auditor for the audit of the charity's annual accounts	12,135	10,500
Fees payable to the charity's auditor in respect of:		
All non-audit services not included above	2,870	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

10. Staff costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	918,411	810,598
Social security costs	78,000	61,524
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	67,238	72,113
	<hr/> 1,063,649 <hr/>	<hr/> 944,235 <hr/>

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

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Charity staff	34	32
	<hr/> 34 <hr/>	<hr/> 32 <hr/>

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Charity staff	28	32
	<hr/> 28 <hr/>	<hr/> 32 <hr/>

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

The total amount of employee benefits received by key management personnel, including employer's NI and pension is £154,467 (2024 (as restated): £137,810). The charity considers its key management personnel to comprise the staff on the Senior Leadership Team as listed on page 1. During the year, the charity made changes to its management structure replacing the Workers Group with this Senior Leadership Team.

The number of employees to whom retirement benefits were accruing under a defined contribution scheme during the year was 34 (2024: 32).

11. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2024 - £NIL).

For committee members, travelling and other expenses are reimbursed in respect of expenses incurred on the company's business. During the year ended 31 March 2025, expenses totalling £252 were reimbursed or paid directly to 3 Trustees (2024 - £328 to 2 Trustees).

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

12. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
<i>Cost or valuation</i>			
At 1 April 2024	12,171	49,389	61,560
Additions	870	6,210	7,080
At 31 March 2025	13,041	55,599	68,640
<i>Depreciation</i>			
At 1 April 2024	12,171	44,392	56,563
Charge for the year	160	3,595	3,755
At 31 March 2025	12,331	47,987	60,318
<i>Net book value</i>			
At 31 March 2025	710	7,612	8,322
At 31 March 2024	-	4,997	4,997

13. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	64,402	57,524
Other debtors	68,735	59,234
Prepayments and accrued income	58,107	18,846
	191,244	135,604

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

14. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	30,439	7,469
Other taxation and social security	11,195	14,502
Other creditors	6,117	22,501
Accruals and deferred income	148,167	156,242
	195,918	200,714
	=====	=====

	2025 £	2024 £
Deferred income at 1 April 2024	108,167	164,931
Resources deferred during the year	108,692	108,167
Amounts released from previous periods	(108,167)	(164,931)
Deferred income at 31 March 2025	108,692	108,167
	=====	=====

Deferred income relates to project funding received in advance for projects in 2025\26.

15. Prior year adjustment

Income in the prior year has been reclassified between categories to better reflect the nature of the income received. Income in total has remained the same.

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

16. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
Staff contingency	69,043	-	-	42,978	112,021
Equipment renewals	10,000	-	-	(3,133)	6,867
Premises	20,000	-	-	(20,000)	-
	99,043	-	-	19,845	118,888
<i>General funds</i>					
General funds	340,078	405,426	(383,273)	(77,912)	284,319
Total Unrestricted funds	439,121	405,426	(383,273)	(58,067)	403,207

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

16. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
<i>Restricted funds</i>					
Local Resilience Fund	988	42,000	(51,560)	8,572	-
EMMA Project	-	123,050	(159,390)	36,340	-
Mortgage Rescue (Court Desk)	-	36,000	(45,839)	9,839	-
Amber Valley Independent Advice	-	63,094	(63,939)	845	-
DUWC - Help is Here	-	5,412	(6,047)	635	-
Erewash Residents Housing Advice	-	26,747	(25,623)	-	1,124
North East Derbyshire District Residents Housing Advice	-	19,127	(23,070)	3,943	-
Access to Justice - Improving Lives Through Advice Project	556	100,000	(98,282)	-	2,274
Homelessness Prevention Project 2023-2025	7,539	149,000	(158,257)	1,718	-
Rough Sleeper Initiative	25,516	-	(8,696)	-	16,820
Justice Together Initiative Project	-	38,609	(37,282)	-	1,327
Step Into Work - Volunteers Project	28,300	78,640	(73,104)	(3,100)	30,736
Barings Hub Project	410	42,000	(41,894)	-	516
Housing Repair Support Service	-	33,250	(33,213)	-	37
DCC Ukraine Migrants Project	-	40,000	(38,024)	-	1,976
eVisa Project	-	20,095	(19,506)	(589)	-
Other restricted funds	16,452	54,774	(61,746)	(136)	9,344
	79,761	871,798	(945,472)	58,067	64,154
<i>Total of funds</i>	518,882	1,277,224	(1,328,745)	-	467,361

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

16. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>					
<i>Designated funds</i>					
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
	106,137	-	(19,787)	12,693	99,043
<i>General funds</i>					
General funds	230,992	369,149	(217,567)	(42,496)	340,078
<i>Total Unrestricted funds</i>	337,129	369,149	(237,354)	(29,803)	439,121

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

16. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
<i>Restricted funds</i>					
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	-
DUWC - Help is Here	-	10,613	(12,355)	1,742	-
Housing Repair Support Service	5,578	31,000	(38,155)	1,577	-
EARRS Project	36,859	-	(41,547)	4,688	-
Erewash Residents Housing Advice	2,702	30,718	(33,803)	383	-
North East Derbyshire District Residents Housing Advice	-	27,003	(27,677)	674	-
Access to Justice - Improving Lives Through Advice 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
Cost of Living Fund - National Lottery	-	74,926	(75,677)	751	-
Other restricted funds	14,391	53,726	(51,353)	244	17,008
	104,521	852,266	(906,829)	29,803	79,761
Total of funds	441,650	1,221,415	(1,144,183)	-	518,882

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

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.

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 were 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.

Restricted funds

Local Resilience Fund Project (Derbyshire County Council)

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-possessions.

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.

DUWC - 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.

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.

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.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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Homelessness Prevention Project 2023-2025

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.

Justice Together Initiative Project

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.

Ukraine Migrants Project

Funded by Derbyshire County Council, this project helped to fund specialist legal advice for Ukrainian residents in Derbyshire.

eVisa Applications Project

Funded by the Home Office, this project delivers direct support to vulnerable clients when transitioning from a physical immigration document to an eVisa.

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.

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.

Other restricted funds

The immaterial restricted funds have been consolidated together. The funds included within here are discussed below.

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.

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

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.

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.

HLPAS Trainee Solicitor

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

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.

Transfers

Transfers of £61,892 have been made from unrestricted to restricted funds to cover an excess of expenditure incurred over income received on restricted projects.

Transfers of £3,825 have been made from restricted funds to unrestricted funds for the purchase of fixed assets from restricted funds where the conditions of funding have been fulfilled.

A transfer of £42,978 was made into designated funds from unrestricted funds to cover costs for staff redundancy if the charity was to unexpectedly close. A transfer of £3,133 was made from designated funds into unrestricted funds to represent depreciation charged on fixed assets. A further transfer of £20,000 was made from designated funds to unrestricted funds to release funds held for a move to new premises which is no longer happening.

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

17. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Designated funds	99,043	-	-	19,845	118,888
General funds	340,078	405,426	(383,273)	(77,912)	284,319
Restricted funds	79,761	871,798	(945,472)	58,067	64,154
	518,882	1,277,224	(1,328,745)	-	467,361
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Designated funds	106,137	-	(19,787)	12,693	99,043
General funds	230,992	369,149	(217,567)	(42,496)	340,078
Restricted funds	104,521	852,266	(906,829)	29,803	79,761
	441,650	1,221,415	(1,144,183)	-	518,882
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

18. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	8,322	-	8,322
Current assets	482,111	172,846	654,957
Creditors due within one year	(87,226)	(108,692)	(195,918)
	=====	=====	=====
Total	403,207	64,154	467,361
	=====	=====	=====

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

18. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	4,997	-	4,997
Current assets	526,671	187,928	714,599
Creditors due within one year	(92,547)	(108,167)	(200,714)
Total	439,121	79,761	518,882

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

	2025 £	2024 £
Net (expenditure)/income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	(51,521)	77,232
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation charges	3,755	5,303
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	(11,566)	(9,492)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(55,640)	65,821
Decrease in creditors	(4,796)	(126,535)
Interest payable	360	306
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	(119,408)	12,635

20. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash in hand	463,713	578,995
Total cash and cash equivalents	463,713	578,995

DERBYSHIRE LAW CENTRE
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

21. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2024	Cash flows	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	578,995	(115,282)	463,713
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	578,995	(115,282)	463,713
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

22. 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 £67,238 (2024: £72,113). At the year end, £nil (2024: £nil) of contributions were outstanding and included within creditors.

23. Operating lease commitments

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Not later than 1 year	3,155	11,310
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	3,080	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6,235	11,310
	<hr/>	<hr/>

24. Related party transactions

Any trustee remuneration or expenses have been disclosed in note 11.

During the year Derbyshire Law Centre received funding for their Help is Here Project totalling £5,412 from DUWC. A trustee of Derbyshire Law Centre is also a trustee of DUWC (2024: £10,613).

During the year, Derbyshire Law Centre received £42,525 from Law Centre Networks and paid £12,161 to Law Centre Networks. A member of Derbyshire Law Centres Workers group is also on the executive board of Law Centre Network (2024: £40,000).

The total donations made by Trustees with no conditions attached was £30 (2024: £nil).