



Annual Report of Trustees 2022 - 2023

In the face of challenges, as the world recovers from the damage of the pandemic, we have continued to adapt our service to help people overcome their dependency on drugs, alcohol, or addictive behaviours. 59% of our clients are in sustained recovery following our help, compared to the national average of 50%. The success rates of the people that have attended our services have remained constant over the past 3 years which is a testament to the dedication and determination of our clients and the staff that support their recovery journey.

We are proud of our resolve to ensure our staff's wellbeing and have committed to improving our support, working towards accreditation as a [Herts Healthy Workplace](#). This is in addition to our dedication to being a [Mindful Employer](#) (since 2019), to achieve better mental health at work. Our staff and volunteers are supporting vulnerable people in our community and bringing that same ethos to how we support clients as well as staff is embedded in our values as an organisation.

Our annual report shows the work The Living Room does to help change the lives of people living with addictions, support their loved ones and to champion therapeutic interventions. It costs on average £2,567 for someone to access our services over one year (the average treatment length).

The long-term impact we measure of graduates from the service shows the lasting effect on people's health, wellbeing, and stability after they leave our services. We know from Treasury approved modelling that for every person who becomes employed after attending our services our role in getting people back into employment has a benefit to society of **£22,000 per person**. We deadweight the actual figures by 50%, as we account for those who might have moved into employment without our support anyway and gives us much greater confidence in standing by a figure.

The Living Room's purpose has always (since 2000) been to break the cycle of addiction for social good. In our penultimate year of our strategic priorities, our purpose remains constant, and we have focused on how to achieve it.

The target for the year was to find a new home for our Watford service, as we had been temporarily housed in a not ideal space by Watford Community Housing. We were pleased to welcome Mayor Peter Taylor to open our new home in Station Road, the Mayor's second time opening our service. Station Road provides much improved facilities for our service and numbers have grown steadily since the opening.

ANNUAL REPORT STATEMENT

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The board of Trustees are satisfied with the performance of the charity during the year and the position at 31st March 2023 and consider that the charity is in a strong position to continue its activities during the coming year and that the charity's assets are adequate to fulfil its obligations.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE CHARITY GOVERNANCE CODE

The aim of the Charity Governance Code is to help charities and their trustees develop high standards of governance. As a sector, we owe it to our beneficiaries, stakeholders, and supporters to demonstrate exemplary leadership and governance. At The Living Room, we use the code as a guide, looking at areas we can improve our Board of Trustees practice and how it is supported by the leadership Executive Team.

There is an annual review of the Charity Governance Code, highlighting areas for improvement, discussions at board level around improvements needing focus and successes to celebrate. Our CEO is familiar with the Code in her training delivery for Hertfordshire Community Foundation.

RELATED PARTIES

None of the trustees receives remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity.

Trustees are invited to declare any relevant conflicts of interest at each board meeting, and formally requested to submit an annual register of interests' form. Board members reported no relevant interests or transactions.

ANNUAL REPORT

The board of trustees of The Living Room present its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2023. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and SORP regulations.

OUR PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's objectives and activities, and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the objectives and activities that have been set.

The Living Room delivers public benefit through supporting adults with an addiction to stop and stay stopped, and family members or carers of a loved one with an addiction, to benefit from peer support.

We do this by providing free, time unlimited, abstinence-based, facilitated, group counselling treatment to break the cycle of addiction and peer support groups for family members or carers of a loved one with an addiction. All our trained counsellors are in long-term and sustained recovery from addictions.

We provide people with the opportunity to explore the root cause of their own or their loved one's addiction and their responsibility in that. We help people to understand the underlying trauma and/or bereavement, which enables people to make connections with others and learn tools and strategies to lead a healthy and happy life; one that benefits future generations, the economy and communities and doesn't rely on dependency to drugs, alcohol, or behaviours for comfort.

We believe that everyone has potential and a life worth living.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Status	The Living Room is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) – Foundation	
Also known as	Living Room Herts, The Living Room Hertfordshire, TLR, TLRH	
Governing document	The Living Room is governed by its Constitution, as adopted on 02 November 2017 amended 26 September 2019.	
Company number	N/A	
Charity number	CIO 1175541 (previously 1080634)	
Registered office and operational address	8-10 The Glebe Chells Way Stevenage Hertfordshire SG2 0DJ	
Trustees	Daniel Marshall Daniel McGovern Eddie Mills Jenny Brace Charles King Fateh Hamoudi Tracy Lacey-Smith John Palmer Ramesh Summan Elizabeth Fisher	CHAIR TREASURER (from 24/04/2022) VICE-CHAIR (resigned 20/06/2022) (resigned 28/07/2022) (resigned 28/07/2022) (from 24/03/2022) (from 12/01/2023)
Chief Executive Officer	Adrienne Arthurs	
Banker	HSBC Town Centre, Danestrete, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 1BY	
Chartered Certified Accountants	Hargreaves Owen Ltd Red Sky House, Fairclough Hall, Halls Green, Weston. Hertfordshire SG4 7DP	

FUNDRAISING REGULATIONS

The Living Room engages in public fundraising but does not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators. The charity observes the relevant fundraising regulations and codes. During the year, there was full compliance of these regulations and codes and The Living Room received no complaints relating to its fundraising practices.

OUR PEOPLE

The Executive Team:

- Adrienne Arthurs, Chief Executive; (and Safeguarding DP)
- Rita Cooper, Clinical Director (and Safeguarding RP)
- Mark Wiseman, External Relations Director (and Shops)
- Susan Hudson, Corporate Services Director (and Data Protection Officer)

The Senior Leadership Team:

- Debbie Coote, Clinical Manager; (and Counselling Manager Watford)
- Cerise James (Fundraising and Marketing Manager)
- Nicola Roope (Finance and Personnel Manager)

16 FTE Counsellors and administrators support the work across all four hubs.

16 Volunteers

OUR TRUSTEES

Board meetings of the Trustees, CEO, and the Executive Leadership team (by invitation), occur quarterly. Additional meetings such as extra-ordinary board meetings, committee meetings and the executive board meeting occur when the need arises as well as planned regularity. Decisions are taken by a majority vote at quorate board meetings, but also communication and decisions can be made via email. Roughly half of the board meetings are in-person and half via video conferencing software.

- Finance Committee
- Sustainability Committee [NEW – including DEEI]
- Income Generation Committee
- Executive Committee

Trustees serve for 3 years to a maximum of three terms of three years. They are encouraged to use their skills, experience, and knowledge to guide and support the strategic direction of the organisation. Each trustee takes the lead on specific policy and procedures endorsement that are required by the Charity Commission, our Commissioners and legal and best practice recommendations. Those endorsements are then proposed to the full board for ratification.

The running of the organisation and operations are delegated to the CEO and the Executive Team.

Trustees are recruited from the general public, although people with lived experience of recovery and ex-service users are encouraged to join the board. Two spaces are allocated specifically. The CEO and the Chair provide new trustees with an induction and ongoing support.

INTRO FROM OUR CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Daniel Marshall
Chair of the Board
(June 2023)

We are facing unprecedented levels of change and complexity across society. Coming out of the pandemic and facing up to a Cost-of-Living crisis, it is undoubtedly the case that in certain areas, the true impact of these issues won't be felt for some time yet. We also know that the Cost-of-Living crisis puts increased pressure on households, and for some, increases the risk of relapse.

As a service, we've remained a constant through that change, complexity, and turbulence that our clients are facing, and that will continue to be the case. We've remained able to deliver high quality services, and achieve incredible, and sustainable, results. Our graduation rate continues to sit higher than the national average, at 59%, for example.

We've also helped more people this year than we did in the last. This is something we're particularly proud of as we experience downward pressure on our budgets due to inflation and is a demonstration of the culture within the organisation of continuing to deliver services effectively and efficiently.

These results are quite remarkable, and are testament to Adrienne and her team, who all work tirelessly to ensure we're here for those who need us. We're nothing without the passion of all our staff and volunteers, and as a Board we're immensely grateful for their hard work and dedication. I also want to thank our Trustee Board – we have an excellent, diverse Board, who care deeply about the organisation and the people we're here to help, and we have managed to attract high quality people on to our Board, which alongside the Executive, puts the organisation in the best possible position to face up to the challenges our clients have.

We know that the world will continue to be complex and changeable, but the organisation is stable, resilient, and will remain able to help people who need our support.

REPORT FROM OUR TREASURER

Daniel McGovern

Treasurer to the Board

(June 2023)

My first year as treasurer for The Living Room has seen the charity continue to grow, increasing the number of people accessing our services and maintaining a healthy graduation rate, which comfortably exceeds the national average.

There is no doubt that the responsibility for the continued success of The Living Room lies entirely at the feet of the people who dedicate their time and expertise to helping those suffering with addiction. Praise should go to Daniel Marshall and Eddie Mills for their stewardship of the Trustee board, Adrienne

Arthurs for overseeing the smooth operation of the charity, and all the staff and volunteers for their commitment to ensuring that those recovering from addiction receive the vital support they need.

Financially, The Living Room has had another successful year, spearheaded by the tireless fundraising efforts of Mark Wiseman's team and the prudent financial management of Corporate Services Director, Susan Hudson. The Living Room secured more funding than budgeted for over the year, as successful grant applications were supplemented by higher-than-expected income from donations and fundraising events. Similarly, income from our charity shops exceeded expectations by more than 40%, a reflection of the wonderful work of our staff and volunteers.

Looking forward, I believe that The Living Room is in robust financial standing for the year ahead. We will continue to closely monitor the financial effects of the Cost-of-Living crisis, ensuring our staff receive fair pay and keeping tabs on the increased costs that every UK institution is facing. Our fundraising team continue to explore new funding avenues and work hard to ensure that relationships with current financial supporters remain positive.

Reading testimonies and speaking to graduates of The Living Room, I am often amazed by the impact of the services provided by our charity. Over the 2022/2023 financial year, The Living Room averaged a cost of £2,567 per client. While this is not an insignificant amount, the fact that the incredible support each client receives costs little more than £210 per month will never cease to astound me. I am proud to be a part of this wonderful charity and I look forward to a successful new year.

COMMENTS FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Adrienne Arthurs
Chief Executive
(June 2022)

The number of people we have supported across this past year is a big increase on the year before. 354 people have stayed longer than two weeks with 59% graduation rate, achieving sustained recovery from their addiction or as a family and carer of a loved one with an addiction, leaving us with tools to maintain their recovery journey and peer support connections. We introduced monthly aftercare drop-in groups at each centre for people that graduate and want to keep in touch, and these are well attended.

Wellbeing has been the focus of the year, ensuring that as an organisation we look after ourselves and our colleagues so that we are able to support others. Mental health issues have been on the rise since lockdown's began in 2020 and as a service that remained open and actively supporting some of the most vulnerable people in society, we are aware how good mental health is an underlying ingredient in

wellness and maintaining recovery. Our measurement of mental health needs by people accessing our support shows a marked rise from 40% in 2019 to 66% by the end of March 2023.

With the needs of our clients becoming more mental health related, this naturally could have an impact on our staff and volunteers. Therefore, as an Executive Team, we have committed to developing a healthier workplace environment, checking what is needed and what would be helpful. Along the path of accreditation, we have highlighted areas of good practice and found opportunities to be a more supportive leadership team and organisation. I am keen to continue to develop and grow the supportive culture and we have now included development plans within our sustainability objectives.

Embracing technological solutions kept our organisation afloat when COVID-19 was causing the world to shut down, and fast forward to today, we have maintained our focus on reducing paperwork, using the tools available to us and to find better ways of delivering, monitoring, and protecting our services. To follow the sustainability goals, we have connected our streamlining to sustainability, as we approach the new financial year and our commitment to the environment.

End of a Good Project

The Fourth Centre – Herts Hub was a virtual service, offering an adapted but full version of our recovery model. People that accessed the group therapy online community rehabilitation service, may not have accessed our service due other barriers besides their addictions. Over the past year we supported 85 people in the Herts Hub, 65% female and 35% male, with the median age of 45. Interestingly, people accessed the service from all around Hertfordshire, with higher numbers living in Broxbourne and East Herts where we don't have a hub physically.

The funding from Hertfordshire County Council and COVID recovery grants ended 31 March 2023, but we were unable to find alternative sources of funding to continue the service. This is despite very real barriers that people accessing this support reported: mental health difficulties, disability, physical health conditions, sensory impairments and learning disabilities which are highly fundable in the JSNA priorities (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment). We will continue to look for funding to provide a virtual service.

Conclusion

The cost-of-living crisis has made our services more expensive to run and less opportunities to find suitable funding to support our work. Therefore, over the coming year we will focus on maintaining our service delivery levels and working with people with more complex needs and holistic barriers. Our unique model is based upon being free to access to all, no matter what their needs are.

In addition, as an organisation, we aim to become more sustainable in all areas of the business and service delivery. I am confident that we will continue to be a high quality, people focused community resource, delivering free, abstinence-based, time unlimited, addiction recovery services for Hertfordshire. Everyone in the organisation is committed to achieving more and more responsibly.

As an organisation that is people focused, I am determined to continue to highlight the needs of our clients and support the needs of our staff.

WE EXIST TO BREAK THE FAMILY CYCLE OF SUBSTANCE AND BEHAVIOURAL ADDICTIONS

OUR VISION

Our vision is a future when people with the **illness of addiction** are able to live their lives **free from** an addiction to drugs, alcohol or behaviours, becoming **contributing citizens in society**.



OUR MISSION

- ✓ To provide **group therapy** for adults with the **illness of addiction**, and
- ✓ to support their **family members**

...in Hertfordshire.



OUR VALUES...

We are **CARING** to our clients & co-workers.



We are **CUSTOMER-FOCUSED** when prioritising our work and activities.



We serve and **SUPPORT** OUR COMMUNITY.



We ensure we are **COMPETENT** in performing our duties.



We value our **INTEGRITY** as professionals.



OUR COMMITMENTS TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION:

We will ensure that anyone, regardless of their individual or group characteristics...

...can get treatment for their addiction and are given support...

...that takes account of their unique background and any complications this may cause for them.

We will reach out to community groups, develop better cultural awareness in our services...

...and focus on LGBTQ+ and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic visibility within our organisation.



OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

VISION	Our vision is a future where people with the illness of addiction can live their lives free from an addiction to drugs, alcohol or behaviours, becoming contributing citizens in society.
MISSION	To provide group therapy for adults with the illness of addiction and to support their family members, in Hertfordshire and other areas of the UK.
AIM	The aim of our organisation is to break the family cycle of addiction (both substance and behavioural addictions). Our culture change work – not just teaching people to live with their addiction, we help them to take back ownership of their lives.
VALUES	We are caring to our clients and co-workers. We are customer focused when prioritising our work and activities. We serve and support our community. We ensure we are competent in performing our duties. We value our integrity as professionals.
DIVERSITY, EQUALITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION	We will ensure that anyone, regardless of their individual or group characteristics, can get treatment for their addiction and are given support that takes account of their unique background and any complications this may cause for them during their time at The Living Room. We will reach out to community groups, develop better cultural awareness in our services and focus on LGBTQ+ and Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic visibility within our organisation.
CHARITABLE OBJECTS	The charity's main objective for the year was to promote the objects set out in its governing document, 02 November 2017 (refreshed 19 September 2019) when the charity was registered as a CIO No 1175541 (formerly 1080634). (a) to preserve and protect the health of all persons who are in danger of becoming addicted to, or dependent upon, drugs of any description, alcohol, solvents or other addictive substances or behaviours as well as their family members within the County of Hertfordshire and such other places as the trustees shall from time to time decide by the provision of counselling and recovery and support services. (b) to advance the education of professionals working in the field of addiction treatment by the provision of professional training, support services and information.

REFERRALS

We accept self-referrals as well as professional referrals, which are easily made via our website or via a phone call to our local number 0300 365 0304. In 2022-23, we saw **1149** (2021-2022 – 1501) enquiries made to our service, including **714** (2021-2022 – 903) referrals.

OUR PROGRAMMATIC WORK:

The Living Room has hubs in Stevenage, St Albans, Watford and Online (Closed 31/03/2023), for Hertfordshire adults to access.

Free, time unlimited group therapy, facilitated by trained counsellors with lived experience of addiction recovery, using person-centred therapy, cognitive behaviour therapy, dialectical behaviour therapy, psycho-educational/psycho-social counselling, psychodynamic counselling and the first four steps of the AA 12-step programme.

Our Services:

[Our Services | The Living Room \(livingroomherts.org\)](http://livingroomherts.org)



All Addiction Group Therapy Monday to Friday	All Addiction Group Therapy Monday to Friday	All Addiction Group Therapy Monday to Thursday
Family and Carers Group Tuesdays	Family and Carers Group Wednesdays	Family and Carers Group Wednesday evenings
Disordered Eating Wednesdays	Disordered Eating Tuesdays	
	Specialist Drug Group Mondays	
	Relationship Group Thursdays	
Weekly Newcomer's Group	Weekly Newcomer's Group	Weekly Newcomer's Group
Monthly Graduate's Group	Monthly Graduate's Group	Monthly Graduate's Group
Monthly Experts by Experience Group	Monthly Experts by Experience Group	Monthly Experts by Experience Group

Online All Addiction Group Therapy Hertfordshire Hub (Closed 31/03/2023)
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday via Zoom



Contracted to deliver drugs and alcohol daytime community rehabilitation in partnership with Relate and Family Lives.

Out of Hours Helpline for families 0808 800 2222 (Family Lives)

One number 0300 365 0304 – self or professional referrals.

Talks, training and event presence to raise awareness.

Holistic support in partnership with voluntary and statutory organisations.

Individual counselling for people attending group therapy provided by counsellors in training.

Our strategic themes:

We will take a client centred approach.

We will consider sustainability in all we do.

Our objectives:

1. Review and refine our services to ensure they are inclusive, effective, efficient, and creating long-lasting impact on the lives of our clients.
2. Develop and nurture external relationships, to grow our partnerships and profile within communities and Hertfordshire.
3. Invest in digital solutions to reduce the impact on the environment and improve efficiency, accessibility, impact measurement and the reach of our services.
4. Position our organisation to successfully bid for long-term contracts and grants.

Our assurances:

We will listen to those accessing our services, so that we can improve them, adapt, and respond holistically to client needs.

Contractual Targets

	Target	Outcomes 2022 - 2023
Service Delivery		
	60% of people achieve sustained recovery	59% of people achieved successful graduation overall. Almost achieved this target. • 53% alcohol • 59% drugs • 52% disordered eating • 82% behavioural addictions • 30% opiates • 77% family and carers
Access and Reach		
	700 people in Hertfordshire helped each year	1149 people supported in total. • Advice and guidance • Services • Signposting elsewhere
Organisational Improvement		
	100% good to excellent client satisfaction	100% good → excellent client feedback

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2021-2024

1. Review and refine our services to ensure they are inclusive, effective, efficient, and creating long-lasting impact on the lives of our clients.
 - Impact report and client monitoring data collection refined.

- Good practice clinical meetings integrated into monthly diaries.
 - Accessibility inspection completed.
2. **Develop and nurture external relationships, to grow our partnerships and profile within communities and Hertfordshire.**
 - Counsellors targeted to make community connections locally.
 - Involvement in professional strategic locality networks.
 - Presentations given to health, other VCSFE groups, statutory organisations, and the public.
 3. **Invest in digital solutions to reduce the impact on the environment and improve efficiency, accessibility, impact measurement and the reach of our services.**
 - Moved over to using electronic MS Forms for all client data collection.
 - Converted staff data collection and systems to Microsoft 365.
 - Electronic archiving of historical paperwork.
 4. **Position our organisation to successfully bid for long-term contracts and grants.**
 - Keep up to date with good governance.
 - Developed our client involvement in co-production.
 - Accreditation as a Herts Health Workplace.

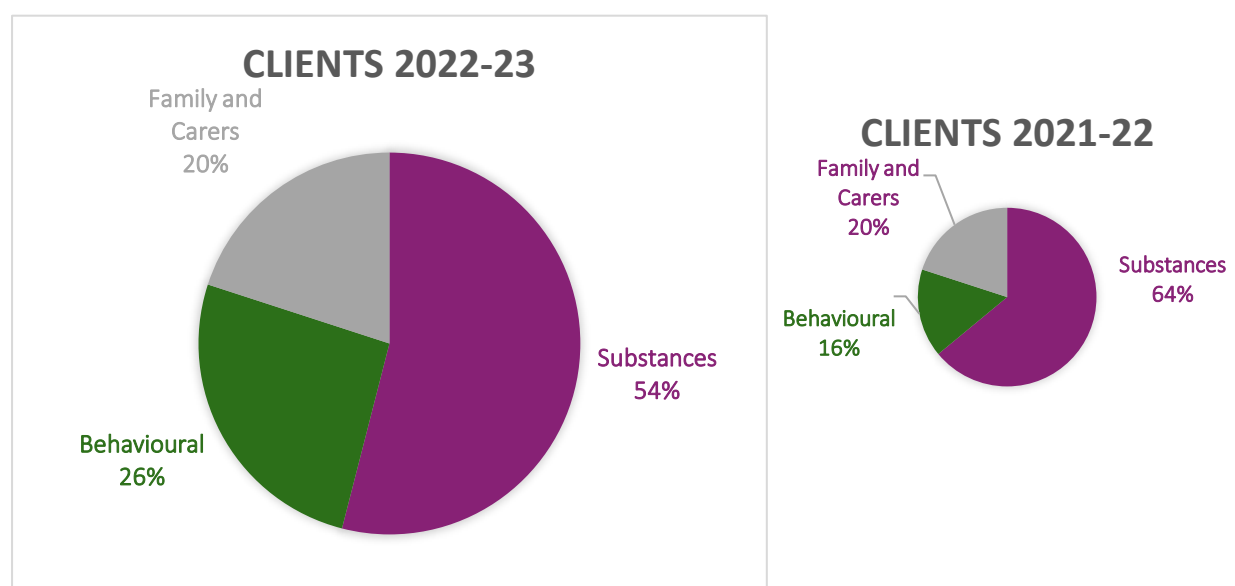
VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTION

The charity has placement counsellor volunteers (training counsellors - above Level 1); peer mentor volunteers, marketing and fundraising volunteers, event volunteers, IT consultants, data analysts, counselling volunteers and all our trustees are volunteers. All work purely in a voluntary capacity and are unpaid.

In 2022-2023, 60 people dedicated many hours to volunteering with The Living Room's Stevenage, St Albans, Watford and Herts Hub hubs and our charity shops.

Our paid colleagues also offer additional hours to support our fundraising activities.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE



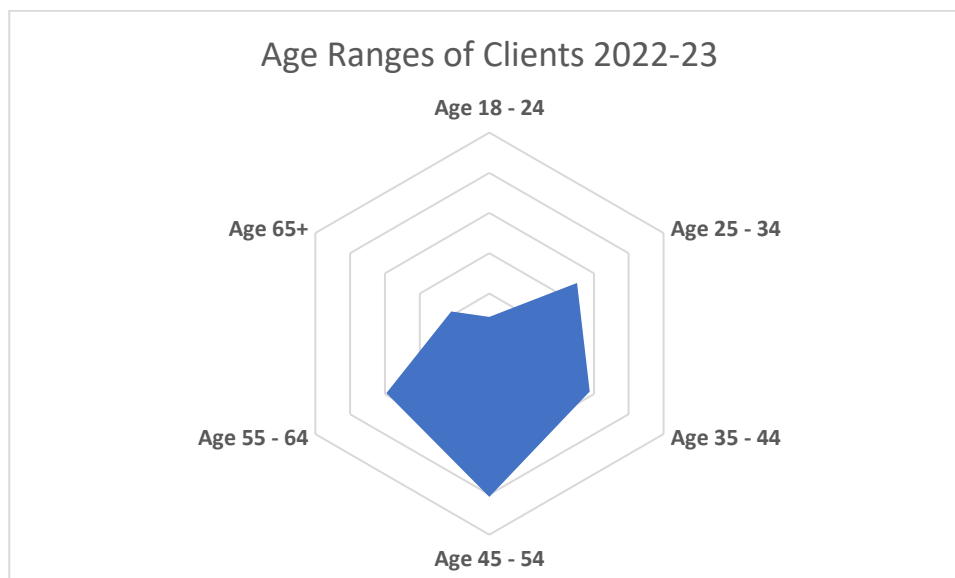
2022 - 2023		2021 - 2022
354	Number of people accessing treatment therapy	340

69	Number of family and carers supported via group therapy	68
1149	Brief Interventions via enquiries – in-person, phone or email	1541
90	‘Families Living in Recovery’ sessions delivered by Family Lives or Relate	96
156	Graduate groups (started Feb 2022) – people attended	27
59%	Graduation rate (Nationally 50%)	65%
16%	Transferred to clinical interventions (e.g., Spectrum CGL)	5%

OUTPUTS

36	Main group sessions per week
5	Family and carer sessions per week
8	Specialist group sessions per week
2	Families Living in Recovery support hours per week
25	Placement (in training) counsellor hours provided per week
392	Counselling hours provided per week

AGE RANGES



EXTRA DELIVERY

Additional projects delivered with or by partners to our clients.

1. Consortium working with RELATE North Thames and Chilterns as well as Family Lives Hertfordshire to deliver our ‘Families Living in Recovery Project’ providing relationship support.
2. Groundwork UK providing outreach for our Stevenage clients on gardening projects locally.
3. Growing People project in St Albans teaching about allotment growing.
4. Terence Higgins Trust deliver workshops to our clients at each hub on ‘Keeping Safe Sexually’.
5. Turning Point provided in-house mental health support one-to-one with clients in each hub.
6. 30 motivational personal story ‘chairs’ from fellowships such as Cocaine Anonymous.

FUNDRAISING

Our services are free at the point of delivery to people wanting to access our services. The Board of Trustees delegates the Income Generation strategy to the Fundraising Working Group comprised of staff and trustees, led by the External Relations Director.

The income budget set December 2022 for April 2023 – March 2024 was proposed by the Fundraising Working group and approved by trustees.

	Approved 22-23 Budget	Actuals 22-23	Approved 23-24 Budget
Total Contracts	485,737	485,736	416,414
Revival Donation	25,000	35,876	32,000
Fundraising, Donations & Legacy Income	96,120	119,030	105,500
Traded income/interest earned	3,000	4,313	3,000
Total Grants	298,050	310,888	187,857
Total Grants Unsecured	20,000	0	190,000
TOTAL INCOME	902,907	919,966	902,771

OUR DONORS - TRUSTS & GRANTS

£30k - £60k	A G Foundation Henry Smith Charitable Fund Henry Smith COVID Fund National Lottery Reaching Communities
£20-£30k	Lloyds Bank Foundation Garfield Weston
£10k-£20k	Martin Geddes Charitable Trust Edward Gostling Foundation
under £10k	SADC Community Revenue Fund SADC Health and Wellbeing Fund Bedford and Luton Community Foundation Stevenage Community Trust Simon Gibson Community Trust Souter Charitable Trust Hospital Saturday Fund Sisters of Mercy Peter Storrs Trust Diocese of St Albans Hertfordshire Community Foundation Marsh Christian Trust The Follett Trust Arnold Clark Corporate funders: ASDA, Waitrose, Screwfix

Other income: Individual donations, places of worship, district and county councillors, community fundraising, our charity shops, and Hertfordshire County Council contracts.

LONG-TERM IMPACT 2022 - 2023

Annually we measure our long-term impact by contacting people who have previously used our services. In 2023, we surveyed 90 people who had accessed our services during 2021, to find out the longer-term outcomes and impact that attending TLR treatment had on their health and wellbeing.

We wanted to know whether our interventions worked. We asked questions that indicated if they were abstinent and positive contributing citizens with good health and wellbeing long term, as per our theory of change.

We asked:

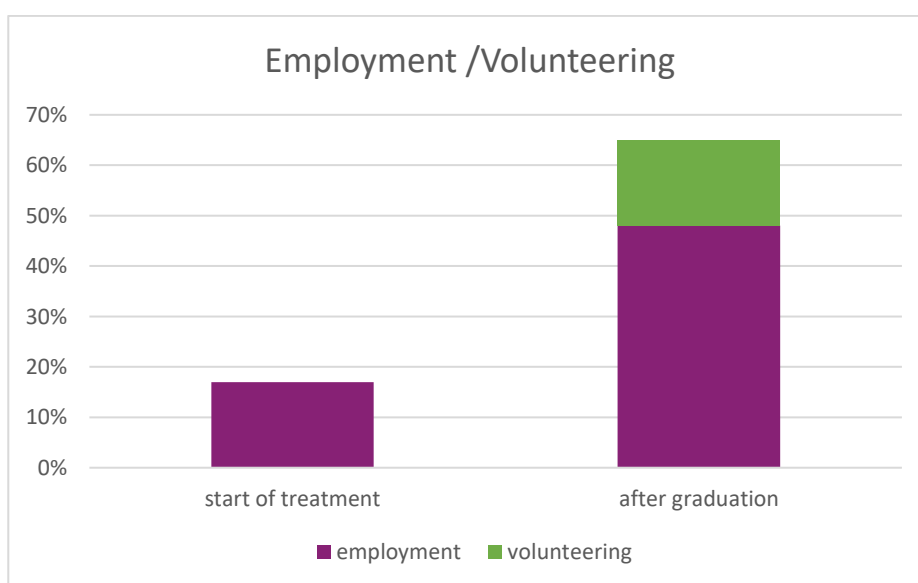
How well does our method of treatment achieve the intended outcomes, long-term?

The answers, from 38 respondents (42% return):

The long-term changes we are working towards in partnership with our clients, is that adults are abstinent and contributing citizens in society. The results from this evaluation, where most people who responded saw a positive change in their lives, across all areas surveyed, would suggest that The Living Room is achieving its intended outcomes.

We accept that we are unable to attribute our clients' improvement solely on engaging in treatment at The Living Room. However, the added comments from our graduates and their sustained recovery indicate the value of attending treatment and the significant positive impact it has had on them and their future.

The overall impact for people that have attended our services, is one of improvement across all areas of wellbeing. And interestingly, consistently following treatment, the increase in the number of people either working or volunteering is impressive. The overall results from all the questions asked are broadly stable, year on year, as we provide a consistent quality service that can demonstrate good outcomes.



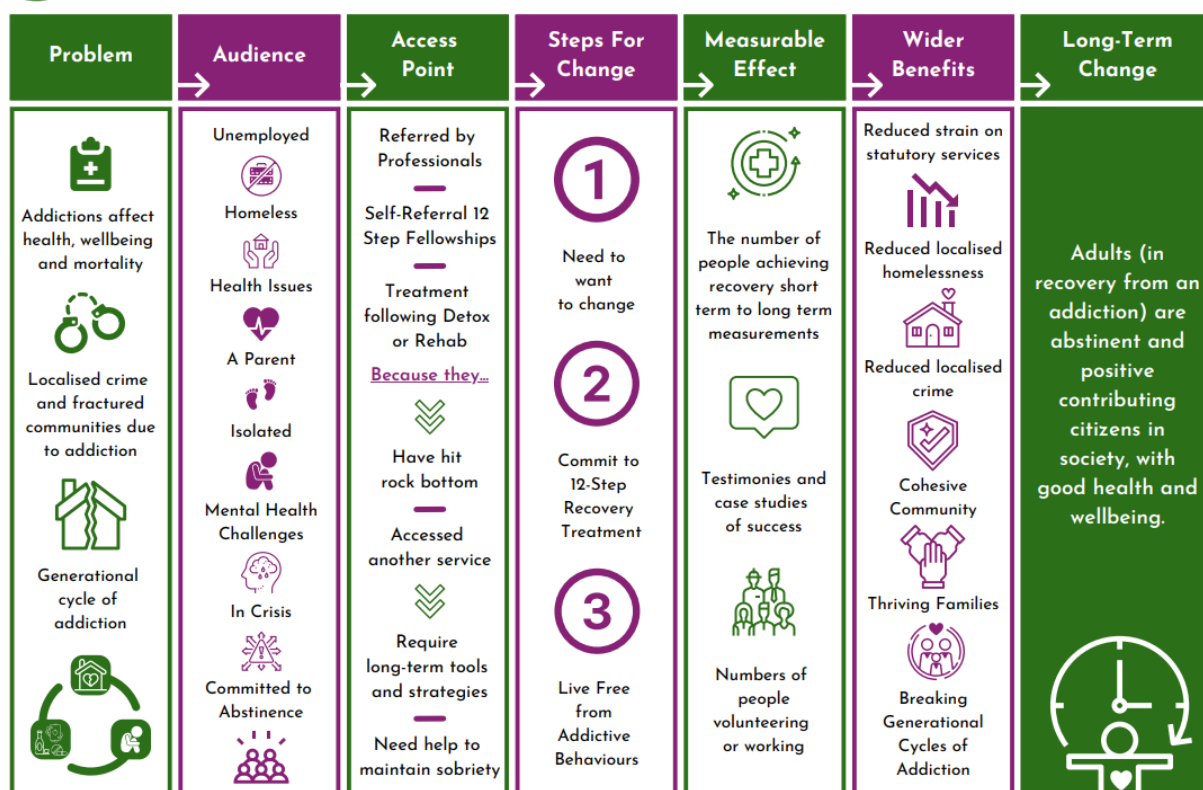
Impact Improvement Rates for 2022 – 2023



"I loved (and sometimes hated) every part of my journey. The counsellors delivered the perfect balance of care while also ensuring that clients were held accountable. I felt safe to speak about all of the things I had previously felt so ashamed about. I found a tribe of people who understood, even if their addictions looked different outwardly".

"I'm a better parent and the relationship between my children and myself gets better every time".

The Living Room - Theory of Change for the Client



"The Living Room has done an amazing job, there is nothing else I can think of that you could have done".

100%	Emotional and mental health improvement (higher than previous year 90%)
100%	Self-care and living skills improvement (before treatment 2.5/5, post treatment 4.2/5)
100%	Scores improved for being motivated and taking responsibility for their own actions (before treatment 2.3/5, 4.3/5 post treatment)
95%	Improved physical health (even with the shadow of the pandemic)
94%	Employed, a homemaker, in education or training, retired or volunteering (2 unemployed)
92%	Recovery benefit of attending The Living Room and managing their dependency
92%	18/24 rated no criminal activity at treatment start, rising to 22/24 at the time of survey
88%	Did not access any further addiction support
84%	Settled and secure housing situation (21% had settled housing at the start of treatment)
82%	Improved family relationships and increase social networks
81%	Satisfied with recovery since leaving TLR
69%	Managed sustained abstinence, but all managing better than when they first accessed help
42%	Continue to attend a fellowship (no family and carers attend a fellowship after treatment)

“I was not aware that The Living Room dealt with such a wide range of issues and assumed that it would only be a drugs and alcohol service, so I was pleasantly surprised when other issues such as eating disorders, love addiction, gambling, etc were brought up as it helped me deal with my issues holistically as well as discover that my substance misuse was also entangled in my other troubles in many ways.”

WHAT WE STOPPED

Our **Hertfordshire Hub**, the fourth centre in our treatment choice, planned to close March 2023. We did look for alternative funding when the COVID-19 Recovery Grant ended, supplied by the government through Hertfordshire County Council. Despite proving the need for this service particularly for people with a higher level of mental health issues, funding was not available to continue.

The interim independent evaluation said:

The delivery of the Hertfordshire hub has attracted new service users into the service who were unlikely to have accessed support from a physical centre due various challenges including mobility issues, self-isolation, shielding, and issues relating to stigmatisation.

The hub has also resulted in an increase of service users accessing treatment from underrepresented groups including those with co-existing mental/physical health issues. As a result, the hub is meeting a known need especially around the number of people who may find it challenging to access services delivered through building-based provision.

“They do listen, they really listen, and they try to help, and it does work, I can feel it working when I’m speaking, to not only the counsellors, but to everyone else that attends”.

FINANCIALS

Total Income for 2022-23 was £919,966 (2021-22 £830,296) with expenditure of £908,634 (2021-22 £858,663) resulting in a small operating surplus of £11,332 (2021-22 £-28,367). Total funds at year end were £307,940 of which £292,047 were Unrestricted Funds for our Core Service (2021-22 Total Funds £296,608 of which £ 279,226 were Unrestricted).

For the 354 clients attending our service in 2022-23 this represents an average cost per client of £2.6k for one year's treatment, or £50 per client per week, which represents exceptional value.

INCOME

Our Lloyds Bank multi-year funding and HCC contract for our Hertfordshire (online) Hub, worth £85k, came to an end this year and it has been a challenge to find other multi-year grants and contracts to apply for. There were also some programmes that we were not included in such as the government Supplemental Grant, however, due to previous years' multi-year grants we have remained stable this financial year.

With an end to 'lockdowns' we were able to raise more funds from events and increased income from room hire and our Charity Shops.

EXPENDITURE

The 11% increase in income has been used to cover the rise in our overheads, all of which have increased this year, and to invest in the bones of our service.

In addition to the 3% annual increase awarded in April 2022, we gave all our staff a 55p hourly increase in October as a response to the Cost-of-Living crisis.

We have also invested in our centres this year, converting the old creche area into a second counselling room for our Stevenage Hub and enabling us to hand back the second Stevenage premises we were renting. We also found a permanent Hub for Watford which we have furnished and equipped to provide two counselling rooms for the increasing client numbers in this area. Our St Albans Hub also had a partial refurbishment to provide two counselling rooms and improved facilities. The total cost of £30k was funded by additional grants and rent savings.

RESERVES POLICY

The trustees have considered the level of free reserves it is appropriate for the charity to hold to ensure its financial sustainability, future strategic development and continuing to operate and meet the needs of clients if unforeseen and potentially financially damaging circumstances arise.

They have considered the reliability and continuance of future income generation and funding, timing of cash flow and working capital requirements and cover for unplanned emergency repairs and premises costs.

Free reserves represent unrestricted funds of the charity excluding restricted funds. The determination of an appropriate reserves level is a key part of the strategic planning process.

This is linked into a risk assessment of key areas of income and expenditure, along with the following:

- Working capital
- Financial risk management
- Future strategic development

The trustees review the reserves level on an annual basis, along with the risk assessment of key areas of income, as this provides the information on an adequate level of reserves to be maintained.

The trustees consider therefore that it would be prudent to set aside an amount equivalent to between three to four months of the forthcoming year's planned expenditure costs – for 2023-24 this would be between £223k and £298k. The free reserves on 31 March 2023 £292k are within the range of its reserves policy. Therefore, the trustees consider the charity a going concern.

REMUNERATION POLICY

The board is responsible for considering the Chief Executive's remuneration, taking account of the skills and experience required and sector norms for charities of similar size.

Pay and pay increases are reviewed biennially by the finance committee in relation to their responsibilities and performance, skills and qualifications, the external economic environment and financial affordability for The Living Room.

The Living Room is a Living Wage Employer, a Disability Committed Employer, and a Mindful Employer.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The board follows a comprehensive risk management policy which clearly defines the roles of the board, finance and audit committee and senior colleagues in identifying and managing risk, and how the register of risks should be used as a live document. The board identifies the key risks and discusses the impact, likelihood, and the risk management in place to mitigate these risks.

Risk is managed under the headings of Health and Safety, Client Welfare, Legal and Statutory Obligations, Fundraising and Marketing, Services and Operations, Data Protection, Safeguarding, Volunteer and Staff Wellbeing, Financial Sustainability. Each trustee takes a lead in each area shown.

Risks	Major Risks and our Responses
Health and Safety	Unsanitary and dilapidated washroom and water access facilities in the St Albans hub – full refurbishment. Small traces of asbestos found at the St Albans premises. Full site report stated no immediate risk to health. Landlord notified.
Client Welfare	Clients have presented higher complex needs in comparison to previous years – may be COVID related. Staff have fewer clients to keywork and have worked more intensely with them, referring to suitable agencies for additional support. 13 incidents with clients were recorded and concluded professionally. None were serious incidents.
Legal and Statutory Obligations	Expired leases with Stevenage Borough Council [SBC] are being worked on for renewal by S. Hudson, SBC, and SA Law.
Fundraising and Marketing	Poor visibility in Watford. Open day and venue launch resulted in 35 professionals attending, raising the profile of our services in Watford.

Services and Operations	Unused creche area, repurposed to Main Group Room 2 with refurbishment and handing back tenancy on No.15 The Glebe to reduce expenditure. Area made suitable for external hire, self-contained. Funding intended for new Watford property purchase was successfully diverted to provide fit for purpose furniture at the rented venue.
Data Protection	One incident recorded. A client's initials were not removed when submitting a report to NDTMS. No further action required.
Safeguarding	4 safeguarding referrals made.
Volunteer and Staff Wellbeing	Cost of Living crisis – made affordable adjustments to salaries across the year to acknowledge the rise in CoL.
Financial Sustainability	Changes to budgets and income streams has meant keeping on top of where the shortfalls are likely to be and looking for alternative ones. COVID recovery grants coming to an end and nothing to replace them, despite the needs being there.

Through the risk management processes established by the charity, the Trustees were satisfied that the major risks identified had been adequately mitigated, where required.

The Charity is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and all client information is encrypted. The Living Room client and supporter databases are held in the cloud, are GDPR compliant and backed-up off site through an encrypted network. The organisation has access to a secure email connection. All colleagues, volunteers and trustees are regularly security checked and all relevant roles are DBS checked as per government guidance for working with Adults at Risk.

The Living Room is a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy and Federation of Drugs and Alcohol Providers and therefore adheres to their ethical conduct for counselling and psychotherapy. It is a member of the NHS Addictions Provider Alliance and Hertfordshire County Council Drugs and Alcohol Network. It co-chairs the Integrated Drugs and Alcohol Governance Group alongside Spectrum (CGL) and Emerging Futures, who also hold commissioned services contracts for Hertfordshire Drugs and Alcohol statutory interventions.

EQUALITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

The Living Room is proud to be an equal opportunities employer. This means that decisions concerning recruitment, promotion, dismissal, or any other aspect of employment will be based on the needs of the business and not any assumptions based on sex, race, age, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, married or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, or belief. This is an important commitment, which colleagues share.

Colleagues are encouraged to raise with management any discriminatory behaviour, assumptions, or attitudes they encounter at work and are entitled to do so free from any reprisal providing they are acting in good faith. There is a Diversity Equity, Equality and Inclusion staff working party forum to review process and procedures as well as ensure we uphold our values and mission.

How have we improved?

1.	Diverse representation of people in all our marketing materials.
2.	Staff training delivered on unconscious bias, twice over the year.
3.	All managers received Management Training Fundamentals, which included modules on equality, diversity, and inclusion.
4.	Newcomer and Graduate Aftercare groups provide additional support to clients at the start of their journey and when they leave us.
5.	Staff flexible working introduced, to promote autonomy.
6.	Updated staff grievance, performance management processes and client complaint policies.
7.	Working with Autism training, offered to clinical staff, to support clients with autistic tendencies to work better in group environments.

Download a pdf of this report [The Living Room \(livingroomherts.org\)](https://livingroomherts.org/)

Partnership and press enquiries admin@livingroomherts.org

Service and clinical enquiries enquiries@livingroomherts.org

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Living Room

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages 25 to 32.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records.

It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the next statement.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Trina Haggerty FCCA
Hargreaves Owen Ltd
Chartered Certified Accountants
Red Sky House
Fairclough Hall
Halls Green
Weston
Herts
SG4 7DP

The date upon which my opinion is expressed is: 13th July 2023

The Living Room
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Voluntary Income	2	827,885	71,180	899,065	820,519
Activities for generating funds	3	20,044	-	20,044	9,752
Investment Income	4	857	-	857	25
Total incoming resources		848,786	71,180	919,966	830,296
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Cost of generating funds					
Costs of generating voluntary income and undertaking charitable activities		828,694	54,531	883,225	843,778
Governance costs		24,653	756	25,409	14,885
Total resources expended		853,347	55,287	908,634	858,663
NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		(4,561)	15,893	11,332	(28,367)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
transfer between funds		17,382	(17,382)	0	0
Total funds brought forward		279,226	17,382	296,608	324,975
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		292,047	15,893	307,940	296,608

**The Living Room
Balance Sheet
as at 31 March 2023**

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	
	Notes	2023	2023	2023	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	8	619	-	619	825
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	88,662	859	89,521	8,097
Rent deposit		6,250	-	6,250	-
Prepayments and accrued income		8,227	-	8,227	-
Cash at bank and in hand		205,380	15,893	221,273	305,700
Total current assets		<u>308,519</u>	<u>16,752</u>	<u>325,271</u>	<u>313,797</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	10	(17,950)	-	(17,950)	(18,014)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>290,569</u>	<u>16,752</u>	<u>307,321</u>	<u>295,783</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>291,188</u>	<u>16,752</u>	<u>307,940</u>	<u>296,608</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>291,188</u>	<u>16,752</u>	<u>307,940</u>	<u>296,608</u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds				291,188	279,226
Restricted funds				<u>16,752</u>	<u>17,382</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>307,940</u>	<u>296,608</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Chair on 13th July 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:


D. M. M. M. M. M.

The Living Room
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2023

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation of the accounts

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Charities Act

The particular accounting policies adopted are set out below.

Transition to FRS 102

No restatement of items has been required in making the transition to FRS 102. The transition date was 1 April 2016.

Incoming Resources

Incoming resources are accounted for on a receivable basis deferred as described below where appropriate.

Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Investment Income

Bank Interest received is included on an actual receipts basis.

Recognition of liabilities

Liabilities are recognised on the accruals basis in accordance with normal accounting principles, modified where necessary in accordance with the guidance given in the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting and Reporting (revised June 2008) issued by the Charity Commissioners for England & Wales.

Fixed assets and depreciation

All tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation.

Depreciation has been provided at the following rates in order to write off the assets (less their estimated residual value) over their estimated useful economic lives.

Fixtures and fittings	25% on reducing balance
Computer equipment	25% on reducing balance

Taxation

As a registered charity, the charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

The Living Room
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2023

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when the funds are raised for particular purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

2 VOLUNTARY INCOME	2023	2022
	£	£
Grants	310,888	265,060
Contracts	485,736	463,131
Places of Worship Donations	6,577	9,049
General Donations	51,865	49,292
Gift Aid	6,876	4,205
Corporate donations	1,247	5,782
Donated services and facilities	35,876	24,000
	<u>899,065</u>	<u>820,519</u>
3 ACTIVITIES FOR GENERATING FUNDS	2023	2022
	£	£
Fundraising events	16,588	6,857
Earned income	3,456	2,895
	<u>20,044</u>	<u>9,752</u>
4 INVESTMENT INCOME	2023	2022
	£	£
Interest receivable	<u>857</u>	<u>25</u>
5 COSTS OF GENERATING VOLUNTARY INCOME AND UNDERTAKING CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	2023	2022
	£	£
Support costs	<u>883,225</u>	<u>843,778</u>

The Living Room
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2023

6 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

7 STAFF COSTS	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries (including pensions)	<u>711,675</u>	<u>714,617</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
Full time equivalents	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000

8 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings	Computer equipment	Totals
	£	£	£
COST			
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	<u>21,086</u>	<u>18,681</u>	<u>39,767</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>21,086</u>	<u>18,681</u>	<u>39,767</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2022	20,765	18,177	38,942
Charge for the year	<u>80</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>206</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>20,845</u>	<u>18,303</u>	<u>39,148</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2023	<u>241</u>	<u>378</u>	<u>619</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>321</u>	<u>504</u>	<u>825</u>

The Living Room
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2023

9 DEBTORS	2023 £	2022 £
Other Debtors	89,521	8,097

10 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	2023 £	2022 £
Taxation and social security	12,998	11,385
Other creditors	4,112	5,789
Accrued expenses	840	840
	17,950	18,014

11 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	At 1/4/2022 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/2023 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	279,226	12,821	292,047
Restricted funds			
General fund	17,382	(1,489)	15,893
TOTAL FUNDS	296,608	11,332	307,940

Net movement in funds, included in the above
are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	848,786	853,347	(4,561)
Restricted funds			
General fund	71,180	55,287	15,893
TOTAL FUNDS	919,966	908,634	11,332

The Living Room
Schedule to the Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Voluntary Income		
Grants	310,888	265,060
Contracts	485,736	463,131
Places of Worship Donations	6,577	9,049
General Donations	51,865	49,292
Gift Aid	6,876	4,205
Corporate donations	1,247	5,782
Donated services and facilities	35,876	24,000
	<u>899,065</u>	<u>820,519</u>
Activities for generating funds		
Fundraising events	16,588	6,857
Earned income	3,456	2,895
	<u>20,044</u>	<u>9,752</u>
Investment income		
Interest receivable	<u>857</u>	<u>25</u>
Total incoming resources	<u><u>919,966</u></u>	<u><u>830,296</u></u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
Governance costs		
Accountancy fees	590	590
Independent examination	250	250
Other professional fees	<u>24,569</u>	<u>14,045</u>
	25,409	14,885
Support costs		
Refreshments	1,122	859
Rent and Rates	41,394	38,314
Water	861	390
Light and heat	10,725	5,666
Telephone	4,767	3,739
Partnerships	30,000	35,000
Depreciation of tangible assets	<u>206</u>	<u>275</u>
	89,075	84,243

The Living Room
Schedule to the Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023	2022
Finance		
Bad debts	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Information technology		
IT support and consumables	9,200	7,133
Website	5,895	5,182
	<u>15,095</u>	<u>12,315</u>
Human resources		
Wages (including pensions)	711,675	714,617
Training	2,998	4,584
	<u>714,673</u>	<u>719,201</u>
Other		
Fundraising	365	335
Insurance	9,464	5,589
Printing, Stationery & Postage	3,744	4,935
Sundries	103	746
Subscriptions	1,066	1,832
Creche	-	894
Staff Travel	3,570	1,218
Marketing	661	387
Repairs and maintenance	32,999	10,108
Recruitment and DBS checks	1,175	997
Equipment	11,235	978
	<u>64,382</u>	<u>28,019</u>
Total resources expended	<u><u>908,634</u></u>	<u><u>858,663</u></u>
Net (expenditure) / income	<u><u>11,332</u></u>	<u><u>(28,367)</u></u>