



Careers
First

Annual Report 2021-22

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Carers First

Company Information

**REGISTERED CHARITY 1085430
COMPANY NUMBER 04144820**

**Registered Office
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Tolgate Lane
Rochester
Kent
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**Auditors
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Chartered Accountants
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Carers First

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Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2022

The Directors, who are also the Trustees of the charitable company, present their Annual Report with the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022. This Trustees' report, prepared in accordance with Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006, is also the Trustees' report as required by Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011.

The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) in preparing this annual report and financial statements.

Structure, Governance and Management

Status

Carers First is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity (No. 1085430) and was incorporated on 19 January 2001.

The Charity's governing document is its Articles of Association, which have been approved by the Charity Commission and its affairs are administered by its Trustees.

Trustees

The Trustees who held office during the year and since are as follows:

Mr Peter Davis (Chair)
Mrs Ruth Rankine (Vice-Chair)
Mr Sukwinder Bassi
Ms Shirley Briggs (resigned 22 October 2021)
Mr Paul Fennell
Ms Georgina Hoare
Mr Antony Hall (resigned 16 May 2022)
Mr Peter Jenkins
Mr Craig Pashler
Mr Marcus Shaw
Mr Julian Sinclair
Mrs Vicki Wells
Dr Marie Wheatley (resigned 13 April 2022)
Mr William Swan (resigned 26 April 2021)

The Trustees are elected, or re-elected, by rotation by the Companies Act Members of Carers First at the Annual General Meeting.

Chair's Introduction

This year, Carers First has significantly increased our reach and impact for carers. Despite operating in a pandemic, the charity has flourished supporting more carers than previously and making a material difference in their lives. We have reached 119,000 carers, 32% higher than the year before. 90% of carers tell us we have helped to improve their lives.

New Strategy (2021-24)

It is now estimated that two in three of us will become a carer in our lifetime. This makes the need for information, timely support and practical help for carers more critical than ever. As a result, we recognise we need to substantially increase the number of carers we reach and have set ourselves an ambitious target of reaching 250,000 carers by 2024.

Underpinning our strategy to increase our reach is the use of digital channels, starting with the launch of our new website in September 2021. Designed in co-production with carers, the new website has customised journeys according to caring situations and extensive, nationally relevant, help and advice content and interactive self-help tools.

The website is the first phase in the wider development of our new service offer for different carer groups. We have not seen a similar offer available elsewhere in the carer support sector and believe it will help position Carers First as an organisation that shapes its services alongside carers to meet their evolving needs.

A Royal occasion

2021 marked 30 years since Carers First was first started by a group of carers in Kent. We were delighted to be joined by HRH The Princess Royal for a celebration event in Lincolnshire alongside carers, volunteers, staff, Trustees and partners. It was a wonderful occasion and I was delighted to see local media coverage of the event. This is important in raising the profile of Carers First which, in turn, helps us to reach more carers.

Board and management

We have a Board of Trustees with a strong mix of skills and experience including finance, law, communications, business, health and social care.

The Board meet quarterly supported by our three Committees (Finance; People and Safeguarding; Quality, Performance and Business Development). In total, there are 15 governance meetings a year.

As Chair, I lead an internal annual governance review and we have an independent external review every three years, the next of which is in 2022. We are working towards using the Charity Governance code to measure our effectiveness.

Our role as a Board is to drive the activities of the charity through the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), led by the Chief Executive, Alison Taylor. We have a strong commitment to co-production with carers. We have Carer Forums in each locality we work in, and these report into SLT. There are Trustees who are linked to each of the Carer Forums and we take the opportunity to meet with carers wherever possible.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

We are committed to offering services that are personalised, inclusive and creative. To do this, we need a diverse staff team and volunteers who can respond to individual carers needs. We want to reach out to all sections of the community and provide a working environment in which everyone feels supported, respected, valued and able to contribute.

We have reviewed and updated our EDI policy and EDI training. As a Board, we receive regular reports on the diversity of our staff and the carers we support. We consider equality and diversity issues across all we do as a charity and take positive action to address any inequality of access.

Outlook

There is no doubt that the year ahead is going to continue to be challenging for carers, especially with the cost of living crisis. It is vital we continue to recognise and reach carers at the earliest opportunity and provide information and support that makes a difference in their lives.

In the year ahead, we will increase the total number of carers we reach online and in the community. We will develop our service offer and programmes of support to provide tailored, high-quality and consistent support to carers. We will continue to build operational and strategic collaborations with key partners and stakeholders to help reach and support more carers.

Thank you

I would like to thank all our supporters and partners who have made our success over the last year possible. I would also like to recognise the dedication of our Senior Leadership Team, staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to support carers. We couldn't do it without you. Thank you.

Peter Davis
Chair of Trustees



Objectives and Activities

The charity's Objects are to relieve the needs of carers and persons who are sick, infirm, disabled or who have social care needs in particular, but not exclusively, by the provision of information, advice and support and by the provision of respite care.

In accordance with Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011, the Trustees have had due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit when reviewing the charity's objectives and planning future activities.

Our Mission and Ambition

Ambition: To enable carers to thrive in their role and achieve the balance in their lives they wish to achieve.

Mission: Carers First provides support, for carers, with carers – so they can live their lives to the fullest.

What we do

We understand that life as a carer can be challenging. Getting the support and help you need shouldn't be.

Any of our lives could be turned upside down due to the ill-health, frailty or disability of a family member or friend. In fact, two in three of us can expect to become a carer in our lifetime.

There are currently 7 million unpaid carers in the UK¹, and that number is on the rise. Their huge contribution saves our economy £132 billion each year² - the cost of a second NHS. Each carer's needs and situation are as unique as they are, but many face similar challenges. They can struggle to balance employment, finances, or their own wellbeing and time for themselves with their caring role. They may not be aware of the help and support available to them - and that's why we're here.

Carers First works directly with, and for, thousands of carers, providing personalised information and tailored support in the way that suits them: online, on the phone or face-to-face in their local community.

¹ Carers Trust, 2022

² Valuing Carers 2015 – the rising cost of Carer Support, Yeadle, Buckner and Carers UK (2015)

Achievements and Performance

We developed our strategy in an inclusive way informed by extensive consultation with carers, staff, Trustees and key stakeholders. The strategy sets out five Strategic Objectives with outcomes, targets and measures.

Strategic Objective 1: Recognise and reach greater numbers of carers, at the earliest opportunity

2021-22 key targets:	What we achieved:
25% increase in total number of carers reached. Baseline 90,000 carers	119,000 carers reached, a 32% increase on the previous year
25% increase in number of carers registered. Target: 40,000	39,012 carers registered, a 23% increase
25% increase in users accessing information and resources on the website	188% increase in the number of people accessing information and support on the website to March 2022 By July 2022, this had jumped to an 866% increase

A key challenge we face is that many people do not identify or recognise themselves as a carer but rather as a daughter, son, mother, father, partner or friend, helping someone close to them. Moreover, many carers can struggle without support for several years before seeking help and seem to slip invisibly between services without accessing or being offered support for themselves.

Improve our communications capability and capacity

We put in place a new communications team to enhance our digital and communications capacity and capability and support with reaching more carers, including through campaigns.

We also successfully launched our refreshed brand, applying it across all our communications. Being consistent across all our communications helps us build trust with carers, partner organisations, funders and key stakeholders, so we can reach and support more carers.

Deliver public focused communications campaigns – in co-design with carers

In November 2021, we launched a charity-wide awareness-raising campaign with the aim of reaching 'hidden' carers. Co-produced with carers, our 'We Care For You' campaign included the creation of a handy pocket guide. The campaign was promoted widely in the community, in local newspapers and digital screens as well as on social media where our content was seen 1.3 million times.

"I didn't know I was entitled to any support as a carer, or that there are people looking out for carers' health, safety, and wellbeing. I used to think that being labelled a 'carer' would increase the pressure on me. But I have been encouraged and gained confidence in myself. The support from Carers First has been a real blessing for my family."

Jacqueline, 47, cares for her husband Nicholas who has ulcerative colitis



In February 2022, we launched a campaign in Southend-on-Sea to reach those supporting someone leaving hospital. We co-produced with carers a pocket guide, online and in print, to assist carers through the discharge process. This includes an easy-to-understand flow chart and information to help the carer think about what they need to know in advance and how to prepare. The guide is being promoted in Southend Hospital, through community health services, voluntary partners and GP surgeries. It has also been promoted by Carers Trust to other Network Partners as good practice.



"I didn't know what to do with Brian's hospital stay and a lack of support - and contact - with staff meant I was struggling to find help when I needed it most. The 1-to-1 support I received from Carers First was fantastic, I was able to get in touch with local support networks, really helping me during a daunting time."

Barbara, 77, reached out for support using Carers First's pocket guide after her husband Brian was admitted to hospital for his hip replacement surgery in December 2021

Develop a new website, as a key vehicle for delivering information and support for carers

In September 2021, we launched our new website. Designed in co-production with carers, the new website has customised journeys according to caring situations and nationally relevant information. There are over 80 help and advice topics covering everything from looking after yourself, grants and discounts for carers to handling legal matters. The website also has a range of self-help tools including calculators for benefits and care costs.

The website is helping us reach more working age and male carers. Recent data shows that we reach a higher proportion of users (15% more) aged between 18-45 via the website than compared to the age of carers registered with us. Similarly, the proportion of male carers reached via the website is 12% higher than carers registered with us.



Strategic Objective 2: Enhance our support to carers to make a material difference in their lives

2021/22 key targets:	What we achieved:
95% of carers who would recommend Carers First to other carers	94% of carers would recommend Carers First to other carers
95% of carers who feel they were listened to and that their own needs were taken into account	92% of carers feel they were listened to and that their own needs were taken into account
90% of carers who feel more confident and informed in their caring role following support from Carers First	89% of carers feel more confident and informed in their caring role following support from Carers First
90% of carers who feel more resilient in their caring role	89% of carers feel more resilient in their caring role
92% of carers who feel there has been an improvement in their lives as a result of the support they received from Carers First	90% of carers feel there has been an improvement in their lives as a result of the support they received from Carers First

Results based on responses from 574 carers

Personalised support for carers

Our helpline often acts as the first point of contact for carers who, depending on their needs, are then triaged to our local community teams. Our helpline team will guide carers through our wellbeing summary to understand their needs and make them aware of support that is available to them.

Carers with more complex needs are referred to our local community teams who will create a tailored plan with the carer using the Carers Star tool. Our community teams supported 12,773 carers in 2021-22.

This plan could include support with anything from looking after yourself, taking breaks, connecting with other carers, getting financial support, help with everyday tasks, planning ahead, legal matters and managing in work or education. The plan is reviewed with the carer after 12 weeks. In some cases, we will refer carers to partner agencies or for support from health and social care.

Lisa is a single parent and cares for her twin sons, Joshua and Jaidan, aged nine who have been diagnosed with learning difficulties. Her caring role is incredibly demanding physically and emotionally, as Lisa supports the additional needs of her sons. Lisa has received information to support her including parenting/autism courses, financial support and help to take a break.



"My Carer Support Adviser calls me or visits to check in on how I'm coping. It's just great to have someone around who totally understands what I'm going through and supports me, even if it's just for a quick chat over the phone. It means I don't have to deal with everything alone, and she can even help talk through decisions like which schools the boys will go to."

Develop information and resources tailored for different groups of carers for use online, by the helpline and our community teams

We held in-depth workshops with over 110 carers across the different caring situations to help shape the development of our service offer and new Programmes of Support. This includes carers of someone with *Dementia, Mental Health, Learning Disability or Autism, Physical Disability, Sensory Conditions, Dependency, those who are Frail or Elderly and End of Life.*

Carers told us they want us to understand them and the challenges they face as a carer specific to their caring situation. They want high quality information, tools and resources to support them at each stage of the carer journey. This includes at diagnosis, when things change, the move to significant care and end of life.

We created a Theory of Change (a visual diagram showing how our work will create change for carers in the short, medium and long-term) for each service offer, mapped to an organisational Theory of Change, and put in place an Implementation plan. This includes creating new information materials and resources together with training for staff which is tested with carers and experts.

Develop new online and community-based programmes in co-production with carers

Carers have accessed our peer support and activity groups ranging from dance classes, book clubs and wellbeing groups to workshops. We have also developed new workshops to support carers wellbeing.

Caring Confidently is a four-week online workshop course, developed with and for carers, and covers topics ranging from the essentials of caring, looking after yourself, managing financially and spotting signs of deterioration in the person you care for.

We launched a new virtual wellbeing programme aimed at helping carers manage stress, build resilience and increase self-care. This made use of techniques such as Neuro-Linguistic Processing (NLP), Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) Tapping and Breathworks.

Our Facebook Community doubled in size this year. The thriving Community provides the opportunity for carers to share stories, ask questions and receive peer support. An example of the group's value is shown in this quote from a carer. "I find this group helpful as somewhere to let off steam, no judgments, lots of understanding and care for what each other are facing."

Maximise carers income

The cost of living started to bite for carers as the year progressed with money worries rising to the top of carer concerns. We continued to support carers to maximise their income and helped secure £887,764.38 in benefit entitlements.

We secured over £100,000 in grants for carers to support with bills as well as pay for larger household expenses that most would otherwise be unable to afford, for example, replacing washing machines and beds.

We increased the opportunities for carers to take a break, through new partnerships. We offered 'Moments for Me' grants for carers through a partnership with Anglian Water. We partnered with Carefree, a new charity turning vacant hotel accommodations into breaks for carers.

Pat, 69, cares for her son, Matt, 45, who has physical and mental disabilities. Her caring role is very physical which has caused her back problems. She hadn't had a break for several years. Pat used the 'Moments for Me' grant for a two-night break to London with her husband.

Pat says:

"This trip has been on my bucket list but we wouldn't have been able to do it without the grant. It was such a lovely break after such a hard couple of years. It was something just for us. I didn't have to do anything for anyone and went to sleep without an alarm. We went to the Theatre and had afternoon tea at the Oxo Tower (a gift from our daughter)."

Supporting young carers

We have contracts and grants to provide support for young carers and young adult carers in Medway and Newham. This included one to one support, attending school and professional meetings, online peer support groups and financial help, e.g. securing grants for school uniforms or laptops.

In summer 2021, we were able to run our activity programme again after the easing of restrictions. 153 young carers aged 5 to 25 years old took part in activities ranging from trips to the zoo, theatre, Laser Tag and trampoline park.



Reaching 'hard to reach' carers

We have a range of projects aimed at traditionally 'harder to reach' carers including men, carers from ethnic minority communities and members of the LGBTQ+ community. We secured funding from the Carers Trust 'Making Carers Count' programme for a project aimed at reaching Turkish and Kurdish carers in Hackney and Haringey. As part of this project, we developed a new partnership with Dey-mer, an organisation supporting Turkish and Kurdish people in Hackney including drop-ins at its community centre. We have increased the number of carers registered from ethnically diverse communities by 10% in the last year.

Men Do is a co-produced programme bringing male carers aged 50+ together in a range of activities. This year, we launched monthly Banter Breakfasts in East Lincolnshire thanks to the support of the Masonic Charitable Foundation. These events are helping to tackle loneliness and isolation in older male carers.

Strategic Objective 3: Raise the profile of Carers First and its work, to secure support for carers in collaboration with other organisations

2021/22 key targets:	What we achieved:
Collaborations with key targeted organisations	Range of new partnerships in place
Raise the profile of Carers First work	New Communications team in place. Improved and pro-active communications

Collaborations with key organisations

Partnerships are key to helping us reach more carers and increase the support available to carers. We have developed partnerships with a range of organisations.

Our volunteering partnership with Legal and General went from strength to strength this year as we introduced strategic volunteering opportunities including mentoring our managers. We also received strategic volunteering support from Asda around digital and data to improve insight and identify gaps and opportunities to develop our services.

We were delighted to receive the support of Lincolnshire Co-op for our 'We Care for You' campaign. During December, posters and copies of our handy pocket guide could be found in Lincolnshire Co-op's 49 pharmacies.

We were proud to win the public vote to be one of the Lincoln City F.C. Charity of the Year partners. We look forward to the opportunities the partnership presents to raise the profile of carers and raise funds.

We continued to develop our partnership with Anglian Water and have reached 150,000 of their customers to date with the support available from Anglian Water and Carers First. This involved offering the 'Moments for Me' grants to carers.

We were selected to participate in the pilot Money Helpers programme from the Money and Pension Service. This gave the opportunity to develop our staff in giving money guidance via a City&Guilds endorsed e-learning programme. We had the distinction of being the only carers organisation in the England pilot programme.

One in seven people are working carers. We work with private and public sector organisations to raise awareness of caring and support their employees who are caring. We have had a longstanding relationship with the Kent Police Enable Group which has grown to over 350 members in the last four years. We attend meetings to promote the support available and provide speakers on different topics.

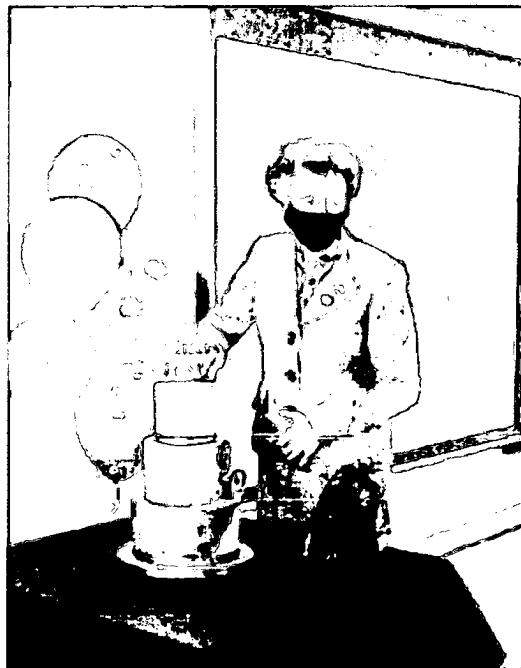
We were pleased to be asked to author the Equalities Review of support for carers by Haringey Council. We will be working with the Council and partners to implement the report recommendations to help improve reach into communities and remove barriers to engaging carers.

Our teams were able to return to hospitals and GP surgeries during the year. Research by Macmillan Cancer Support shows 70% of carers come into contact with health professionals however only 7% of carers are identified by GPs. In Medway, we worked with local GP surgeries to increase the number of carers registered. Registrations increased by 240% in one surgery alone.

Raise the profile of the impact of the charity's work

We were delighted to be a finalist in the Care Charity of the Year category in the Kent Charity Awards. We also received recognition in the Healthwatch Medway Awards.

The visit by HRH the Princess Royal in December 2021 presented a wonderful opportunity to increase our profile and help us reach more carers. The visit received coverage on the Lincolnite, which has over 100k likes on its Facebook page as well as articles on Yahoo and Good Housekeeping. A tweet about the Royal visit on the Royal Family page received 1.8k likes.



Strategic Objective 4: Develop a vibrant, supported, inclusive and high performing team

2021-22 key targets:	What we achieved:
Staff who feel engaged in their work – “I am motivated to go the extra mile”	82% (none disagreed)
Staff programme of learning and development opportunities in place	Full programme of learning and development opportunities for managers, staff and volunteers
Secure Investing in Volunteers accreditation	Investing in Volunteers accreditation awarded in January 2022

Engaged staff team and positive work culture

We completed an Annual Staff Survey to better understand levels of staff engagement and motivation. Following the Survey, we put in place an action plan to help us continue to listen to, and address, any issues raised by staff. We want to ensure Carers First is a great place to work and staff feel supported, valued and able to flourish.

We have colleagues trained as Mental Health First Aiders and actively promote our Employee Assistance Programme. We introduced a new Pay and Grading Framework during the year to make sure our salaries and benefits are fair and competitive.

Learning and development opportunities

40 Carers First Managers and Team Leads have participated in our bespoke Management Programme covering a range of tools, techniques and resources such as understanding themselves as a manager, project planning and creating high performing teams.

Eight of our Managers were paired with a mentor as part of our skilled volunteering partnership with Legal & General. One Manager fed back: ‘It has made me more confident in my abilities. It was good to reflect on work I was putting in place and I am now in a really good place to move forward.’

We have an online Learning Management System where staff, volunteers and Trustees can stay up to date with training. This includes mandatory courses such as Safeguarding, Health and Safety and the Carers Star to optional skill enhancement courses like Thriving in Change, Time Management and Coaching and Mentoring. Many of our team also completed training opportunities from external providers.

We are committed to looking after our teams’ wellbeing. We were proud to receive the highest level of accreditation as part of the Working Well for the Healthy Employer and Workplace which is supported by Essex County Council. We also received a Healthy Workplace Silver Award in Medway, advancing from the Bronze Award the previous year.

Grow our number of volunteers and volunteer roles

We welcomed new volunteers this year taking our total to 166, 30% more than last year. We are very grateful to our volunteers who gave 7,619 hours and supported over 1,000 carers. The value of volunteers' contribution to the charity was over £100,000.

Volunteers bring a different set of skills and experience that add a lot of value to our service. Many of our volunteers have been carers themselves, have cared for someone previously, or know someone in their family who's been a carer. This often gives them an empathy that connects with carers.

We have a range of volunteer roles including telephone befrienders, online support and support groups and events.

We have worked with several universities and colleges and have welcomed placement students who are completing health and social care courses.

Zoe is a university student studying health and social care as well as a carer for her daughter who has profound learning disabilities. She recently completed a two week placement which included volunteering as a moderator on the Carers First Online Community which has doubled in size in the last six months. Zoe plans to continue volunteering with Carers First.

"My placement showed me how important the work of Carers First is. The Online Community allows other carers to share stories, enquire for support, and have general friendships. These groups were influential to myself as I realised there is a large community of carers that need peer support as well as statutory support."



Strategic Objective 5: Grow our financial sustainability and strengthen efficiency of our operations

2021-22 key targets:	What we achieved:
Secure re-tenders or extensions of existing contracts	Extensions secured on four contracts and won a new contract
Achieve fundraising target for first year of new Income Generation Plan	Exceeded target
Maintain quality accreditation	Successfully secured re-accreditation for all quality awards including ISO 9001

Maintain existing statutory contracts and attract new contracts, where financially viable

We successfully secured extensions to our contracts in Lincolnshire, Medway, Newham and Hackney as well as winning a new contract to deliver the Carer Support service in Southend-on-Sea.

In August 2022, we were re-awarded the contract to deliver the Carer Support Service in Lincolnshire.

Grow our income and diversify our funding base

We exceeded the first-year target of our new three-year Income Generation Plan which sets out our ambition to quadruple our voluntary income and diversify our funding base. For every £1 we spent on fundraising, we raised £5.33.

We continued to develop new income streams. For example, we secured new corporate partnerships and our Christmas appeal raised four times more than the previous year.

Quality accreditation maintained

We received re-accreditation for ISO 9001, an internationally recognised quality management system. This is important in ensuring we have the processes and people to deliver effective services. It also assures funders and stakeholders that we have a system of quality assurance in place. We also secured Cyber Essentials Plus which demonstrates our rigour in protecting the sensitive data we hold and the security of our systems.

Strengthen the efficiency of our operations

We commissioned a new HR system, made improvements in reporting our impact and reduced our office costs.

Becoming a carer overnight: Sheila' story

"I was working in a care home at the time but I had to stop working to concentrate on my father's recovery. My life completely changed; in fact, I stopped having a life. I had a child to look after and my father's illness was life changing.

"When my father Francisco suffered his strokes it was the start of a very difficult time for both of us," said Sheila, who is now 45. "At the time I was a single parent working in residential care and looking after my teenage son Ruben. After his stroke my father had aphasia which meant he had very poor communication skills and he stopped talking. It was a very hard time for all of us.



"I was hoping and praying that he could recover from the strokes, which is why I dedicated myself 100% to him, and thank God today he's much more independent. He has improved and he's regained his power of speech."

Despite this improvement Sheila says her father still needs a lot of help and support. "He lives in sheltered accommodation in Leytonstone and I visit him almost every day," she says. "I take care of all his finances, I do his shopping, cook his meals, make appointments - basically I do everything for him.

"The biggest challenge is to try to improve his health," she added. "Healthwise he's not that well; it's a big, big challenge. He still has a heart condition and he's monitored every week by the hospital. We still have a lot to do."

Looking back, things began to change and improve for Sheila when she contacted Carers First.

"Carers First saved my life to be honest," she said. "When I contacted them, I was so desperate and I didn't know I could get help.

It took me a long time to ask for help but when I did, I found Renee, from Carers First, who supported me. I'm so appreciative of this person – she supported me with everything, even money issues; I'd stopped working so there was no money coming in, but Renee told me about the various benefits I could claim. They also helped me a lot emotionally, and they still do."

With support from Carers First, Sheila has started working again; she has received a care package from the Council including Care Workers to help her look after Francisco, and she's even started volunteering for Carers First herself, making sure other unpaid carers get the advice and support they need.

Lessons learnt

Digital and adapting post COVID-19

Over the past year our team have learned to adapt to life post COVID-19:

The pandemic transformed our model of support from primarily face-to-face to digital. While this was difficult for many carers who missed the face-to-face contact, it presented new opportunities to reach other carers who struggled to leave the person they care for.

We continue to develop our digital support alongside face-to-face and telephone in a blended service offer which meets the needs of all carers. Successful examples of this include Caring Confidently and our new Wellbeing programmes with one-off sessions on Breathworks and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) tapping.

Our team have also increased their use of social media and WhatsApp to communicate with carers this year. Our Facebook Online Community has doubled in membership in the last year. Young carers have told us WhatsApp is their preferred form of communication.

We have learnt that adaption must be continuous, trying new online learning events and activities, being creative and thinking 'outside of the box' to effectively engage carers.

We need to ensure we have a balanced approach; digital engagement cannot completely replace face-to-face services or there will be groups of carers who would be excluded. Our project with the Turkish and Kurdish community is an example of how we are reaching out to communities who are not able to engage digitally.

Financial concerns have continued to be a challenge for carers post pandemic, in addition to mental health and wellbeing challenges. We need to find new ways to support carers financially and have been working closer with local Councils to support the delivery and access of the household funds grant.

Programmes of Support

Through our strategy development it became clear that we needed to create a more consistent experience for carers and further professionalise our support and expertise. This is to make sure that every carer receives a consistent level of high-quality support.

Through multiple workshops, we have gained rich insight on the challenges carers and our staff face which has helped define our new service offer and Programmes of Support.

We aim for every carer to have a clear understanding of the different Programmes of Support available from Carers First and the best possible support tailored for them, based on their caring situation - in person and online.

We aim for all Carers First staff working directly with carers to have a consistent understanding of different caring situations, the support they need and how to provide it. We will make sure our staff have high quality information, tools and resources to use to support carers; and training to use these.

Impact

It is essential that we understand the difference we are aiming to make for carers and how we can demonstrate this. To support this, we have worked with our staff to shape an overarching Theory of Change for Carers First setting out the short, medium and long-term outcomes and changes we are looking to see.

We have created a new framework for measuring and demonstrating the impact of the work of Carers First. This includes the impact on carers, staff and volunteers, and the impact across the wider care and support systems in which Carers First operates. The framework is supported by an action plan that builds on the data and evidence already collected by the organisation and which will provide Carers First with more consistent and robust evidence of the difference it makes, and for whom.

Partnerships

Engaging with our key stakeholders and partners has continued to grow stronger since the introduction of virtual meetings. Our teams have been able to join and attend more meetings which has led to stronger relationships and collaborations which have continued post pandemic.

The ease of access to join online meetings has enabled projects to be scoped and delivered within shorter time frames. It has allowed us to engage experts onto projects where previously this may have been difficult. These projects have helped us develop stronger relationships with Commissioners and key stakeholders in the locality.

Plans for the future

In April 2022, we entered the second year of our three-year strategy which sets out our ambition to help 250,000 carers by 2024. It commits us to the five strategic objectives which we have outlined above. These are broken down into outcomes and targets over the next three years. These objectives inform our annual Operational Plan.

The difference we want to see by 2023 -

1. Recognise and reach greater numbers of carers, at the earliest opportunity

- 40% increase in total number of carers reached
- 40% increase in visitors accessing information and resources on the website
- Increase the proportion of carers supported early in their caring journey
- 15% increase in carers receiving 1:1 or group support
- Increase in reach and impact of communication activities

2. Enhance our support to carers to make a material difference in their lives

- Develop our service offer and Programmes of Support for different groups of carers, in co-production with carers
- Implement new Impact Framework for evaluating outcomes and impact of our support for carers
- 90% of carers maintain or improve their Carers Star score
- 92% of carers report an improvement in their lives as a result of Carers First support
- 90% of carers feel more resilient in their caring role

3. Raise the profile of Carers First and its work, to secure support for carers in collaboration with other organisations

- Forging strong and productive relationships with the local Integrated Care Systems (ICS)
- Build operational and strategic collaborations to help reach and support more carers

4. Develop a vibrant, supported, inclusive and high performing team

- Increase the number of staff who feel there is a positive, inclusive and supportive work culture
- Increase the number of staff who feel proud to work for Carers First
- Increase the number of volunteers
- Increase the number of volunteers who feel supported and valued in their roles

5. Grow our financial sustainability and strengthen efficiency of our operations

- Successfully retender for four existing contracts
- Continue to grow and diversify income from non-statutory sources. Target £619k
- Introduce a new HR system
- Further develop our data reporting and insight
- Work towards the Charity Governance Code



Financial review

The charity's incoming resources for the year ended 31 March 2022 totalled £4,563,735 (2021 - £4,285,129). Resources expended totalled £4,446,618 (2021 - £4,132,221) and net gain on investments was £44,224 (2021 - £222,390). The net surplus came to £161,341 (2021 - £375,298).

During the year, the Trustees reviewed the reserves of the charitable company and established a revised policy under which the Charity's reserves are determined and monitored. The policy is risk based and assesses the financial risks on an ongoing basis and monetises the possible impact within a reserve range between £1.4m and £1.9m. The Trustees consider this level of reserves as sufficient to cover our operational commitments in event of any changes e.g. loss of a significant contract. The level of reserves also allows for investments to develop and enhance our services for carers.

At 31 March 2022 the unrestricted fund balance was £1,762,499 (2021 - £1,664,207) and the restricted balance was £333,209 (2021 - £270,160) which are in line with the reserves policy.

Carers First has continued to demonstrate year-on-year growth of its activities and the numbers of carers it supports. The Trustees are committed to invest in future opportunities as necessary.

Investments

Carers First investments are held as a reserve against any future shortfall in income against expenditure: They seek to maintain and, if possible, enhance, the real value of the funds represented by its investments in line with the business plan. We seek to meet these objectives by maintaining an appropriate balance between maximising long-term returns and avoiding undue risk and volatility in capital values.

Our Investment of Financial Assets policy sets out that our financial assets should be invested in line with our aims and charitable objectives. The Trustees do not wish to adopt an exclusionary policy. However, individual investments may be excluded if perceived to conflict with the charitable purpose of the organisation.

The portfolio is split between UK quoted investments (investment trusts, REIT's and EFT's) and holdings in unit/open ended investment companies (OEIC's). There are no direct foreign investments. In May 2022, we instructed our broker to increase our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) holdings in our investments from 6.4% to between 20% and 25%.

Risk Management

Effective risk management is at the heart of our strategy and protecting the future sustainability of Carers First. We are fully committed to ensuring risks are appropriately managed. An organisation-wide risk management approach is in place to identify key strategic and operational risks, ensuring they are managed effectively through clear accountability and escalation when needed.

Risks are assessed to determine their severity, verify effective management, and take action to mitigate where necessary. This is reviewed by Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team on an ongoing basis.

Key risks faced by Carers First and how we are managing them

A key risk is loss of income. Carers First is aware of potential Local Authority cuts to funding and the risk of not securing re-tendered contracts. To mitigate these risks, we are working closely with commissioners to ensure we are delivering impactful services to carers and that we can evidence this.

We have also taken steps to diversify our income and ensure the continuance and sustainable growth of our work.

Health and safety continues to be a priority for Carers First, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have taken appropriate measures and put in place robust risk assessments to ensure we are protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of the staff team and the carers we work with.

Information security is high on the risk agenda for all organisations. The importance of defending our IT systems from malicious attack, and protecting the personal data we hold from unauthorised access and misuse, is recognised by Carers First. Security measures are in place to protect unauthorised access to IT systems and to carry out ongoing tests for potential vulnerabilities in the IT network. Policies and procedures are also in place to protect data within the working environment, supported by mandatory data protection training for all staff, Trustees and volunteers.

AUDITORS

In accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006, a resolution proposing that Lindeyer Francis Ferguson Limited be reappointed as auditors of the charitable company will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees are responsible for preparing financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company and charity law requires the Trustees (who are also the directors of Carers First for the purposes of company law) to prepare financial statements for each fiscal year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law), including the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the surplus or deficit for that period. In preparing those financial statements they have:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepared the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business;
- stated whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy, at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

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

STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE TO AUDITORS

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information which has not been disclosed to the company's auditors. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any matters which would be relevant for audit purposes, and to ensure that such information has been communicated to the company's auditors.

SMALL COMPANY EXEMPTIONS

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006. Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:



P Davis
Chair of Trustees

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Carers First (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is 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).⁵

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 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources 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's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

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

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the trustees' report, 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 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 trustee 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's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined below, 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.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applying to the charity, and the procedures that management adopt to ensure compliance, including those relating to the Charities SORP FRS 102. Disclosure checklist has been performed to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The charity is subject to other regulations including employment law, health and safety and General data protection regulation (GDPR). Those identified do not have a direct effect on the amounts or disclosure within the financial statements, however non-compliance would result in penalties or impact on the charity's operations. We designed and performed audit procedures to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding compliance with laws and regulations, including:

- Assigning an engagement team familiar with charities.
- Enquiry of the Board of Trustees.
- Review of meeting minutes and correspondence.
- Review of legal expenses.
- Confirming DBS checks were in place for staff members.
- Review of the completeness and accuracy of disclosures made in the financial statements.

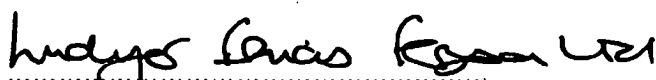
We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statement to material misstatement, including considering how fraud might occur. This was performed by:

- Reviewing the charity's systems and controls by performing walkthrough tests to assess for strong controls and segregation of duties.
- Obtaining the Board of Trustees' assessment of fraud risk.
- Considering the ways fraud could be committed, including through fraudulent financial reporting to attract new grant funders or whether management have incentives to manipulate results.
- Reviewing the application of accounting policies and estimates for any signs of management bias.
- Identifying key risks as revenue recognition, cut off, cost allocations and management override of controls.
- Reviewing performance material journals for any signs of management bias or override of controls.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's 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.



Jonathan Healey BA FCA

Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of:

Lindeyer Francis Ferguson Limited

Statutory Auditors

Chartered Accountants

North House
198 High Street
Tonbridge
Kent TN9 1BE

Date: 12 October 2022

Carers First

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Note	2022 Unrestricted funds £	2022 Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	2021 Total funds £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	2	169,330	570,439	739,769	582,902
Charitable activities	3	3,597,145	194,677	3,791,822	3,664,997
Investments		32,144	-	32,144	37,230
Total income		3,798,619	765,116	4,563,735	4,285,129
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		73,947	-	73,947	71,891
Charitable activities	4	3,670,604	702,067	4,372,671	4,060,330
Total expenditure		3,744,551	702,067	4,446,618	4,132,221
Net gains on investments		44,224	-	44,224	222,390
Net income and net movement in funds	7	98,292	63,049	161,341	375,298
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		1,664,207	270,160	1,934,367	1,559,069
Total funds carried forward	13	1,762,499	333,209	2,095,708	1,934,367

Carers First

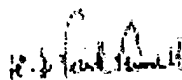
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Note	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	9		66,109		62,654
Investments	10		1,491,000		1,223,394
			<u>1,557,109</u>		<u>1,286,048</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	11	534,207		272,523	
Cash at bank and in hand		535,565		938,121	
		<u>1,069,772</u>		<u>1,210,644</u>	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(531,173)		(562,325)	
Net current assets			538,599		648,319
Total net assets			<u>2,095,708</u>		<u>1,934,367</u>
The funds of the charity					
Unrestricted funds	13		1,762,499		1,664,207
Restricted income funds	13		333,209		270,160
			<u>2,095,708</u>		<u>1,934,367</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 10th October 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:



P Davis
Chair of Trustees



P Fennell
Chair of Finance Committee

Company number: 04144820

Carers First

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Note	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities:					
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	A		(173,080)		239,851
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Interest and dividends received		32,144		37,230	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(38,242)		(62,151)	
Purchases of investments		(336,967)		(351,593)	
Sales of investments		113,589		321,963	
Net cash used in investing activities			(229,476)		(54,551)
Change in cash and cash equivalents			(402,556)		185,300
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			938,121		752,821
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			<u>535,565</u>		<u>938,121</u>
A. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities					
Net income for the year			161,341		375,298
<i>As per the Statement of Financial Activities</i>					
Adjustments for:					
Depreciation charges		34,787		43,687	
Net (gains)/losses on investments		(44,228)		(264,985)	
Interest and dividends receivable		(32,144)		(37,230)	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		(261,684)		(22,545)	
Increase/(decrease) in creditors		(31,152)		145,626	
			(334,421)		(135,447)
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities			<u>(173,080)</u>		<u>239,851</u>

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

1.1 Basis of preparation

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

Carers First 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 note(s).

The financial statements are presented in pounds sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

1.2 Income

Income from donations and grants is recognised when the charity is entitled to the funds, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. For donations, this is usually on receipt. For grants, this is usually when a formal offer is made in writing, unless the grant contains terms and conditions outside of the charity's control which must be met before the charity is entitled to the funds. Where grants are received in response to a proposal including a budgeted timescale, such that the timescale for the expenditure is implicit in the grant agreement, the income is recognised in accordance with that timescale.

Income from contracted services, and services to users, is recognised when the services are provided. Income from such sources received in advance of the service provision is accounted for as deferred income.

Investment income is recognised when receivable.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a present legal or constructive obligation exists at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount can be estimated reliably.

Expenditure on charitable activities comprises the direct costs incurred by the charity in delivering its charitable objectives. Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly relate to the charitable activities. These costs have been allocated to the charitable activity. Staff costs are allocated to direct costs or support costs on the basis of staff time.

1.4 Pensions

The charity makes contributions to the personal pension schemes of its employees. The pension cost in the financial statements represents the contributions payable by the charity during the year.

1.5 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objectives.

1.6 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 the particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

1.7 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated realisable value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and equipment - Between 20% and 33% straight line

Assets costing less than £500 are written off in the year they are acquired.

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.8 Investments

Listed investments are stated at market value. Gains and losses arising on the revaluation of investments are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities.

1.9 Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial instruments which are classified as basic financial instruments.

Short-term debtors and creditors are measured at the settlement value. Any losses from impairment are recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.10 Status

Carers First is a charitable company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is Unit 4, Michael Gill Building, Tolgate Lane, Rochester, Kent, ME2 4TG.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	2022 £	2021 £
Grants	701,370	525,844
Donations	38,399	57,058
	<u>739,769</u>	<u>582,902</u>

Income from restricted funds in the comparative period was £489,741.

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

3 Income from charitable activities

	2022 £	2021 £
<i>Activity: Carers services</i>		
Medway Council	330,959	327,908
Medway PCN	134,085	82,989
Lincolnshire County Council	1,454,902	1,431,052
Waltham Forest Borough Council	198,000	182,111
Hackney Borough Council	192,013	192,013
Haringey Borough Council	104,319	87,299
Newham Borough Council	208,620	209,211
Essex County Council	900,000	901,451
NHS Kent & Medway CCG	196,897	250,963
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	72,027	-
	3,791,822	3,664,997

Income from restricted funds in the comparative period was £170,000.

4 Expenditure on charitable activities

	2022 £	2021 £
<i>Activity: Carers services</i>		
Direct costs Note 5	3,673,176	3,485,270
Support costs Note 6	699,495	575,060
	4,372,671	4,060,330

Expenditure for restricted funds in the comparative period was £647,158.

5 Direct costs of charitable activities

	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs	2,947,942	2,914,030
Staff expenses, recruitment and training	10,923	19,703
Project costs	612,229	448,255
Grants paid to individuals	102,082	103,282
	3,673,176	3,485,270

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

6 Support costs

	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs	231,049	193,114
Staff expenses, recruitment and training	25,134	23,246
Rent and service charges	51,473	58,489
Other premises expenses	24,275	23,446
Insurance	15,382	12,583
Office and IT costs	257,904	151,923
Legal and professional fees	30,401	26,980
Audit fees	9,090	12,075
Payroll processing fees	6,702	6,313
Trustee expenses, meetings, recruitment and training	778	9,958
Bad debts	-	658
Bank charges	524	309
Professional membership fees	11,996	12,279
Depreciation	34,787	43,687
	699,495	575,060

7 Net income/(expenditure)

	2022 £	2021 £
Net income is stated after charging:		
Audit fees	9,090	12,075
Depreciation	34,787	43,687
Net gains on investments	44,224	222,390
Rent paid under operating leases	51,473	58,489

The audit fee charged in the year was £9,450 (2021: £9,150).

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

8 Staff costs

	2022 £	2021 £
Gross salaries	2,935,213	2,890,491
Employer's National Insurance contributions	215,801	204,766
Pension and healthcare costs	82,197	77,367
	<u>3,233,211</u>	<u>3,172,624</u>

One member of staff received employment benefits (excluding employer pension contributions) in excess of £60,000 during the year (2021: 1). During the year 173 employees and former employees received employer contributions to their personal pension schemes (2021: 155).

The average number of employees during the year on a headcount basis was as follows:

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Management	4	4
Administration and HR	11	20
Outreach and carer support	131	121
	<u>146</u>	<u>145</u>

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

9 Tangible fixed assets

	<i>Fixtures, fittings & equipment £</i>
Cost	
At 1 April 2021	175,476
Additions	38,242
Disposals	(72,050)
At 31 March 2022	141,668
Depreciation	
At 1 April 2021	112,822
Charge for the year	34,787
Eliminated on disposal	(72,050)
At 31 March 2022	75,559
Net book value	
At 31 March 2022	66,109
At 31 March 2021	62,654

10 Investments

	2022 £	2021 £
Market value		
At 1 April 2021	1,223,394	928,779
Additions	336,967	351,593
Sales proceeds	(113,589)	(321,963)
Net gains on investments	44,228	264,985
At 31 March 2022	1,491,000	1,223,394

The portfolio is split between UK quoted investments (investment trusts, REIT's and EFT's) and holdings in unit/open ended investment companies (OEIC's). There are no direct foreign investments.

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

11 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	514,820	252,539
Prepayments and accrued income	19,387	19,984
	<u>534,207</u>	<u>272,523</u>

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	83,265	61,079
Taxation and social security	198,365	209,128
Deferred income	120,511	43,888
Other creditors	13,796	13,169
Accruals	115,236	235,061
	<u>531,173</u>	<u>562,325</u>

Deferred Income:

Incoming resources deferred in the previous period	43,888	36,361
Released to the Statement of Financial Activities	(38,005)	(30,477)

Incoming resources deferred in the current period:

Grants and contract income	114,628	38,004
	<u>120,511</u>	<u>43,888</u>

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

13 Movement on funds

	<i>At 1 April 2021 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers/ Gains and (losses) £</i>	<i>At 31 March 2022 £</i>
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	1,664,207	3,798,619	(3,744,551)	44,224	1,762,499
	<u>1,664,207</u>	<u>3,798,619</u>	<u>(3,744,551)</u>	<u>44,224</u>	<u>1,762,499</u>
Restricted income funds					
NHS Carers and Crisis					
Service pilot	24,483	133,500	(136,389)	-	21,594
Children in Need	-	70,662	(70,662)	-	-
Medway carers support	128,308	35,000	(40,505)	-	122,803
Carers Trust	400	-	-	-	400
Colyer-Fergusson					
Charitable Trust	-	19,379	(14,211)	-	5,168
Young Londoners	-	35,979	(28,744)	-	7,235
Other donations and grants	109,659	301,282	(299,301)	-	111,640
Health and Wellbeing	-	74,209	(45,741)	-	28,468
Mercers	7,310	43,764	(50,689)	-	385
Making Carers Count	-	25,164	(2,931)	-	22,233
Southend on Sea	-	26,177	(12,894)	-	13,283
	<u>270,160</u>	<u>765,116</u>	<u>(702,067)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>333,209</u>
Total funds	<u>1,934,367</u>	<u>4,563,735</u>	<u>(4,446,618)</u>	<u>44,224</u>	<u>2,095,708</u>

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

13 Movement on funds *continued*

Restricted funds have been received for the following purposes:

NHS Carers and Crisis Service

To provide support to carers in crisis in Swale and Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley for a 2 week period to prevent hospital admission and support hospital discharge.

Children in Need

This funding is to provide one to one support and recreational activities for young carers.

Medway Carers Support

The Medway Carers support/wellbeing funding is to make payments to carers to enable them to maintain their caring role and to prevent carer breakdown. The amount paid per carer is based on assessment.

Carers Trust

This includes grants to provide workshops, support and activities for young adult carers.

Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust

This funding allows the employment of staff to support young adult carers to transition from children's services into adulthood and supporting them into further education and employment.

Young Londoners

This funding allows the employment of staff to support young carers and young adult carers to fulfil their potential through a range of activities such as support sessions, training and other social activities.

Donations

Various donations and legacies received throughout the year to provide specific activities and/or support to carers.

Grants

Various grants to enable the provision of additional activities for carers that are not funded within core contracts and grants awarded to individual carers to enable them to take a holiday or purchase something for the home to assist them in their caring role.

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

13 Movement on funds *continued*

Health and Wellbeing

To employ care coordinators to work within PCN's across Medway to offer support and health checks to carers.

Mercers

Funding to enable the recruitment/training and supervision of volunteers to engage with older carers to combat loneliness.

Making Carers Count

The Making Carers Count grants improves access to support for carers from the Turkish and Kurdish community by working closely with Turkish and Kurdish organisations within the boroughs of Hackney and Haringey. Carers First provide activities, group meetings, 1:1 support, information advice and guidance in Turkish and Kurdish language to identify hidden and hard to reach carers.

Southend on Sea

Funds to provide carers break including support to enable carers to attend medical appointments.

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Comparative figures

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers/ Gains £	At 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	1,301,492	3,625,388	(3,485,063)	222,390	1,664,207
	1,301,492	3,625,388	(3,485,063)	222,390	1,664,207
Restricted income funds					
NHS Carers and Crisis Service pilot	45,359	135,000	(155,876)	-	24,483
Children in Need	-	52,698	(52,698)	-	-
Medway carers support	126,798	35,000	(33,490)	-	128,308
Carers Trust	400	-	-	-	400
Colyer-Fergusson Charitable Trust	-	22,035	(22,035)	-	-
Young Londoners	-	15,676	(15,676)	-	-
Other donations and grants	85,020	250,273	(225,634)	-	109,659
Health and Wellbeing	-	74,060	(74,060)	-	-
Mercers	-	74,999	(67,689)	-	7,310
	257,577	659,741	(647,158)	-	270,160
Total funds	1,559,069	4,285,129	(4,132,221)	222,390	1,934,367

Carers First

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	<i>Unrestricted funds</i> £	<i>Restricted funds</i> £	<i>Total funds</i> £
Fund balances at 31 March 2022 are represented as follows:			
Tangible fixed assets	66,109	-	66,109
Investments	1,491,000	-	1,491,000
Net current assets	205,390	333,209	538,599
	<u>1,762,499</u>	<u>333,209</u>	<u>2,095,708</u>

Comparative figures

Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are represented as follows:

Tangible fixed assets	62,654	-	62,654
Investments	1,223,394	-	1,223,394
Net current assets	378,159	270,160	648,319
	<u>1,664,207</u>	<u>270,160</u>	<u>1,934,367</u>

15 Financial commitments

At 31 March 2022 the charity was committed to future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Land and buildings		
Due not later than one year	36,181	34,181
Later than one year not later than five years	12,388	18,468
Other		
Due not later than one year	198	629
Later than one year not later than five years	-	-
	<u>48,767</u>	<u>53,278</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

16 Related party transactions

The Board of Trustees and the six, (2021: six) members of the Senior Leadership Team are considered to be the charity's key management personnel. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions) received by key management personnel during the year was £266,428 (2021: £243,080).

There was no Trustees' remuneration nor other benefits during the current or prior period.

Expenses totalling £74 were reimbursed to one trustee in relation to travel costs (2021: None).

Offices:

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Michael Gill Building, Tolgate Lane, Strood, Kent ME2 4TG

Lincolnshire Office:

2nd Floor, 28 Market Place, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LR

Essex Office:

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London Office:

Waltham Forest Resource Hub, 1 Russell Road, Leyton, London E10 7ES

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