



Trustees' report and financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2023



The Together Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Registered charity number 209782
Company registration number 00301722

About the Together Trust

We are one of the North West's leading disability charities. We help children, adults, parents, and carers, delivering individual care, support and education to thousands of people each year.

For over 150 years, we have been championing and caring for people with disabilities, autism, and complex health needs. And providing life-changing support for looked-after children and care-experienced people.

Our mission

We are the Together Trust. We're here to champion the rights, needs and ambitions of the people we support – they are at the heart of everything we do. We stand by them, and we work together for change.

Our vision

A society where everyone thrives because they are valued within their communities.

Our values

We will always strive to be:

- **Positive**
We take pride in celebrating the difference we make.
- **Professional**
We act in a fair and respectable way that recognises our collective expertise.
- **Passionate**
We encourage creative ideas and inspire one another.
- **Supportive**
We are considerate and caring towards one another.

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Reference and administrative information

Board of Trustees (Non-executive)

Chair

Giles Gaddum

Vice Chair

Lynne Ridsdale (retired 01.03.23)
Norah Flood (appointed 17.04.23)

Lead Honorary Treasurer

Anthony Farnworth

Assistant Honorary Treasurer

Ian Johnson

Geoff Durbin

Marcell Edwards

Norah Flood (see above)

David Freeston

Maria Greenwood

Jane Grime

Michael Henshaw

Roger Horne

Simon Lees-Jones

Nick Lowry

Gani Martins

Tristan Morris

Rebekah Pierre

Steven Pitt

Dilal Ranasinghe

Jane Walapu

President

Brian Chesworth OBE

Registered Office

Together Trust Centre

Schools Hill

Cheadle

Cheshire

SK8 1JE

0161 283 4848

enquiries@togethertrust.org.uk

www.togethertrust.org.uk

Trust Leadership Team (Executive)

Chief Executive

Mark Lee

Resource Director

Brian White

Service Director

Jill Sheldrake MBE

Governance & External Affairs

Director

Julie Isted (resigned 04.11.22)

Executive Head of Education Services

Sara Bayley (appointed 01.02.23)

Principal Professional Advisers

Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC

3 Hardman Street

Spinningfields

Manchester

M3 3HF

Investment Managers

Brewin Dolphin Limited

1 The Avenue

Spinningfields Square

Manchester

M3 3AP

Legal Advisers

Trowers & Hamlins LLP

55 Princess Street

Manchester

M2 4EW

Auditor

RSM UK Audit LLP

14th Floor

20 Chapel Street

Liverpool

L3 9AG

HR & Health & Safety

Advisers

The Royal Society for the

Prevention of Accidents

(RoSPA)

28 Calthorpe Road

Edgbaston

Birmingham

B15 1RP

Chair's introduction

On behalf of the Trustees of the Together Trust, who are also Directors of the company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, I am pleased to present our annual report for the Together Trust, our progress towards the goals in our Stronger Together Strategic Plan (the Strategic Report), the financial statements and auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Our vision is a society where everyone thrives because they are valued within their communities. The Trust is deeply rooted in its values and aspires to be person-centred in all its plans, practices and behaviours. The complex needs of our beneficiaries mean that the people we support do not often benefit from generic, off-the-shelf solutions but require specialist support that is tailored to their needs. I am pleased to report that the Charity has successfully managed its risks to date, to ensure that we are able to continue to support the people who need our services in a financially sustainable manner.

Today our care, special education, community, and clinical services support over 3,000 children, adults, and families each year. To do this our team of over 800 people, at dozens of sites, put the rights, needs and ambitions of the people we support at the heart of all that they do. We work for the Together Trust because we are passionate about improving the lives of people with disabilities, autism, mental health needs, care leavers and their families.

I am immensely proud of our achievements this year and on behalf of our Board, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our workforce for their dedication and loyalty. I thank also our Leadership Team on their continued diligence and care in steering the Charity through the challenging times in which we live. More than ever, the essential support our staff, volunteers and donors provide enables our services to adapt and evolve to meet the lifelong changing needs of people and families.



Giles Gaddum
Chair of Trustees

Charitable objectives, structure, and management

The Together Trust (“the Charity” or “the Company”) is a registered Charity and a company limited by guarantee, which is governed by Articles of Association, last amended on 2 December 2022. The Together Trust serves children, young people, adults, and families whose special needs fall within the areas of emotional, behavioural and social difficulties, physical disabilities, learning disabilities and autism.

The Charity’s objects are:

To give aid, assistance, and care to those with disabilities or in need, including to children and/or young persons; and

To promote the education, training and advancement in life of those with disabilities or in need, including that of children and/or young persons.

The Charity’s work reflects the main themes and ideas within Department for Education plans and the direction of current and future adult social care and health provision. Most of the Trust’s services are based in the North West of England and surrounding areas however, the Charity accepts referrals from all parts of the UK.

The Trust’s Leadership Team (Executive) – Key Management

The Chief Executive is assisted in the day-to-day management of the Charity by Operational Directors, listed on page 1, who each have responsibility for an area of its activities, resources, performance, and operations. Within the year the Governance and External Affairs Director resigned, and an Executive Head of Education Services was appointed to oversee Inscape House School, Ashcroft Schools and Bridge College. Following a governance review the Trust has, since the year end, appointed a new Head of Governance reporting to the Executive team.

Statutory and Regulatory

The Together Trust’s subsidiaries, as listed in note 15 to the financial statements, have not traded during the year, have no income and bore no expenditure.

Corporate governance

Governance handbooks for Members, Trustees and Governors support the Charity Articles by setting out the policies, procedures and practices the Board and our Governing Bodies adopt in the fulfilment of their responsibility for the activities of the Trust and are provided to each on induction to the Trust.

The Charity seeks to secure its future governance responsibilities by an active Trustee Governance Subgroup which is responsible for recruiting Trustees. New Trustees bring knowledge and abilities to the Charity that have been derived from various perspectives including business and commerce or professional, occupational, charitable or lived experience.

Members

We seek to secure future governance responsibilities by an active subgroup that reports to the Board which is responsible for recruiting new Members of the Charity who contribute to governance activity in different ways.

The Together Trust is a private company limited by guarantee and currently has 19 registered Members. The interests of the Trust and its Members are aligned with the common purpose of carrying out the objects of the Charity.

During the year the Trust’s Articles of Association were updated to reflect best practice and evolve membership. At the Annual General Meeting in December 2022, Members approved that any person who is appointed as a Trustee will automatically, by virtue of that appointment, become a Member. No person other than a Trustee may be admitted as a member.

The Together Trust holds an AGM every 12 months, which all Members are entitled to attend either personally or by proxy.

There are Conflicts of Interest and Gift in Kind policies in place for Members, Trustees and Governors to manage any actual and perceived conflicts that might arise. The Board of Trustees (Non-executive)

The Together Trust is shaping a strategic plan to 2025/26, known as 'Stronger Together', to deliver even greater impact for the people and families we support. Our Trustees and Governors have a key role in shaping and influencing this plan. We are also on a journey to improve equality, diversity and inclusion across our governance and leadership structure, our workforce, and our services.

Our plan builds on both existing expertise and commits to new ways of improving how the Charity works. More information about this can be found in the Future strategy section of this report.

We believe we will deliver long lasting social impact when our Board and leadership teams better reflect the community of people and families the Trust serves. Improving Board diversity is crucial for us in terms of our values as an organisation. It means we are more effective, make better decisions and is key to effective delivery of our mission.

20 Trustees served during the financial year from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023:

Geoff Durbin	Marcell Edwards
Anthony Farnworth	David Freeston
Norah Flood	Giles Gaddum
Maria Greenwood	Jane Grime
Michael Henshaw (appointed 10.12.22)	Roger Horne
Kirsteen Hughes (retired 19.12.22)	Ian Johnson
Simon Lees-Jones	Nick Lowry
Gani Martins	Tristan Morris
Lynne Ridsdale (retired 1.3.23)	Lyndsey Stark (retired 7.3.23)
Helen Stevenson (retired 12.10.22)	Jane Walapu

Since the year end, the following Trustees were appointed

Rebekah Pierre (appointed 17.4.23)	Dilal Ranasinghe (appointed 28.4.23)
Steven Pitt (appointed 6.6.23)	

Michael Henshaw was appointed as Trustee during the year while Rebekah Pierre, Dilal Ranasinghe and Steven Pitt were recruited during the year and appointed as Trustees since the year end. Together, they bring a range of new skills and lived experience, strengthening the Board's oversight to champion the rights, needs and ambitions of the people we support. The Board would like to thank Kirsteen Hughes, Lynne Ridsdale, Lyndsey Stark and Helen Stevenson for their service as Trustees. All 4 Trustees ended their trusteeships during the reporting period.

The Board holds responsibility for agreeing the strategic direction of the organisation, setting the budgetary framework, and deciding upon major undertakings. Responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Charity is delegated to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive reports fully to the Trustees at each Board meeting and to the Chair on a regular basis. This allows the Board to monitor progress in a well informed and incremental manner and to agree any strategic or budgetary adjustments which may become necessary in the year.

The Trustees have the benefit of a qualifying third-party indemnity provision as defined by section 234 Companies Act 2006. The Charity purchased and maintained throughout the year directors' and officers' liability insurance in respect of itself and its trustees.

Groups that report to the Board

The Trust aims to ensure the Charity's values are reflected in all our work and that the ethos and the culture of the organisation underpin the delivery of all activities. Our special purpose subgroups and school and college governing bodies meet regularly to undertake specific tasks on which they report to the Board to assist its function, decision-making and continued improvement.

School and College Governing Bodies – Each governing body has its own constitution approved by the Board. The Board appoints Trustees to be the Chair and Vice Chair of each governing body.

Trustees who served as a Chair to a Trust education governing body during the reporting period were: -

Ashcroft School – Anthony Farnworth

Bridge College – Roger Horne

Inscape House School - Giles Gaddum

The Together Trust Fostering Panel - the panel is made up of people with a range of skills, knowledge and experience and includes staff members from the Together Trust fostering agency. Some panel members have a professional background in child or social care, and others have direct experience with the fostering process. Our panel members also have access to legal and medical advice should they need it as well as each other's skills and expertise.

The panel considers fostering applications and makes recommendations about the suitability of applicants. This also includes making recommendations about the number, age range and backgrounds of the children placed with Together Trust foster carers.

Board Subgroups

The Board maintains several Trustee-led, special purpose subgroups that undertake specific tasks which contribute to the Charity's governance and operation to meet the aims within the 'Stronger Together' plan.

The Board undertook a comprehensive review of its subgroups to ensure their terms of authority and reference were in line with the Charity's new plans and approved revisions to strategic theme responsibilities for each subgroup in May 2022. All subgroups monitor and evaluate relevant KPIs to help drive continuous improvement with focused plans to address areas requiring improvement. The revised subgroup terms also now ensure each area of activity supports the Trust's commitment to social value and improved equity, diversity and inclusion for governance, the workforce, and the people the Charity supports.

Each subgroup receives updates on performance, evaluation, and risk in core areas of operational and infrastructure services at the Charity. The terms for each subgroup reflect the Charity Governance Code.

The Board receives reports, including KPI Red, Amber, Green ("RAG") rated performance from each subgroup in line with the organisation's planning and performance management cycle.

Governance Subgroup – the subgroup meets quarterly to assist the Board to oversee the methods by which the Board, subgroups and governing bodies monitor and share progress to ensure supportive, effective, and inclusive governance. The group is assisted by the EDI Governance Steering Group to ensure the recruitment of Members, Trustees and Governors, their training, responsibilities and the proper arrangements of supervision and appraisal (where relevant) are in place and follow best practice.

The Trust aims to create an environment where divergent views are welcomed, and individuals feel confident sharing their ideas. To achieve this, trust and mutual respect is essential - both between Board members and between the Trustees and the Executive Team and wider workforce.

The **EDI Governance Steering Subgroup** reports to the Governance Subgroup and oversees the strategic approach to building a more equitable and diverse organisational governance culture, ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles are embedded to help deliver the best possible outcomes for the people we support. The group was formed in 2021 to assist Trustee and Governor understanding of systems and culture at the Together Trust. Following successful recruitment of Trustees with EDI expertise, they have context-specific and realistic goals, taking action and monitoring EDI governance performance in the future.

Supporting People Subgroup – the subgroup meets six times a year to ensure the Together Trust is aligned to the needs of the people it supports and commissioners. It also reviews how the Charity continuously improves and addresses the needs of the people who use its services. The group monitors and evaluates all relevant quality improvement and most regulatory activity in services. It oversees participation, co-production and customer engagement, aiming to create accessible and regular programmes of effective communication, impact and social value reporting to our external stakeholders. It oversees campaigns, advocacy and participation and external accreditation of customer relationship standards, including Investor in Customers, ensuring results are acted upon effectively.

The subgroup also ensures that the Charity's complaints policy is transparent, well-publicised and effective, and that complaints are handled constructively, impartially and dealt with following a pre-agreed timeline.

Finance and Audit Subgroup – the subgroup meets six times a year to inform the Honorary Treasurers and the Chair of Trustees of the financial position and performance of the Charity and the operational detail behind the management accounts that are presented at each Board meeting. It oversees the annual budget process and any special issues with financial implications that are to be reported to the Board.

The subgroup also reviews funding strategy, growth plans and matters in respect of the Charity's pension schemes. It ensures that third party partners and suppliers are procured in line with policy and the Trust conducts its business in a commercially responsible way to achieve maximum positive impact for communities, people and the environment.

The subgroup is responsible for the appointment and removal of the external auditor, for the ongoing relationship and liaison with the auditor and for monitoring management's responsiveness to external audit findings and recommendations.

Human Resources and Organisational Development Subgroup – the subgroup meets regularly to ensure that the Trust is able to attract, retain, and motivate the highest calibre of staff to deliver value for money for the Charity's beneficiaries in line with strategic objectives and financial parameters. The subgroup assists the Board to oversee the approach to an effective People Strategy including fair pay and reward for all staff including the Key Management Personnel. Further information on the Trusts' pay and reward structure can be found later in this report in the section on Workforce and Workforce Engagement.

The group ensures our staff have clear learning and development opportunities and supports staff with the day-to-day challenges they face, in work and outside. We know that the Trust can be a challenging working environment and resilience is important for us all. The group ensures effective staff engagement and that the outcomes from staff surveys are received and acted upon.

The group oversees the Charity's approach to workforce equality, diversity and inclusion, effective engagement with and development of the Staff Council and ensures safer recruitment procedures operate effectively.

The subgroup also ensures that the Charity can attract, retain and motivate high levels of volunteers and oversees external accreditation of HR/training-related standards including Investors in People.

Safeguarding Scrutiny Subgroup – the subgroup has lead responsibility for effective governance of safeguarding at the Trust. This is achieved by scrutiny of operational actions and quality assurance of safeguarding standards and processes at the Charity. The day-to-day operational safeguarding responsibility is held with the designated safeguarding officer for the Trust who is also the Service Director.

The subgroup scrutinises leadership activity in respect of adherence to adopted safeguarding policies and procedures, is informed of safeguarding incidences at the Trust and scrutinises the management of risk. It ensures safeguarding policies at the Together Trust comply with local and national safeguarding standards. The subgroup maintains an overview of key performance indicators. The group works with the Safeguarding Learning & Development Forum, which reports directly into the subgroup.

Health and Safety, Risk and Environment Subgroup – this subgroup ensures that appropriate health and safety processes are in place to ensure a safe working environment which meets all legal requirements, including consultation arrangements. It ensures business continuity plans are reviewed regularly and agrees and monitors an organisational approach to environmental impact.

The subgroup also oversees the development of the Trust's property portfolio and ensures that it is fit for purpose, including compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), and monitors the effectiveness of

the Charity's approach to risk management.

Health and Safety Committee is made up of representatives from across the Charity who meet on a regular basis to promote efficient health and safety policies and methods across all areas. The Together Trust is a registered member of the Contractors Health and Safety Scheme under which its health and safety practice is reviewed each year. The Charity also subscribes to The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), for external guidance and advice where required.

Digital Transformation Subgroup – the subgroup meets quarterly to oversee how technology can reach and support our workforce and the people we support with the aim of delivering practical, efficient and cost-effective solutions. It oversees how the Charity creates a culture in which digital can flourish and the accountabilities for digital development within the Charity ensuring that, where possible, digital is an integral part of business design.

We take a digital-led approach, and our aim is to share learning to enable our workforce and the people we support to:

- Develop the right skills required to use technology effectively and safely
- Make it easier to communicate with the Trust
- Explore how technology can encourage independence and wellbeing
- Ensure effective information management and compliance reporting including GDPR

Service Visitor Subgroups – a programme of visits aims to ensure that all the Together Trust operations and central support services will be visited by Trustees at least once in each financial year. This enables Trustees to broaden their knowledge and awareness of issues relating to the activities of the workforce and for the people who use the Charity's services. The aim is to promote positive working relationships between Trustees and our workforce.

Strategic Report

Section 172 statement

This section of the Report describes how the Directors have had regard to the matters set out in section 172(1) (a) to (f), and forms the Directors' statement required under section 414CZA, of the Companies Act 2006.

The Directors recognise that the long-term success of the Together Trust is dependent on having regard to the interests of its stakeholders. As a registered Charity, the Directors' responsibility also extends to ensuring that the affairs and objectives of the Together Trust are managed in a way that enhances public trust and support. The Board has identified and documented its stakeholders in the Together Trust's Stronger Together Strategic Plan. Key stakeholders include the people we support, their families, carers, commissioners, our workforce and our regulators.

Our Annual Review Report describes our impact, and is available to download on the Trust's website www.togethertrust.org.uk.

Beneficiaries

The Board recognises the importance of engaging with stakeholders, understanding their views and interests in order to be successful over the long term. Dialogue with stakeholders can help the Board to understand significant changes in the landscape, help inform future developments and trends, and develop strategy that is aligned with stakeholder interests.

The Charity works tirelessly towards a brighter future for the people we support and their families and to build communities where everyone feels valued and can thrive. The people we support tell us that they face daily discrimination, hardship and barriers in their lives. Things must change. Every day, we listen and learn from the people we support so we can work together for change. We take a pro-active approach to helping the people we support to influence local, regional and national policy. We also work closely with national organisations such as the Disabled Children's Partnership and Children England to help the people we support to influence future policy and provision.

The Board actively engages with its beneficiaries, both informally and formally, to understand the impact of its charitable activities and the interests of its beneficiaries. The Together Trust retained the highest award possible for its customer service and relationship management following an independent assessment by Investor in Customers (IIC) in 2017, 2019 and 2021. IIC registered the Charity as having 'exceptional' customer service levels and awarded the Charity gold status across all four IIC principles. The independent assessment of excellence in the field of customer service and customer relationships is based on internal and external perceptions of the customer experience.

The Supporting People subgroup described earlier in this report, reports directly to the Board and has responsibility for overseeing and advising Trustees to ensure the Together Trust is aligned to the needs of its customers and commissioners. The subgroup reviews how the Charity continuously improves and addresses the needs of the people and families who use its services.

The Charity continues to work to formalise a participation strategy and is listening closely to the people we support about the issues that affect them inside and outside of the Trust. Our aim in this area is to be a trusted partner to the people we support and empower people to make positive progress to influence our service development, campaigns, future policy and provision.

We continue to work in partnership with charitable organisations such as the Disabled Children's Partnership, Children England and lead an Alliance for Children in Care and Care Leavers subgroup, bringing together more than 40 organisations through our campaigning work. During the year we campaigned successfully to change the government's policy to reduce levels of homelessness among young people who have care experience.

During the year we have campaigned at a European level to amplify the views of the people we support. The Together Trust has consistently responded to government consultations, sharing evidence and insight from the people we support and our workforce around our strategic priorities.

In 2022 the Together Trust also contributed to *Free Loaves on Friday*; a book written by care experienced people about the care system. The anthology is a collection of stories, letters, and poems from care-experienced people of diverse backgrounds. The aim of the book is to give a loud, clear message that care-experienced voices matter.

Workforce and Workforce Engagement

The Charity takes great pride in its workforce on whom it depends for the delivery of its charitable objectives.

During the year the Together Trust employed an average of 809 people in the fields of care, education, community, clinical, management and infrastructure support. In June 2022 the Trust became a Real Living Wage employer.

The Charity's pay and reward structure follows a Job Family Model which aims to set out pay and reward in an equal, fair and consistent manner, and at a level to recruit and retain the necessary calibre of staff. Each job family contains different levels, each reflecting different job outputs, skills, knowledge, and experience. However, the essential nature of the activities carried out and the basic skills used are similar. The number of levels varies for each job family, depending on the scope and range of responsibilities.

The Trust makes substantial provision for the qualification, training and development of its staff and volunteers. It offers a wide variety of learning and development opportunities to support organisational, team and individual development linked to achieving the very best outcomes for the people we support. The Charity is committed to working with all colleagues to support their development needs and provides a variety of learning and development events, training, and role specific qualifications.

The Charity's workforce can access an employee assistance service which is a free and confidential support programme to help support staff and volunteers in many aspects of their lives, in and out of the workplace. The Trust is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of its workforce and continues to champion a number of mental health and wellbeing initiatives to enable staff to feel supported both at work and at home. With over 40 mental health first aiders in our workforce, they offer initial support for mental health and wellbeing through non-judgemental listening and guidance. All members of the workforce are also able to self-refer for support from Able Futures, who give guidance from a mental health specialist to help staff learn coping mechanisms, build resilience, access therapy or work with the Charity to make adjustments to help mental health at work.

The Teachers' Pension Scheme is recognised for eligible employees and all other staff may join a defined contribution pension scheme, which is available to them from the commencement of their employment.

The Charity is aware of its responsibilities in accordance with statutory legislation and all relevant appointments are subject to satisfactory references, Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks and overseas checks.

Investing in people

In 2021 the Trust was assessed at 'beyond the standard' for Investors in People ("IIP") and it achieved the prestigious 'Gold' award. The Trust regards the IIP standard as an effective way to improve its practices, measure performance and demonstrate excellence. The IIP framework is used as a key part of developing the Together Trust's people strategy.

The Charity is committed to eliminating discrimination and to treating all individuals fairly in all aspects of its work. The Trust promotes the employment of disabled people through its Equality and Diversity & Disclosure of Disability policies that support equality of opportunity in the recruitment, employment and retention of staff and volunteers, including access to training and promotion. The Charity ensures that EDI is at the forefront of all service delivery and workforce support. Our aim is for long-lasting change that sees EDI become part of the Trust's DNA.

The Trust is committed to improving Equality, Diversity and Inclusion engagement plans for its workforce and the people it supports.

Volunteering

A three-year volunteering strategy was agreed in autumn 2020 and which has been updated in 2023. The Charity aims to have an effective and inclusive volunteering programme that delivers tangible and valuable outcomes for our beneficiaries, supporting the delivery of the Charity's Stronger Together Plan. Sixty volunteers have supported the Trust over the past year. From governance, education, residential services and community services to support roles including fundraising, communications and organisational development.

Over the reporting period, our regular volunteers (not including Governors or Trustees) gave more than 3,000 hours of their precious time to help the Trust (more than double the hours in the previous reporting year). Their contribution equates to over £28,500 if valued in terms of the national living wage. In addition, almost 950 hours of time was contributed by volunteers, including corporate groups, helping at our events during the course of the year.

Effective workforce engagement

A Human Resources and Organisational Development Subgroup reports direct to the Board and oversees effective workforce engagement and that the outcomes from staff and volunteer surveys are received and acted upon. This group also oversees the organisation's approach to workforce equity, diversity and inclusion and monitors and evaluates all relevant KPIs with focused plans to address areas requiring improvement. More information about the work of this subgroup can be found on page 6 of this report.

The Trust seeks to listen, understand and act upon our staff views through the Staff Council. The Staff Council is an elected group of colleagues from across all our services who meet on a quarterly basis. As a consultative body for employees, the Trust has extended and is strengthening the Staff Council's role to ensure that, as strategy is developed and plans are implemented, Staff Council representatives help to communicate and engage better with our workforce. They review how successfully initiatives have been delivered. The meetings are chaired by the Chief Executive and have Trustee attendance.

Suppliers

The Trust recognises its responsibility to ensure its charitable business activities are undertaken in accordance with regulatory requirements and best practice. The Trust's procurement policy has been developed to help the Trust achieve best value in the use of limited resources to support the Trust in achieving its overall aims and objectives. It also supports addressing the requirements of the Charity Governance Code and the 2010 Bribery Act by emphasising the responsibility of all staff involved to conduct procurement legally and ethically, as well as securing value for money.

All procurement activity adheres to the following key principles:

- transparency – clear procedures to be followed and evidence of adherence retained for audit
- equal treatment – for all potential suppliers to ensure a level playing field, no favouritism and to ensure best value is obtained
- wherever possible we endeavour to source potential suppliers from the local area where this can be justified in terms of best value and/or social value
- suppliers will be required to follow Trust safeguarding standards where applicable

The Trust also measures and reports on its supplier payment practices to Trustees on a regular basis.

Wider Community and Environment

The Board is focused on its long-term and strategic charitable aims as set out in the Stronger Together Plan described in the Future Strategy section of this report. One of the aims of the Health and Safety, Risk and Environment Subgroup, created in 2021, is to agree and monitor an organisational approach to environmental impact. This group oversees the development of the Trust's property portfolio to ensure that it is fit for purpose while being as green and sustainable as cost effectively possible. The group monitors the effectiveness of the Charity's approach to risk management (including the annual risk register). The group also monitors and evaluates all relevant KPIs to help address areas requiring improvement.

The Board recognises the importance of open and honest dialogue with Regulators who include Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. As a registered Charity the Together Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission. The Board receive regular updates on legal, regulatory and compliance matters when it meets six times a year. Board subgroups receive more frequent updates in line with their specialisms, as set out in the Corporate Governance section of this report.

Measuring, managing and reporting the Together Trust's social value

The Together Trust continues to take a strategic approach to the implementation of social value measurement and reporting, both as an organisation and through its contracts, which measure and report our overall social footprint. The Charity is already delivering social value however, it needs to improve data capture and reporting to its stakeholders to improve impact, evidence social value delivery and support it in developing a stronger and more robust approach to bidding. During 2022/23 the Charity established a structured process for target setting, measurement and contract management of the social, economic and environmental impacts of each project from bidding, project management to completion. The National Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) social value framework tools was adopted during 2022/23.

Monitoring Progress

The Board monitors progress against strategic aims in the Stronger Together Plan by measuring key performance indicators relating to specific areas of the Charity's operations and support services. Each Board subgroup, described in the Corporate Governance section of this report, receives KPIs relating to their specialist area either monthly or quarterly.

Stronger Together Scorecard Themes



More information about the measures and results can be found in the Strategic achievements and performance section of this report.

Strategic achievements and performance

In the year to 31 March 2023, the Together Trust provided over 47 social care, special education, community and family support services to over 3,200 children, young people, vulnerable adults and families, whose special needs fall within the areas of emotional, behavioural and social difficulties, physical disabilities, learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders. Like many other charities, demand for the majority of the Trust's services continues to grow.

In the main, the Trust's services were carried out on behalf of local authorities, public sector bodies and service users in the North West of England and surrounding areas including Staffordshire and the West Midlands. All Special Educational Services are Ofsted regulated. Residential Care Services, along with Domiciliary Care and Community Support Services, are regulated by either the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) or the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

During the reporting period the Together Trust's services were:

Special Educational Services

Inscape House School – a non-maintained special school that meets the needs of children and young people, aged 5 to 19 years, with autism spectrum conditions and related social communication difficulties. The school also runs its own café as a social enterprise.

Bridge College – a specialist Further Education Day college that supports students up to 25 years with learning difficulties and disabilities, complex needs, communication disorders and autism.

Ashcroft School - an independent special school catering for children and young people, aged 8 to 18 years, who have struggled to cope in other settings because of their individual barriers to learning. Ashcroft also offers Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) services, vocational learning for 14 to 19 year-olds and operates Ashcroft College which support students, aged 14 to 16 years, who may have been excluded or are close to being excluded from mainstream education.

Social & Therapy Care Services – Residential Care Services

12 Ofsted registered homes for children and young people including:

- 1 short break/overnight respite service for young people with autism/learning disabilities
- 1 short break/overnight respite service for young people with physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities
- 2 shared care service provisions for young people with autism/learning disabilities
- 2 emergency provisions
- 5 mainstream Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) provisions
- 2 therapeutic services for young people with complex autism/learning disabilities
- 1 home for disabled adults with complex health needs (CQC registered)

Social & Therapy Care Services - Domiciliary Care and Community Support Services

- 6 supported living services for adults with complex needs
- Weekend club for young people with complex needs in Stockport (opened in January 2022)
- Evening youth activity clubs for young people with disabilities/autism in Stockport
- The Hub at the Humphrey Booth Centre in Ordsall, Salford – a community space for the people of Salford
- A learning support service based at Bolton College, supporting students, aged 16 to 26 years, with complex needs and/ or disabilities
- Adult day services at Newbridge and SK30+ centres in Stockport
- Specialist Positive Behaviour Support Services in Stockport and Salford
- SEND mediation and dispute resolution services in Blackburn with Darwen, Bolton, Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester, Manchester, Oldham, Salford, St Helens, Stoke on Trent and Telford and Wrekin.
- SEND Information and Advice Service in Stockport

Social & Therapy Care Services - Clinical services

Together Trust multi-disciplinary teams work in mainstream and SEND schools and colleges providing:

- Observation, assessment, individual and group interventions
- Support to update and deliver on Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP) recommendations
- Staff coaching and training
- Sleep support (Trafford and Rochdale, and Children in Need funded services in the wider area)

Other services – Fostering services

We provide a Fostering service with support and training so our Foster carers can provide safe, caring, nurturing homes for children who need them.

Our activity and key performance indicator (KPI) results in 2022/23

During the year, the Charity renewed its commitment to its strategic plan, known as Stronger Together, which has been updated to 2025/26. The plan builds on both existing expertise and commits to innovative ways of improving how the Charity works. More information about this can be found in Future Strategy section of this report.

During 2022/23, the Charity continued to deliver results against four key strategic goals, set originally in 2017/18, as set out on the following pages.

Stronger Together Aim 1

Our needs led, community based, integrated services deliver high-quality, person-centred support. We adapt and evolve to meet the life-long changing needs of people and families.

Our progress in 2022/23

Referrals for the majority of Trust services remains high, though fostering placements were fewer in the year. The Charity continues to invest in supporting and recruiting foster carers to meet increased demand for foster placements. Many of the young people we support in children's homes benefit from long term placement stability. This remains a good indicator for the outcomes for young people in the Charity's care, as is their attendance in full-time education. The Trust supports national and local campaigns aimed at improving the longevity of residential placements for children that reach 16+ and encourage and support young people to remain in care until they reach 18+. Many young people in our foster care also benefit from long term placement stability and we are actively looking at how we can continue to provide a consistent level of support to our cohort of care leavers.

Many young people produced excellent award results, thanks to the dedication and support of our workforce. The redevelopment of Newbridge, a service for people with individual and often complex needs in Stockport, was approved by the Board in April 2019. The expansion of this Stockport service was delayed as a result of the COVID pandemic; however, redevelopment has begun with support from a fundraising appeals during 2022/23 and 2023/24.

At 31 March 2023 all Trust services were graded Good by Ofsted/CQC with only one exception. All of the Charity's CQC and Ofsted educational inspection reports are available as a download from www.togethertrust.org.uk

Service Occupancy – Placement Numbers

	31 March 2023	Target
Community Services achieving a minimum of 95% of contracted hours :	87%	100%
Clinical Services achieving a minimum of 95% of contracted hours:	99%	100%
Average occupancy across all children's homes:	86%	100%

A major project commenced in the year to consider the redevelopment of the Together Trust's Cheadle campus. The Board will continue to consider proposals and options into 2023/24.

Stronger Together Aim 2

We are a trusted partner – we empower people to make positive progress to influence our service development, campaigns, future policy and provision.

Our progress in 2022/23

During the year Inscape House School won the National Association of Special School's Breaking Barriers award <https://www.nasschools.org.uk/2022/10/13/nass-award-winners-2022/>

The Trust was also shortlisted and highly commended in the Stockport Business Awards' category of best not for profit organisation.

Participation and co-production development continues to help the people we support to change government policy and future development and practice at the Trust. More information about this can be found on page 8 of this report.

We campaign based on the feedback from the people we support, and their families, about what matters to them and from their perspective what good looks like.

Our current campaigns and policy priorities are:

- Improved outcomes for care leavers
- Improved mental health support for young people
- Greater employment and opportunity for people with disabilities
- Better support for young people who are transitioning services

Investor in Customers (IIC) registered the Charity as having 'exceptional' customer service levels and awarded the Trust gold status across all four of its principles in 2021. The independent assessment of excellence in the field of customer service, and customer relationships, is based on internal and external perceptions of customers and staff. The Trust has retained this standard since 2017.

For latest news and developments at the Together Trust visit our [website www.togethertrust.org.uk](http://www.togethertrust.org.uk)

Investor in Customers biennial accreditation results (December 2021):

90.4% of respondents agree that the Trust's staff provide a consistently high-quality service and good support.

90.9% of respondents view the Trust as a trusted service provider.

84.8% of respondents said that the Trust focuses on putting customer and individuals who use our services first.

Stronger Together Aim 3

We grow organically and sustainably to meet changing needs. We maximise fundraising opportunities and aim to demonstrate our social, environmental, and economic value from everything that we do.

Our progress in 2022/23

During the year, the Together Trust won new contracts and joined or reconfirmed its position on the following frameworks:

- Manchester City Council – Learning Disability and/or Autism Early Intervention and Prevention Service: 3 years and 6 months from April 2023
- Tameside MBC – SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS): 1 year contract from July 2022
- Stockport MBC – Youth Club (short breaks for children with disabilities): 1 year contract from April 2022
- Lancashire County Council - Flexible Agreement for the Provision of Fostering Agency Placements: 10 years from May 2022
- Manchester City Council - Flexible Purchasing System for Alternative Education Provision: 10 years from May 2022
- Cheshire East Council – SEND Mediation and Disagreement Resolution Service: 2 years re-award from March 2023

- Stockport MBC – Enhanced Therapies Service: 1 year re-award from August 2022 (subsequently to be re-awarded for further year in August 2023)
- Trafford MBC – Sleep Tight Service: 1 year re-award from July 2022
- NHS GM Integrated Care Board – Rochdale Sleep Service: 1 year re-award from April 2023
- Stockport MBC – EOTAS Service (Education Other Than at School): 1 year contract from September 2022
- Liverpool City Council - Schools Outreach Service – various individual school contracts for Speech & Language and Occupational Therapy, and Advisory Teachers services across Liverpool

Significant investment continues to be made in IT/digital transformation to upgrade equipment and improve digital platforms for the people we support and our workforce. Migration to cloud storage continues across Trust settings and major projects include updating the Trust’s finance and billing platforms. Work has begun to improve CRM systems and centralise referrals. A programme board governance framework oversees project management and reporting.

Income rose to £33.75m during the year (2021/22 £32.57m). Fundraising team income was £231,000 in donations (2021/22 £237,000).

The Trust continued to deliver awareness of its heritage and archive thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in 2022, enabling it to plan a number of learning and participation heritage-themed events for volunteers, young people and the wider community. The grant, to mark the Trust’s 150th anniversary, was delivered differently due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions. In agreement with the National Lottery, completion of this work was achieved in summer 2022.

The grant delivery culminated with an exhibition of the Charity’s heritage at Manchester Central Library in spring 2022. Our 150th heritage activity can be viewed by visiting <https://www.togethertrust.org.uk/150>

Stronger Together Aim 4

Our flexible, talented and diverse workforce treat people equitably and inclusively. They have clear learning and development opportunities. We listen to our workforce, look after their wellbeing and work with our Staff Council to ensure effective engagement.

Our progress in 2022/23

As at 31 March 2023:

Staff turnover in operational service areas	23% (21/22 27%)
Length of service in operational service areas	42% with 5 years or more service

During 2022/23 the Together Trust continued to focus on its workforce. The Charity is committed to a transparent system for pay and reward in order to attract and retain staff, as our ability to recruit and retain staff continues to be a key risk.

The Charity published its latest gender pay report in April 2023. A copy of this can be downloaded from: <https://www.togethertrust.org.uk/Charity-information>

The Trust has continued to work closely with the Staff Council which represents the workforce and acts as our workforce’s voice. It is a forum for colleague consultation and two-way information sharing, informing colleagues and leaders about important information and influencing the Together Trust’s strategies, policies, procedures and ways of working.

The Trust was awarded Investors in People Gold in May 2021 and continues to invest heavily in its learning and development programme, giving staff the opportunity to develop their skills and providing them with opportunities to progress within the Charity. It has further developed its leadership and management training for staff. More information about workforce development can be found in the Section 172 statement on Workforce and Workforce Engagement of this report.

A recruitment and early retention plan has been developed to help secure appropriate staffing levels in services and further investment has been made in strengthening the recruitment team, together with utilising technology and the continuing successful use of an employee referral app.

Around sixty volunteers have supported the Trust in a variety of roles from trustees and governors to reading supporters and musicians. Where possible, volunteering outcomes have been tracked for the services supported and for the volunteers themselves. You can read more about our volunteers in the Section 172 statement on Volunteers of this report.

The Trust is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of its workforce and, during the year, championed a number of mental health and wellbeing initiatives to enable staff to feel supported both at work and home. With over 40 mental health first aiders in the workforce, they offer initial support for mental health and wellbeing through non-judgemental listening and guidance.

Further information about the Together Trust's impact can be found in our Annual Review Report and is available to download on the Trust's website.

Energy Usage and Sustainability

The information and data to calculate energy usage in 2022/23 is taken from meter readings for gas and electricity and from fuel card readings for the Trust fleet of vehicles. Mileage claims have been used to calculate the 'grey' fleet. All fuel conversions to kWh and CO₂ emissions data have been calculated in line with UK Government environmental reporting guidance, using UK Government GHG conversion factors for company reporting.

The Total Energy Consumption (TEC) in 2022/23 amounts to 3,955,757 kWh (2021/22 4,071,620 kWh*) resulting in carbon emissions of 668 tonnes of carbon dioxide (2021/22 697 tonnes*). The annual quantity of emissions resulting from our transport activities, including the grey fleet, and the use of gas was 615.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide (2021/22 627.5 tonnes*). Electricity usage accounted for 52.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide (2021/22 69.9 tonnes*).

The average tonnes of carbon emissions per employee was 0.83 (2021/22 0.85).

The annual emissions from the Trust central site, including Inscape House and Ashcroft schools and the Central Administration office (but excluding transport), amounted to 186 tonnes of carbon dioxide being 27.8% of the total emissions (2021/22 192 tonnes accounting for 27.5%). Transport in total accounted for 26.5% of carbon emissions (2021/22 25.7%). There has been a reduction of 4.2% in the environmental impact of the Trust's activities and it is anticipated that by the end of March 2024 the Trust will have 100% zero carbon electricity as contracts are renewed.

The Trust is in the process of developing a masterplan for the redevelopment of its main site at Cheadle with a key objective to ensure that it is as green and sustainable as is cost effectively possible. A review of the Trust's vehicle fleet continues with the aims of progressing to the use of more energy efficient vehicles and updating infrastructure to accommodate charging points for electric vehicles. Environment factors and lower energy efficiencies are among the factors that are considered when energy suppliers contracts are being renewed.

**The comparative figures for 2021/22 have been restated to correct an error in their evaluation last year, resulting in electricity consumption being understated and gas consumption being overstated and a net overstatement of 19 tonnes of carbon dioxide.*

Financial review

While the majority of Trust income is from local authority fees for education and care services provided, it is noted that authorities continue to face significant funding gaps and the financial outlook for the sector is challenging, which indicates a premium being put on continuing to provide services which represent good value for money to local authorities in the future.

The Charity's services are essential for those who we support and the majority of people who receive our services require a funding decision from the responsible local authority or other such public agency. Most of the Trust's fees are received for services to individuals, although some services are purchased on a block contract basis by local authorities who wish to ensure they have guaranteed access to the Charity as their provider of choice. The Charity is also in a variety of partnership arrangements with a number of local authorities, although more recent new business has been awarded via formal tender processes.

For 2022/23 the Trust reports net expenditure for the year of £0.38m which is down from net income of £1.35m in 2021/22. After transfers between funds and other gains and losses there is a reduction in funds of £0.55m compared to an increase in funds of £1.45m in 2021/22.

Overall Social & Therapy Care Services made a loss of £1.38m on income of £14.57m (2021/22 a surplus of £0.07m on income of £14.28m) due to lower occupancy across services. Turnover of staff in the sector has been high, albeit lower than last year, and despite strong demand for services it has been difficult to recruit staff in sufficient numbers to meet demand despite increases in pay and conditions and as a result there was increased reliance on agency staff. Education services made a reduced surplus of £0.82m on an increased turnover of £16.71m (2021/22 a surplus of £0.92m on income of £15.57m), while other services (fostering) made a surplus of £0.1m on income of £2.10m (2021/22 a surplus of £0.27m on income of £2.43m).

2022/23	Income £'m	Expenditure £'m	Net £'m
Donations	0.23	0.23	0.00
Social and Therapy Care services	14.57	15.95	(1.38)
Education services	16.71	15.89	0.82
Other services - Fostering	2.10	2.00	0.10

Comparative for the year ending March 2022

2021/22	Income £'m	Expenditure £'m	Net £'m
Donations and Fundraising activities	0.24	0.18	0.06
Social Care services	14.28	14.21	0.07
Education services	15.57	14.65	0.92
Other services - Fostering	2.43	2.16	0.27

a) Income

In 2022/23 the Together Trust has seen its income increase by 3.7% from £32.57m to £33.76m with the main increase being in education services where income increased by 7.3% due to fee increases and increased student numbers at Bridge College. Social & Therapy Care Services saw an increase in income of 2.0% through fee increases although occupancy of residential services was down due largely to difficulties recruiting staff, while other services (which is mainly our fostering service), saw a reduction in income of 13.6% with less foster placements in the year.

- Investment policy and returns

The investment portfolio of the Charity is invested with the main purpose of ensuring the underlying security of the investment, while achieving growth wherever possible against a series of benchmarks and the regular advice of our investment managers is taken to help achieve this. At the year end, the market value of investments was £924,000 (2021/22 £976,000).

- Fundraising

In 2022/23 fundraising income, including donations, all grants and gifts in kind, was £0.23m (2021/22 £0.24m). Notable contributions were received from a diverse group of supporters, both long-standing relationships and friends to the Charity. The Together Trust is extremely grateful for the generous support received from a variety of individuals, community and corporate supporters, and for the increasing number of grant-making trusts who have chosen to support our young people and families.

As the impact of the COVID pandemic receded, 2022/23 saw the fundraising team return to community events including the fully accessible Join Together Festival. The festival, formerly known as the Family Fun Day, was relaunched, and welcomed by supporters existing and new. We would like to extend particular thanks to the companies and organisations who supported the relaunch of this event. In particular BUPA, the High Sheriff's Police Trust and Primark and the ongoing support of our other key partners throughout 2022/2023 who include: Manchester City Football Club, Kingsmill/AB Foods, John Lewis, Just Teachers, L'Oreal, UDP, The Booth Charities and WNS Assistance.

The Together Trust would like to thank the public for their support of its 2022/23 events, both in person and virtual, including:

Grow Together
Declutter and Donate
Join Together Festival
World Cup Watchalong
Quiz Together
All raffles; and
50:50 Lottery

During the year the charity's online retail channels expanded. This has proved successful and supports most activities undertaken by the fundraising team.

The Trust would like to acknowledge support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to extend grant delivery into 2022/23 and acknowledges the many other individual donors, grant funders and corporate supporters who have made donations or gifts in-kind during the year.

A capital appeal to redevelop Newbridge, one of the Trust's adult centres in Stockport, was delayed into 2021/22 however, work on the capital appeal commenced in 2022/23. The planned expansion of Inscape House School was also put on hold and now forms part of the Trust's redevelopment plan for the Cheadle Campus.

All Trustees are aware of the CC20 guidance from the Charity Commission. The Fundraising Department works closely with the Trust's Information Governance Manager, who oversees data protection compliance for the Charity, to ensure best practice is embedded in all that we do including, but not limited to, a Fundraising database which is administered in the Fundraising Department and the continuance of permission-based communications with individual supporters.

There have been no formal complaints concerning our fundraising practices during the reporting period. Together Trust actively promotes a Complaints and Compliments Policy, which can be found on the Charity's website: <https://www.togethertrust.org.uk/who-we-are/policies>

The Charity is registered with the Fundraising Regulator. The Together Trust does not engage in face-to-face fundraising (known as chugging), telephone fundraising, or direct mail campaigns. There were no licensed street collections in the reporting period. The Together Trust does not use commercial participators.

b) Expenditure

The Charity reports expenditure of £34.07m in the year (2021/22 £31.20m), an increase of 9.2% compared to an increase in income of 3.6%. This resulted in net expenditure, before gains and losses, of £0.32m compared to net income of £1.37m last year.

Of the increase in expenditure, payroll costs increased by 8.3% following a cost-of-living annual pay increase of 4.5% and a 25% pay enhancement for weekend working, topping up of the sleep-in allowance and further increases due to incremental pay scale progression. In addition, annual leave entitlements were increased. Agency costs increased by £0.65m in the year to £2.14m as a result of more dependency on agency staff. After some years of low inflation, it rose by 10.1% in the 12 months to March 2023.

Social & Therapy Care Services expenditure increased from £14.21m in 2022 to £15.95m in 2023, an increase of 12.2% with the growth in therapy services and staff costs including agency increasing by 14.4%, while education services expenditure increased by 8.5% to £15.90m, being largely an increase in staffing and agency costs. Other services expenditure (being largely fostering), reduced by 7.4% to £2.00m reflecting the reduction in foster placements.

The average number of employees during the year was 809 (2021/22 821). Payroll costs are reported at £23.3m (2021/22 £21.5m), an increase of 8.4% on the previous year.

Whilst the Government continues to actively seek partnership with the voluntary sector, there seems little prospect of them altering their position over VAT. It continues to be a significant burden and the Charity's non-recoverable VAT element amounted to £1,084,000 (2021/22 £894,000).

An actuarial loss of £277,000 on the defined benefit (final salary) pension scheme (which has been closed to new members since 2000) has been suffered during the year (2021/22 actuarial gain of £4,000). The pension scheme has moved from an (unrecognised) asset as at 31 March 2022 to a liability as at 31 March 2023, primarily due to the reduction in return on its assets.

c) Public Benefit

In setting its plans and priorities for areas of work, the Trustees of the Together Trust have referred to the guidance from the Charity Commission on the provision of public benefit. The summary of the Charity's Strategic Plan and the analysis of the achievements to date as shown in the Strategic Achievements and Performance section of this report, together with more specific examples of the Charity's activities set out in its performance reports, demonstrate how the Charity has sought to fulfil its principal charitable objective which is to give aid, assistance and care to those with disabilities or in need.

Access to all the Together Trust services is based on an objective assessment of need by Together Trust staff and/or a commissioning local authority and is not based on financial ability to pay. In the case of Independent Advice and Support Services and Independent Supporter Services, any parent/legal guardian whose child attends school in the area the service operates may have access to these services.

d) Reserves

The Trustees periodically review the reserves policy of the Charity and during the last review moved it towards a policy based on an assessment of the Trust's cash flow and the risks it faces. In the current uncertain times, the Together Trust takes a prudent view where, as a minimum, the level of cash reserves must not fall below £2.5m at each month end and it should hold cash reserves of at least six weeks expenditure at the year end. The Trust has significantly increased its designated reserves in the previous year to help support the achievement of our corporate strategy, which has been updated, and in particular to support digital transformation and a property review. It is anticipated that this strategy will result in significant outlay being made over the course of the next four years.

As at 31 March 2023, reserves totalled £28.00m (2021/22 £28.55m), of which £0.48m (2021/22 £0.52m) relates to Restricted Funds and £0.16m (2021/22 £0.17m) relates to Endowment Funds. Of the remaining balance of £27.36m (2021/22 £27.86m), £20.52m (2021/22 £20.91m) relates to general funds (of which £4.41m (2021/22 £3.97m) has been designated to set aside funds towards investment plans) and £6.84m (2021/22 £6.95m) relates to revaluation reserves.

Of the £27.36m (2021/22 £27.86m) unrestricted funds, £19.02m (2021/22 £19.15m) is represented by fixed assets and a further £4.41m (2021/22 £3.97m) has been Designated to set aside funds towards investment plans and both are therefore not available as working capital.

The table below sets out available reserves.

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Net current assets	9,998	10,282
Less long-term creditors and provisions	(1,024)	(881)
Net reserves	8,974	9,401
Less restricted, designated and endowment funds	(5,043)	(4,657)
Available reserves	3,931	4,744

At the year-end available cash funds were £8,863,000, against the equivalent of six weeks' worth of expenditure of £3,915,000 (2021/22 available cash funds were £9,397,000 against £3,575,000 of expenditure).

e) Fixed assets

To monitor and control its fixed assets, the Charity makes use of a fixed asset register, which details the organisation's properties, vehicles and other capitalised equipment.

There have fixed asset additions of £0.7m during the year (2021/22 £0.6m), with 2 vehicles (2021/22 6 vehicles) being purchased during the year along with property renovations and improvements at various properties within the property portfolio being undertaken. The changes in tangible fixed assets are summarised in the notes to the financial statements (see note 14).

f) Going Concern

The key challenge for the Trust going forward, which is common to the Care sector in particular, is the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff in a shrinking labour market. To help address this the Trust has reviewed and increased its pay and reward offer to staff and the resources it devotes to recruitment. The Trust has prepared budgets and cash projections taking account of the impact on its financial resources of the increase in the Charity's pay and reward offer to staff, the resources it devotes to recruitment, funds and capital expenditure, and the risk of being able to secure annual fee increases for its services.

The level of brought forward unrestricted reserves and available cash funds have also been considered and we do not believe there are material uncertainties that call into doubt the Together Trust's ability to continue in operation for the foreseeable future.

Future strategy

‘Stronger Together’ Strategic Plan

The Together Trust provides a wide range of care, community, clinical and education services, which have provided it with a degree of resilience during the last few years of challenge in the age of austerity. The Charity has sought to develop and build upon these areas of expertise.

During the previous year the Charity renewed its commitment to Stronger Together, its strategic plan, which was updated to 2025/26. The plan builds on both existing expertise and commits to innovative ways of improving how the Charity works.

The financial projections supporting the Stronger Together strategy, illustrate growth in current service provision across all service areas.

Beyond 2022/23

During the prior year the Trust began work to build a new five-year strategic plan. The Board endorsed proposals evidencing growth opportunities where the Charity will seek to strengthen existing and form new partnerships and alliances. The plan will also use stakeholder feedback, including the Investor in Customers accreditation work, to give the Charity greater insights to inform future planning and service development.

Our Stronger Together strategic aims are:

- 1 Our needs led, community based, integrated services deliver high quality, person centred support. We adapt and evolve to meet the life-long changing needs of people and families
- 2 We are a trusted partner – we empower people to make positive progress to influence our service development, campaigns, future policy and provision
- 3 We grow organically and sustainably to meet changing needs. We maximise fundraising opportunities and aim to demonstrate our social, environmental and economic value from everything that we do
- 4 Our flexible, talented and diverse workforce treat people equitably and inclusively. They have clear learning and development opportunities. We listen to our workforce, look after their wellbeing and work with our Staff Council to ensure effective engagement

The Board has endorsed this approach, including a property review of the Cheadle site, and substantial funds have been set aside in designated reserves for this purpose. Work is continuing to comprehensively review the service environment to support the wider goals and challenges of commissioners and families that we work alongside.

In line with a needs-led pathway, our aim is to develop a model to provide services with the individual central to the package of support. This model will grow capacity, support local authorities and expand our reach by developing community-based provision that works flexibly with our resources.

Our progress will continue to be measured by key performance indicators relating to specific areas of the Charity's operations and support services.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring effective risk management and ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to manage risks. On an ongoing basis risks are reported to every main Board meeting (six per year) to keep them abreast and up to date with the main, current risks and issues and the actions being taken to mitigate these risks. We have recently undertaken a review of our risks and risk methodology to improve the management and reporting of risk.

Throughout the year the impact of the coronavirus pandemic continued to reduce down to manageable levels and overall, our key risks have not changed in the last year and relate to our ability to recruit and retain sufficient staff to run our services cost effectively.

Although, during the initial stages of the pandemic in 2020/21, staff turnover reduced, it increased in 2021/22 to 27% of the workforce which was common throughout our sector, but which had a major impact on our ability to run services. In 2022/23 we have seen staff turnover reduce to 23% for the year with a steady reduction throughout the year following significant increases and improvements to our pay and terms and conditions and we continue to remain a Real Living Wage employer. We have strong learning and development opportunities available to staff, as well as staff wellbeing support and a new staff reward platform providing additional benefits.

The continued financial success of the Trust is particularly dependent on securing annual fee increases for its services and we have been largely successful in securing these in recent years. Fee increases are becoming increasingly necessary with recent high inflation rates and the need to keep our pay competitive, but we are aware that Local Authorities who fund our services are under increasing financial pressures themselves, but demand for our services remains high and they recognise the reasons for these increases.

The Charity continues to review its resource requirements and in particular the need to update its digital infrastructure and property portfolio to ensure that it remains competitive in the future. Significant investment has already been made in our digital team and systems upgrades and this will continue. We have recently concluded a masterplan for the main Cheadle site in consultation with key stakeholders and are progressing with the first phase.

Safeguarding continues to be an area of potential risk and the Charity has established a robust accountability, control and review framework involving officers and Trustees.

The Charity has been informed by The Pensions Trust that some benefit changes in regard to the final salary-based pension scheme, which closed to new members in 2000, may not have been in accordance with the scheme rules. The Pensions Trust are seeking Court direction in relation to this, the outcome of which is not expected to be known until early 2025. As outcome of the case is awaited, at present, no obligation of a liability has arisen as a result of the past benefit changes and therefore no amounts are provided for. If the Court directs that changes were made in a way not permitted by the scheme rules, then this would give rise to additional pension liabilities for the Charity in the future, which the Scheme's Actuary has estimated to be in the region of £6.1m. This figure is estimated on a non-accounting basis, using actuarial assumptions derived using the Trustee's Technical Provisions basis as at 30 September 2021 where this relates to service prior to the date of change and has been calculated from the preliminary results of the actuarial valuation as at 30 September 2021 allowing for market conditions at that date. It is not possible to determine the financial implications for the Charity at this stage, therefore the above details are disclosed as a contingent liability in order to provide stakeholders with information about the potential impact of this matter.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

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

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

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

AUDITOR

RSM UK Audit LLP was appointed during the period and has expressed their willingness to continue in office as auditor and a resolution to reappoint RSM UK Audit LLP as auditor will be proposed at the forthcoming annual general meeting.

The Trustees' Report, including the Strategic Report and the directors report as required by company law, was approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by



Giles Gaddum
Chair of Trustees

10 November 2023

Independent auditor's report to the members of The Together Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Together Trust (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (including the Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; 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

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

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

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

Other information

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

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the Trustees' Report, which includes the Directors' Report and the Strategic 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 and the Strategic Report included within the Trustees' Report have 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 or the Strategic Report included within the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' responsibilities set out on page 23, 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.

The extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The objectives of our audit are to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding compliance with laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, to perform audit procedures to help identify instances of non-compliance with other laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements, and to respond appropriately to identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations identified during the audit.

In relation to fraud, the objectives of our audit are to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud, to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud through designing and implementing appropriate responses and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

However, it is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team:

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the sector, including the legal and regulatory framework that the charitable company operates in and how the charitable company is complying with the legal and regulatory framework;
- inquired of management, and those charged with governance, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud;
- discussed matters about non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessment of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

As a result of these procedures we consider the most significant laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements are FRS 102, Charities SORP (FRS 102), Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, and the charitable company's governing document. We performed audit procedures to detect non-compliances which may have a material impact on the financial statements which included reviewing the financial statements including the Trustees' Report, and remaining alert to new or unusual transactions which may not be in accordance with the governing documents.

The most significant laws and regulations that have an indirect impact on the financial statements are the Education Inspection Framework under the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Keeping Children Safe in Education under the Education Act 2002, Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulations, and the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR). We performed audit procedures to inquire of management whether the charitable company is in compliance with these law and regulations and inspected correspondence with regulatory authorities.

The audit engagement team identified the risk of management override of controls as the area where the financial statements were most susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included but were not limited to testing manual journal entries and other adjustments, evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business and challenging judgments and estimates.

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.

Laura Inglesby

Laura Inglesby FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of RSM UK AUDIT LLP, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants,
14th Floor
20 Chapel Street
Liverpool
L3 9AG

10 November 2023

Statement of financial activities

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2023 (including income and expenditure account)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £'000	Restricted Funds 2023 £'000	Endowment Funds 2023 £'000	Total Funds 2023 £'000	Total Funds 2022 £'000
INCOME FROM:						
Donations	4	86	145	-	231	237
Charitable activities	5	33,375	-	-	33,375	32,278
Investments	6	142	-	4	146	24
Other	7	1	-	-	1	29
TOTAL INCOME		33,604	145	4	33,753	32,568
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Raising funds	8	220	5	1	226	176
Charitable activities	9	33,714	130	-	33,844	31,019
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		33,934	135	1	34,070	31,195
Net losses on investments	15	(55)	-	(11)	(66)	(26)
Net (expenditure)/income for the year		(385)	10	(8)	(383)	1,347
Transfers between funds		53	(53)	-	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)						
Actuarial (loss)/gain on defined benefit pension scheme	22	(277)	-	-	(277)	4
Other gains	12	109	-	-	109	103
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(500)	(43)	(8)	(551)	1,454
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS						
Total funds brought forward		27,862	520	165	28,547	27,093
Net movement of funds in the year		(500)	(43)	(8)	(551)	1,454
Total funds carried forward	20	27,362	477	157	27,996	28,547

There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those listed above and the net (expenditure)/income for the year.

All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

See note 19 for comparative Statement of Financial Activities analysed by funds.

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	14	18,098	18,170
Investments	15	924	976
		<u>19,022</u>	<u>19,146</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	16	3,178	2,963
Cash at bank and in hand		9,340	9,917
		<u>12,518</u>	<u>12,880</u>
CREDITORS:			
Amounts falling due within one year	17	(2,520)	(2,598)
		<u>9,998</u>	<u>10,282</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>29,020</u>	<u>29,428</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
CREDITORS:			
Amounts falling due after more than one year	18	(712)	(881)
Provision for pension scheme liabilities	22	(312)	-
		<u>27,996</u>	<u>28,547</u>
NET ASSETS			
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Unrestricted funds:			
General		16,108	16,939
Revaluation reserve		6,845	6,951
Designated		4,409	3,972
		<u>27,362</u>	<u>27,862</u>
Restricted income funds		477	520
Endowment funds		157	165
		<u>27,996</u>	<u>28,547</u>
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	20,21	<u>27,996</u>	<u>28,547</u>

These financial statements on pages 27 to 55 of The Together Trust (registered number 301722) were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 10th November 2023. They were signed on its behalf by:



Giles Gaddum
Chair of Trustees



Anthony Farnworth
Honorary Treasurer

Cash flow statement

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Net movement in funds	(551)	1,454
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	802	731
Losses on investments	66	26
Income from investments	(21)	(9)
Profit on the sale of fixed assets	(1)	(29)
Interest receivable	(125)	(15)
Interest payable	53	60
Decrease in debtors	(215)	4,080
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(65)	(2,155)
Net movement of pension service cost	98	67
Net cash outflow from defined benefit scheme pension contributions	(63)	(63)
Interest rate swap liability gain	(109)	(103)
Pension scheme actuarial gain	277	(4)
Net cash flows from operating activities	146	4,040
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Interest received	125	15
Income from investments	21	9
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	1	32
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(730)	(612)
Proceeds from sale of investments	358	21
Purchase of investments	(387)	(701)
Net cash flows from investing activities	(612)	(1,236)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Interest paid	(53)	(60)
Repayments of borrowings	(58)	(71)
Net cash flows from financing activities	(111)	(131)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash in the year	(577)	2,673
Cash at the beginning of the year	9,917	7,244
Cash at the end of the year	9,340	9,917

Analysis of changes in net debt

	Note	At the beginning of the year £'000	Cash flows £'000	Fair value movements £'000	At the end of the year £'000
Cash		9,917	(577)	-	9,340
Bank loans	18	(808)	58	-	(750)
Interest rate swap	23	(131)	-	109	(22)
		8,978	(519)	109	8,568

Notes to the financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of listed investments and derivatives which are measured at market value.

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

The financial statements are prepared in Sterling, which is the functional currency of the Charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest one thousand sterling pounds.

Group financial statements

The Charity is exempt from the requirement to prepare consolidated financial statements by virtue that all subsidiary undertakings may be excluded from consolidation as they are not material and have not operated in the financial year. These financial statements therefore present information about the Charity as an individual undertaking rather than as a group.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have prepared budgets and projections which indicate that, taking account of the impact on cash levels and financial resources of the increase in the Charity's pay and reward offer to staff, the resources it devotes to recruitment, capital and funds expenditure and the risk of being able to secure annual fee increases for its services, the Charity is able to continue as a going concern and maintain sustainable cash reserves for the foreseeable future.

Therefore, the Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing these financial statements. The Trustees have considered a period in excess of twelve months from the date of the approval of these financial statements in making their assessment.

Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes, although in practice they may represent the funding of fixed assets.

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

The purpose of the development fund reserve is to earmark funds to provide for ongoing maintenance, repair and refurbishment of the Together Trust homes and schools, in compliance with standards set by inspecting bodies such as the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). The age and fabric of the establishments necessitate constant repairs, which have been highlighted by comprehensive surveys carried out by an appointed architect and reviewed annually. The programme for refurbishment for any new financial year is specified prior to the previous year end.

The Revaluation reserve arose when fixed assets were revalued, prior to the adoption of FRS102, at a value higher than their previous carrying value and the increase in value is accounted for within the revaluation reserve. It forms part of unrestricted funds.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used by the Charity for particular purposes as specified by the donor. The costs of administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The purpose of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Endowment funds are a form of restricted fund where the assets are required to be invested or retained for actual use rather than expended. An endowment fund where there is no power to convert the capital into income is known as a permanent endowment fund which must generally be held indefinitely.

Expendable endowment is an endowment fund where the Trustees have the power to convert the assets (i.e. land, buildings, investments or cash) into expendable income. The Charity holds permanent and expendable endowment funds. The permanent funds are not considered to be material.

Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met (generally by delivery of contracted services), it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from grants includes grants where entitlement to funding is subject to specific performance conditions. Performance conditions may be stipulated explicitly by the funder or may be implicit as per the Charity's funding proposal. Income is deferred when the funder has imposed conditions, which must be met before the Charity has unconditional entitlement or the funder has specified the funds can only be utilised in future accounting periods.

Donated goods and services are included at the lower of their value to Charity and their estimated market value. No amount is included for services donated by volunteers. The full value of leasehold peppercorn rent is not valued due to the prohibitive cost of doing so. Income from fundraising activities is included in donations.

Fees invoiced in advance of services provided are carried forward as deferred income until the service is delivered.

Expenditure

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

Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Expenditure on raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income and those incurred in generating fundraising income
- Charitable expenditure includes all expenditure associated with activities directly attributable to the service delivery of the Charity's charitable objectives, in respect of residential, respite, outreach, educational, fostering and social work services
- Support costs are costs of those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include central head office costs (for example finance, human resources and governance costs) and have been allocated to charitable activity costs on a basis consistent with income.

Operating lease agreements

Rentals applicable to operating leases, where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor, are charged against income on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Liabilities

Liabilities are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are recognised at their settlement amount.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Trustees

The Trustees have elected that the Charity apply a policy of non-remuneration for Trustees, excluding out of pocket expenses.

Tangible fixed assets

The transitional arrangements of FRS 102 were adopted on transition to FRS102 to freeze the tangible fixed assets valuation of freehold and leasehold properties as deemed cost, and hence tangible fixed assets are stated at deemed cost (being 2014 market value net of depreciation to the adoption of FRS 102) less depreciation and any provision for impairment. Costs of maintenance are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as they are incurred. Assets below a value of £2,500 are not capitalised.

Depreciation is provided on each tangible fixed asset, other than freehold land which is not depreciated, at rates calculated to writeoff the cost, less its estimated residual value, on a straight line basis over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Properties	- buildings	- 2% - 3% per annum
	- improvements	- 6% - 20% per annum
Leasehold property improvements		- over the life of lease
Motor vehicles		- 20% per annum
Ancillary equipment		- 20% per annum

Investment assets

Investments are included in the balance sheet at fair value as measured by middle market price values at the year end. The Trustees do not consider there to be any material difference in the valuation as measured by bid price. Movements in values during the year are included in the Statement of Financial Activities for any realised and unrealised gains and losses.

Employee benefits

For defined benefit schemes, the amounts charged to the Statement of Financial Activities are the current service costs and gains and losses on settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities. The interest cost and the expected return on assets are shown as a net amount of other finance gains or losses. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent currency and term to the scheme liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The resulting defined benefit asset or liability is presented separately after other net assets on the face of the balance sheet. The Trust recognises a plan surplus as a defined benefit plan asset only to the extent that it is able to recover the surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the plan.

For defined contribution schemes, the amount charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet as appropriate.

The Trust participates in the Teachers' Pension Scheme, which is a defined benefit scheme. The Charity is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme and therefore has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it was a defined contribution scheme.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Financial instruments

The Charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102, in full, to all of its financial instruments.

Recognition and measurement of financial instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Classification of financial instruments

Financial instruments are classified as liabilities and equity instruments according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the Company after deducting all of its liabilities.

Financial assets and liabilities at amortised cost

Trade and all other debtors (including accrued income) which are receivable within one year are initially measured at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost, being the transaction price less any amounts settled and any impairment losses.

A provision for impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the amounts due will not be collected according to the original terms of the contract. Impairment losses are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities for the excess of the carrying value of the trade debtor over the present value of the future cash flows discounted using the original effective interest rate. Subsequent reversals of an impairment loss that objectively relate to an event occurring after the impairment loss was recognised, are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Trade, and all other creditors (including accruals) payable within one year that do not constitute a financing transaction are initially measured at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost, being transaction price less any amounts settled.

Where the arrangement with a creditor constitutes a financing transaction, the creditor is initially measured at the present value of future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar instrument and subsequently measured at amortised cost, being transaction price less any amounts settled and the cumulative amortisation (using the effective interest method) of any difference between the amount at initial recognition and the maturity amount. The effective interest rate is the rate that discounts estimated future cash payments to the carrying amount of the financial liability.

Borrowings are initially recognised at the transaction price, including transaction costs (unless the arrangement constitutes, in effect, a financing transaction, in which case it is initially recognised at the present value of future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument) and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Interest expense is recognised on the basis of the effective interest method and is included in interest payable and other similar expenses.

Trade investments are equity investments over which the Company has no significant influence, joint control or control and are initially measured at transaction price. Transaction price includes transaction costs, except where trade investments are measured at fair value through profit or loss when transaction costs are expensed to profit or loss as incurred. Trade investments are measured at fair value through profit or loss, or cost less impairment if fair value cannot be measured reliably. The fair value of trade investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange is the quoted bid price.

Derecognition of financial assets and liabilities

A financial asset is derecognised only when the contractual rights to cash flows expire or are settled, or substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are transferred to another party, or if some (but not substantially all) risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

A financial liability (or part thereof) is derecognised when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Derivative financial instruments

The Charity uses derivative financial instruments to reduce exposure to interest rate movements. The Charity does not hold or issue derivative financial instruments for speculative purposes. Derivatives are initially recognised at fair value at the date a derivative contract is entered into and are subsequently remeasured to their fair value at each reporting date. The resulting gain or loss is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities immediately.

2. Company, charitable and legal status of the Trust

The Together Trust, a public benefit entity, is incorporated in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member. The company is a registered Charity and has no liability to corporation tax on its charitable activities. The registered office is given on page 1.

3. Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the Charity's accounting policies, which are described in note 1, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

In respect of the defined benefit pension scheme, the Charity has an obligation to pay pension benefits to certain employees. The cost of these benefits and the present value of the obligation depend on a number of factors including life expectancy, salary increases, asset valuations and the discount rate on corporate bonds. The Trustees estimate these factors in determining the net pension obligation in the balance sheet. The assumptions reflect historical experience and current trends as set out in note 22 **Error! Reference source not found.**

Other than the above, the Trustees do not consider there are any other critical judgements or sources of estimation uncertainty requiring disclosure.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

4. Analysis of income from donations

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Donations	231	237

5. Analysis of income from charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Social & Therapy Care Services	14,566	14,281
Educational services	16,712	15,570
Other services	2,097	2,427
	33,375	32,278

Government grants of £nil (2022 £38,000) are included within income from charitable activities (Social & Therapy Care Services) and relate to HMRC Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

6. Analysis of income from investments

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Investment income	21	9
Bank interest	125	15
	146	24

7. Analysis of other income

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Net gain on disposal of fixed assets	1	29
	1	29

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

8. Analysis of expenditure on raising funds

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Staff and related costs	151	125
Service provision costs	21	10
Service administration costs	19	6
Other service costs	35	35
	<u>226</u>	<u>176</u>

9. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Expenditure	Social & Therapy Care Services	Education Services	Other Services	Total
	2023 £'000	2023 £'000	2023 £'000	2023 £'000
Staff and related costs	11,913	10,498	1,530	23,941
Premises costs	735	1,164	22	1,921
Service provision costs	613	728	21	1,362
Service administration costs	260	441	84	785
Other service costs	379	725	51	1,155
Head Office support costs (note 10)	2,045	2,339	296	4,680
	<u>15,945</u>	<u>15,895</u>	<u>2,004</u>	<u>33,844</u>

Comparatives for the year ended 31 March 2022

Expenditure	Social & Therapy Care Services	Education Services	Other Services	Total
	2022 £'000	2022 £'000	2022 £'000	2022 £'000
Staff and related costs	10,410	9,807	1,671	21,888
Premises costs	584	944	20	1,548
Service provision costs	627	649	9	1,285
Service administration costs	269	575	97	941
Other service costs	479	647	50	1,176
Head Office support costs (note 10)	1,841	2,026	314	4,181
	<u>14,210</u>	<u>14,648</u>	<u>2,161</u>	<u>31,019</u>

Expenditure

Total expenditure comprises direct costs incurred in the delivery of Trust services and head office support costs which are apportioned between services. Direct costs include all direct staff, premises and service provision in the day-to-day delivery of the service. It also includes other costs related to the provision of the service at each location in respect of insurance, depreciation, and interest.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

10. Analysis of Head Office support costs

	Social Care Services	Education Services	Other Services	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2023
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Staff & related costs	1,155	1,321	167	2,643
Premises costs	114	130	16	260
Office administration costs	450	515	65	1,030
Governance costs	111	127	16	254
Other costs	215	246	32	493
	2,045	2,339	296	4,680

Comparatives for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Social Care Services	Education Services	Other Services	Total
	2022	2022	2022	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Staff & related costs	1,042	1,148	178	2,368
Premises costs	87	97	15	199
Office administration costs	358	393	61	812
Governance costs	119	130	20	269
Other costs	235	258	40	533
	1,841	2,026	314	4,181

Head Office support costs allocation

There is a head office function, which provides all the support services of the Trust's activities. These services include Communications and Marketing, Business Development, Finance, Human Resources & Organisational Development, IT services and Facilities Management and the services of the Executive Directors. Cost recovery apportionment is based on the level of income for each of the services.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

11. Net income for the year

Net (expense)/income for the year is stated after charging:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Auditor's remuneration		
- audit	40	27
- other audit services	3	3
- non-audit services	13	-
Interest paid on bank loan	36	20
Interest paid on interest rate swap contracts	17	40
Depreciation of owned assets	802	731
Rental under operating leases	130	35
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

These costs include central head office costs where applicable and have been allocated to activity costs on a basis consistent with income.

12. Other gains

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Gains on interest rate swap contract	109	103
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

13. Analysis of staff costs and the cost of key management personnel

The average number of staff employed during the financial year, excluding relief and supply staff, amounted to:

	2023 Headcount No.	2022 Headcount No.
Social & Therapy Care Services staff	370	369
Education services staff	348	365
Other services staff	12	13
Other support staff	79	74
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	809	821

The aggregate staff employment costs were:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Wages and salaries	19,720	18,325
Social security costs	1,898	1,660
Pension	1,658	1,503
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	23,276	21,488

During the year the Trust incurred redundancy costs of £22,000 (2022 £7,000).

Although the Trust maintains a pool of bank relief and supply staff to cover unforeseen absences, where this is insufficient to meet operational need, agency staff are engaged in the short term. In addition to the above staff costs, agency costs for the year were £2,141,000 (2022 £1,495,000).

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

In addition to the above staff costs, foster carer fees amounted to £1,076,000 (2022 £1,233,000).

Employee emoluments over £60,000

The number of employees whose emoluments, excluding pension contributions and employer's national insurance contributions, but including benefits in kind, were in excess of £60,000 was:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
£60,001 to £70,000	5	4
£80,001 to £90,000	-	1
£90,001 to £100,000	1	1
£100,001 to £110,000	-	1
£110,001 to £120,000	1	1
£120,001 to £130,000	1	-

The key management personnel are detailed on page 3. The total remuneration (including pension contributions and employers' national insurance contributions) of the key management personnel of the Trust for the year totalled £585,000 (2022 £504,000).

Trustees' remuneration

None of the Trustees receive any remuneration for their services to the Trust. During the year, no Trustees received reimbursement of expenses (2022 nil).

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Land and Buildings	Property Improvement	Motor Vehicles	Ancillary Equipment	Total
COST	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
At 1 April 2022	21,553	1,269	1,047	293	24,162
Additions	658	-	67	5	730
Disposals	-	-	(31)	-	(31)
Transfers	(3)	-	-	3	-
At 31 March 2023	22,208	1,269	1,083	301	24,861
DEPRECIATION					
At 1 April 2022	3,784	1,265	725	218	5,992
Charge for the year	646	1	128	27	802
On disposals	-	-	(31)	-	(31)
At 31 March 2023	4,430	1,266	822	245	6,763
NET BOOK VALUE					
At 31 March 2023	17,778	3	261	56	18,098
At 31 March 2022	17,769	4	322	75	18,170

The freehold and leasehold properties were professionally valued on 31 March 2014 and this became the deemed cost on transition to the accounting standard FRS 102.

Included within land and buildings above is a long leasehold property with a net book value of £4,589,000 (2022 £4,706,000). The Charity pays a peppercorn rent for the related land.

Certain property is pledged as security on the Charity's bank loan. The net book value of these properties is £4,589,000 (2022 £4,706,000).

The comparable amounts for fixed assets included above at a valuation determined according to the historical cost accounting rules are:

	Land and Buildings
	£'000
Cost	14,983
Accumulated Depreciation	4,054
Net book value at 31 March 2023	10,929
Net book value at 31 March 2022	10,812

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

14. Tangible Fixed assets (continued)

List of charitable properties:

Property	Description
Corbar Road	A 5 bedded residential service accommodating children and young people
Crosskeys	A 2 bedded residential service accommodating children and young people
Haines House	A 5 bedded residential service
Schools Hill	The main administrative centre for the Charity, which accommodates 60 staff. The campus also is home to the following Together Trust services: Inscape House School – a school for young people aged 5 – 19 years with autism. The school can accommodate up to 105 young people Ashcroft School – special education for young people with complex emotional difficulties aged 8 – 18 years. The school can accommodate up to 60 pupils
Ashcroft College	Specialist support and teaching in four vocational areas (including construction) to students aged 14 to 16 who may have been excluded or close to being excluded from mainstream education
Bridge College	Property held on long lease as a specialist further education college for students up to 25 years old with learning difficulties, disabilities and complex needs, communication disorders and autism
Lerryn	A 6 bedded residential service accommodating children and young people
Meridian	A 5 bedded short break service for young people with autism
Newbridge	A specialist day service provision
Norvent	A specialist therapeutic residential provision for two young people
Pearce Lodge	A 5 bedded unit for disabled young people aged 16 to adulthood
Pendlebury House	A shared care service for up to 6 young people with autism and behavioural needs
Pocket Nook	A 4 bedded service for children and young people with autism and other special requirements
Swann Lane	A 4 bedded service for children and young people
Ventnor Road	A 3 bedded service for children and young people
Woodlands	A 5 bedded short break service for disabled young people

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

15. Investments

Listed investments

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
UK listed investments	924	976

Movement in market value

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
At start of year	976	302
Additions	387	701
Disposal proceeds	(358)	(21)
Net investment losses	(66)	(26)
Movement in cash held by investment managers	(15)	20
At end of year	924	976
Market value is analysed between:		
Investments	907	944
Cash held by investment managers	17	32
	924	976

Unlisted investments

The company's investments at the balance sheet date in the share capital of companies include the following:

- Subsidiary:**
- Together (Trading) Limited
Country of incorporation: England and Wales
Date of Incorporation: 3 March 2005
Nature of business: Dormant

Number of £1 ordinary shares **1 (100% holding)**
 - BGWS (Trading) Limited
Country of incorporation: England and Wales
Date of Incorporation: 1 September 2005
Nature of business: Dormant

Number of £1 ordinary shares **1 (100% holding)**
 - Boys and Girls Welfare Society Limited
Country of incorporation: England and Wales
Date of incorporation: 6 May 2005
Nature of business: Dormant

Limited by guarantee

None of these companies has traded during the year (2022 dormant) and they are not consolidated in the financial statements of The Together Trust on the grounds of immateriality.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

16. Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade debtors	2,225	2,215
Prepayments and accrued income	949	747
Other debtors	4	1
	<u>3,178</u>	<u>2,963</u>

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Bank loans	60	58
Trade creditors	1,105	967
Accruals	398	471
Deferred income	100	209
Taxation and social security	447	407
Other creditors	410	486
	<u>2,520</u>	<u>2,598</u>

Deferred income movement

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Balance at start of year	209	2,681
Amount released in the year	(209)	(2,681)
Amount deferred in the year	100	209
	<u>100</u>	<u>209</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>100</u>	<u>209</u>

Deferred income comprises income received or invoiced in advance of service delivery.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Bank loans	690	750
Financial derivatives (see note 23)	22	131
	<u>712</u>	<u>881</u>

The bank loan is repayable as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Payable within one year	60	58
Payable between 1 and 2 years	61	60
Payable between 2 to 5 years	197	191
Payable after 5 years	432	499
	<u>750</u>	<u>808</u>

The bank loan matures on 31 December 2033 and is secured on certain property (see note 14) with a debenture dated 26 November 2021.

In prior years interest was payable at a variable rate of LIBOR plus 2.25% on the principal amount during the year. During the prior year the prevailing interest rate transitioned to UK base rate following the discontinuance of LIBOR. Interest payable in the year was £36,000 (2022 £20,000).

The Trust is a party to an interest rate swap contract in relation to a financial derivative to manage its exposure to the risk of interest rate variation. Under this swap contract, the Charity has agreed to exchange the difference between fixed and floating rate interest amounts. This allows the Charity to mitigate the risk of changing interest rates and cash flows on the variable rate debt held. See note 23 for further details.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

19. Comparative statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £'000	Restricted Funds 2022 £'000	Endowment Funds 2022 £'000	Total Funds 2022 £'000	Total Funds 2021 £'000
INCOME FROM:						
Donations	4	107	130	-	237	194
Charitable activities	5	32,240	38	-	32,278	30,455
Investments	6	18	-	6	24	21
Other	7	29	-	-	29	25
TOTAL INCOME		32,394	168	6	32,568	30,695
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Raising funds	8	169	2	5	176	198
Charitable activities	9	30,811	208	-	31,019	29,101
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		30,980	210	5	31,195	29,299
Net (losses)/gains on investments	15	(50)	-	24	(26)	43
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		1,364	(42)	25	1,347	1,439
Transfers between funds		35	(35)	-	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	22	4	-	-	4	22
Other gains	12	103	-	-	103	57
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		1,506	(77)	25	1,454	1,518
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS						
Total funds brought forward		26,356	597	140	27,093	25,575
Net movement of funds in the year		1,506	(77)	25	1,454	1,518
Total funds carried forward	20	27,862	520	165	28,547	27,093

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

20. Movement on funds

	1 April 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains & (losses) £'000	Transfers £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Unrestricted						
General	16,939	33,604	(33,705)	(223)	(507)	16,108
Revaluation reserve	6,951	-	-	-	(106)	6,845
Designated	3,972	-	(229)	-	666	4,409
Unrestricted funds	27,862	33,604	(33,934)	(223)	53	27,362
Restricted funds	520	145	(135)	-	(53)	477
Endowment funds	165	4	(1)	(11)	-	157
	28,547	33,753	(34,070)	(234)	-	27,996

Year ended 31 March 2022 comparatives

	1 April 2021 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains & (losses) £'000	Transfers £'000	31 March 2022 £'000
Unrestricted						
General	15,295	32,394	(30,672)	57	(135)	16,939
Revaluation reserve	7,057	-	-	-	(106)	6,951
Designated	4,004	-	(308)	-	276	3,972
Unrestricted funds	26,356	32,394	(30,980)	57	35	27,862
Restricted funds	597	168	(210)	-	(35)	520
Endowment funds	140	6	(5)	24	-	165
	27,093	32,568	(31,195)	81	-	28,547

Unrestricted Designated Funds

These funds comprise:

- a development fund which was established to ring-fence funds for the maintenance of the Charity's homes and schools in compliance with standards set for the services by inspecting bodies. This expenditure is expected to be incurred on an ongoing basis.
- service re-development funds established to ring-fence funds for the delivery of the Trust's service innovation plans, property review and digital investment. The timing of this expenditure being incurred is over a number of years.
- a number of other voluntary income funds which have been agreed on the basis that 'unspent' unrestricted donations which have been generated during the year will be spent specifically and directly on the children and young people that the Trust supports. The Together Trust operates a 'wish list' process whereby the children and young people submit their 'wishes' and as far as the fund will allow these are considered and met during the year. This expenditure is expected to be incurred on an ongoing basis.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

20. Movements on funds (continued)

Restricted Funds					31 March
	1 April	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	2023
	2022	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	£'000				
1. Inscape grants	58	-	-	(58)	-
2. Ashcroft	63	1	(8)	-	56
3. Bridge Transitional fund	96	-	-	-	96
4. Youth Music Fuse fund	12	-	(2)	-	10
5. 150 th anniversary fund	23	10	(7)	(20)	6
6. Miscellaneous	268	134	(118)	25	309
	520	145	(135)	(53)	477

2022 comparatives

	1 April	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	31 March
	2021	£'000	£'000	£'000	2022
	£'000				£'000
1. Inscape grants	58	-	-	-	58
2. Ashcroft	63	-	-	-	63
3. Bridge Transitional fund	96	-	-	-	96
4. Youth Music Fuse fund	22	7	(17)	-	12
5. 150 th anniversary fund	20	42	(39)	-	23
6. Miscellaneous	338	119	(154)	(35)	268
	597	168	(210)	(35)	520

- Inscape grants** – Funds from grants for specific purposes for Inscape.
- Ashcroft** – Funds from Corporate supporters allocated to specific projects for Ashcroft School
- Bridge Transitional fund** - this is a fund for Bridge College, being grant monies from Central Government to enable Colleges to develop alternative income streams.
- Youth Music Fuse fund** – this is a fund for a project to support young people to enjoy and learn music across all Together Trust education settings
- 150th Anniversary fund** – a National Lottery funded project to celebrate the heritage and archive of the Trust's 150 years of providing aid, assistance and care to children and young people
- Miscellaneous** – This represents a number of individual service funds, generally established from donations restricted for use by a particular service.

Transfers from restricted to unrestricted funds represents, where permitted, the transfer of funds which remain unspent following completion of the specific projects to which they related.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

20 Movements on funds (continued)

Endowment Funds

	1 April 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains & (losses) £'000	Transfers £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Jubilee Trust Fund	106	3	(1)	(7)	-	101
Other funds	59	1	-	(4)	-	56
	165	4	(1)	(11)	-	157

2022 comparatives

	1 April 2021 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains & (losses) £'000	Transfers £'000	31 March 2022 £'000
Jubilee Trust Fund	79	5	(5)	27	-	106
Other funds	61	1	-	(3)	-	59
	140	6	(5)	24	-	165

Jubilee Trust Fund

This fund forms part of the Charity's investment portfolio and, as a permanent endowment fund, the restrictions on capital and use of income must be followed and spent in accordance with the Jubilee Trust Fund objects. The Together Trust is the sole trustee of the Jubilee Trust Fund and the two charities are linked with The Together Trust being the reporting Charity for both.

Other Funds

These are expendable endowment funds held by the Charity to be used in accordance with the individual fund objects. These funds are as follows:

- Hoyer Trust Fund
- Thomas Hunt Trust Fund
- William Melland Trust Fund
- Ragged & Industrial Trust Fund
- Ann Street Wardle Trust Fund
- Harold Grimshaw Trust Fund

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

21. Analysis of assets and liabilities between funds

	Unrestricted 2023 £'000	Restricted 2023 £'000	Endowment 2023 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Tangible fixed assets	18,098	-	-	18,098
Investments	767	-	157	924
Debtors	3,178	-	-	3,178
Cash	8,863	477	-	9,340
Current liabilities	(2,520)	-	-	(2,520)
Long term liabilities	(1,024)	-	-	(1,024)
Total net assets	27,362	477	157	27,996

2022 Comparatives

	Unrestricted 2022 £'000	Restricted 2022 £'000	Endowment 2022 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Tangible fixed assets	18,170	-	-	18,170
Investments	811	-	165	976
Debtors	2,963	-	-	2,963
Cash	9,397	520	-	9,917
Current liabilities	(2,598)	-	-	(2,598)
Long term liabilities	(881)	-	-	(881)
Total net assets	27,862	520	165	28,547

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

22. Pensions

Together Trust Final Salary Scheme

The Charity operates a defined benefit scheme, the Together Trust final salary scheme. The provider of the scheme is The Pensions Trust. The Scheme was closed to new entrants when it became 'paid up' with effect from 31 March 2000.

This scheme is a separate Trustee administered fund holding the pension scheme assets to meet long-term pension liabilities. An actuarial valuation was carried out as at 30 September 2021 by a qualified actuary, independent of the scheme's sponsoring employer. Scheme liabilities have been based on liability information as at 30 September 2021 updated, by a qualified actuary independent of the Scheme's sponsoring employer, to 31 March 2023. The major assumptions used by the actuary are shown below.

The most recent completed actuarial valuation showed a deficit of £687,000 as at 30 September 2021. The Together Trust has agreed with the scheme's Trustee that it would aim to eliminate the deficit over a period of 5 years and 6 months by the payment of annual contributions of £148,000 (payable monthly) in respect of the deficit with payments beginning from 1 April 2023 and these payments are being made.

In addition, and in accordance with the actuarial valuation, the Charity has agreed with the Scheme Trustee that it will pay £63,000 per annum up to 31 March 2023 and £69,000 per annum thereafter, increasing by 3% per annum each 1 April, to meet expenses of the Scheme and levies to the Pension Protection Fund.

Assumptions

The key assumptions used in the actuarial valuation were:

	Valuation at	
	2023	2022
	% per annum	% per annum
Discount rate	4.89	2.78
Inflation (RPI)	3.21	3.62
Inflation (CPI)	2.86	3.22
Allowance for revaluation of deferred pensions of RPI or 5% p.a. if less	3.21	3.62
Allowance for pension in payment increases of CPI or 5% pa if less	2.79	3.09
Allowance for pension in payment increases of CPI or 3% pa if less	2.25	2.41
	% of maximum allowance	
	2023	2022
Allowance for commutation of pension for cash at retirement	75	75

The mortality assumptions adopted imply the following life expectancies on retirement:

	Life expectancy at age 65 (years)	
	2023	2022
Retiring today:		
Males	21.5	21.7
Females	23.9	24.1
Retiring in 20 years:		
Males	23.1	23.3
Females	25.4	25.6

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

22. Pensions (continued)

The amount included in the balance sheet arising from the Trust's obligations in respect of the defined benefit scheme is as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fair value of scheme assets	6,713	9,294
Present value of defined benefit obligations	(7,025)	(8,951)
(Deficit)/surplus in plan	(312)	343
Unrecognised surplus	-	(343)
Net liability recognised in the balance sheet	(312)	-

The Trust recognises a plan surplus as a defined benefit plan asset only to the extent that it is able to recover the surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the plan.

Movements in the fair value of scheme assets were as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fair value of scheme assets at start of year	9,294	9,390
Interest income	254	189
Return on assets excluding interest income	(2,499)	54
Expenses	(98)	(69)
Contributions paid by the employer	63	63
Benefits paid and expenses	(301)	(333)
Fair value of scheme assets at end of year	6,713	9,294

The actual return of the plan assets over the reporting period was a loss of £2,245,000 (2022 a gain of £243,000).

Analysis of assets

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Asset Category		
Bonds	3,410	5,840
Property	840	1,075
Other	2,463	2,379
Total assets	6,713	9,294

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

22. Pensions (continued)

Movements in the present value of defined benefit obligations were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Defined benefit obligation at start of year	8,951	9,311
Interest expense	245	187
Experience losses on liabilities	478	303
Gain on change of assumptions	(2,348)	(517)
Benefits paid	<u>(301)</u>	<u>(333)</u>
Defined benefit obligation at end of year	<u>7,025</u>	<u>8,951</u>

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in respect of the defined benefit scheme are as follows:

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Expenses	(98)	(69)
Interest income on assets	254	189
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	(245)	(187)
Interest effect of asset ceiling	(9)	(2)
Net cost recognised within net expenditure for the year	<u>(98)</u>	<u>(69)</u>
Return on scheme assets (excluding amounts included in net interest cost) – (loss)/gain	(2,499)	54
Experience gains and losses arising on the scheme liabilities – loss	(478)	(303)
Effects of changes in the demographic and financial assumptions underlying the present value of the scheme liabilities – gain	2,348	517
Effects of changes in the amount of surplus that is not recoverable (excluding amounts included in net interest cost) – gain/(loss)	352	(262)
Total actuarial (losses)/gains	<u>(277)</u>	<u>6</u>
Total cost relating to defined benefit scheme recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities	<u>(375)</u>	<u>(63)</u>

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

22. Pensions (continued)

The Charity has participated in two (2022: two) pension schemes for its staff and these are described below.

(i) Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Trust participates in the Teachers' Pension Scheme ("TPS").

The TPS provides pensions to teachers who have worked in schools and other educational establishments in England and Wales. The Scheme is an unfunded statutory public service pension scheme with the benefits underwritten by the Government. The Scheme is financed by payments from the employer and from those current employees who are members of the Scheme who pay contributions at different rates which depend on their salaries.

Every four years, the Government Actuary's Department carries out a valuation of all unfunded public service pension schemes, including the Teachers' Pension Scheme. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2016 in accordance with The Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 (as amended).

The valuation report was published by the Government's Actuary's Department on 5 March 2019. The key results of the valuation and the subsequent consultation were that employer contribution rates were set at 23.68% with effect from 1 September 2019.

A full copy of the valuation report and supporting documents can be found on the Teachers' Pension Scheme website www.teacherspensions.co.uk.

The 2020 valuation result is expected to be implemented from 1 April 2024.

The TPS is a multi-employer pension scheme. The Trust is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme. Accordingly, the Trust has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The Trust has set out above the information available on the scheme and the implications for the Trust in terms of the anticipated contribution rates.

The pension costs paid to the TPS in the year amounted to £748,000 (2022: £679,000) and have been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as an expense with £70,000 (2022: £57,000) outstanding at the balance sheet date. The liability and expense have been allocated in full to unrestricted funds. The allocation of the expense to activities is explained in note 9.

(ii) Group Personal Pension Plan

The Charity also provides eligible staff the opportunity to contribute to a personal pension through a Group Personal Pension Plan, which is a defined contribution scheme. It is made available to all staff excluding those eligible for the Teachers' Pension Scheme. Provision of the scheme is made through pension provider Standard Life.

In the year ended 31 March 2023 the pension contributions payable in respect of staff participating in the Group Personal Pension plan was £906,000 (2022: £814,000) with £79,000 (2022: £68,000) outstanding at the balance sheet date.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

23. Derivative financial instruments

The following table details the notional principal amounts and remaining terms of interest rate swap contracts outstanding as at the reporting date:

Outstanding contracts - receive floating pay fixed contracts

	Average contract fixed interest rate		Notional Principal value		Fair value	
	2023 %	2022 %	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
5 years +	4.21	4.21	896	952	22	131

The Trust is party to an interest rate swap contract in relation to a financial derivative to manage its exposure to the risk of interest rate variation. The interest rate swap contract expires on 31 March 2031.

The fair value of the derivative is calculated by discounting the future cash flows to the maturity date of 31 March 2031. The product gives the Trust increased certainty over future costs and cash flows, and the liability should be considered within the context of the length of the loan period and interest rates existing when the loan agreement was made in December 2010.

The interest rate swap settles on a quarterly basis. In prior years, the floating rate on the interest rate swap was three months' LIBOR. As a result of the discontinuance of LIBOR, from 31 December 2021, the floating rate on the interest rate swap transitioned from LIBOR to UK Base Rate. The Trust settles the difference between the fixed and floating interest rate on a net basis.

Gains of £109,000 (2022: £103,000) in respect of the interest rate swap contract have been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

24. Related party transactions

No Trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the Charity during the year (2022 £nil). There were no other related party transactions during the current or prior years that require disclosure.

25. Financial commitments

Capital commitments

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Contracts for capital expenditure not provided for	<u>-</u>	<u>82</u>

Operating lease commitments

The total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases were:

	Land & Buildings		Other	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
- due within one year	-	4	17	15
- due between one and five years	-	-	17	16
- due after five years	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>31</u>

26. Contingent Liabilities

The Charity has been informed by The Pensions Trust that some benefit changes in regard to the final salary-based pension scheme, which closed to new members in 2000, may not have been in accordance with the scheme rules. The Pensions Trust are seeking Court direction in relation to this, the outcome of which is not expected to be known until early 2025. As outcome of the case is awaited, at present, no obligation of a liability has arisen as a result of the past benefit changes and therefore no amounts are provided for. If the Court directs these changes were made in a way not permitted by the scheme rules, then this would give rise to additional pension liabilities for the Charity in the future, which the Scheme's Actuary has estimated to be in the region of £6.1m. This figure is estimated on a non-accounting basis, using actuarial assumptions derived using the Trustee's Technical Provisions basis as at 30 September 2021, where this relates to service prior to the date of change and has been calculated from the preliminary results of the actuarial valuation as at 30 September 2021 allowing for market conditions at that date. It is not possible to determine the financial implications for the Charity at this stage, therefore the above details are disclosed as a contingent liability in order to provide stakeholders with information about the potential impact of this matter.

27. Ultimate controlling party

The Together Trust is the ultimate controlling party and is under the control of its Members. Any person who is appointed as a Trustee will automatically, by virtue of that appointment, become a Member. No person other than a Trustee may be admitted as a Member. The Trustees, as Charity Trustees, have control of the Charity and there is no one individual controlling party.



The Together Trust

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