

A photograph of three people in a garden. A man in a grey hoodie and sunglasses sits on the left. A woman in a red sweater sits on the right. A man in a grey hoodie stands behind her, leaning on the chair. They are all smiling. The background is a lush green garden with trees and a blue sky.

United Response Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23

Charity number: 265249
Company registration
number: 1133776

The logo consists of a series of colored dots in a curved line above the text.

**United
Response**
support that changes with you

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About United Response

United Response is a pan-disability charity. We work with communities across England and Wales to provide care, support, housing, education and employment services.

Our **vision** is a society where everyone has equal access to the same rights and opportunities.

Our **mission** is to ensure that individuals with learning disabilities, mental or physical support needs have the opportunity to live their lives to the full.

Our **values** guide the way we work. We are *Creative, Responsive, Strong, Honest and United*.

Charitable objectives

United Response was founded in 1973 with just one service. We now operate in over 420 locations across England and Wales. We were established to support people with learning disabilities or physical disabilities, autistic people, and those with mental health needs to live the life they choose in their community.

Beneficiaries

We support young people from the age of 16 and adults up to the end of their life. We work alongside the people we support and their families, carers, advocates and the communities they live in.

We have particular expertise in working with people with complex needs, including those with profound learning disabilities. Many of the people we work with have complex behaviour support needs. We support them to live fulfilled lives as part of their community using active support and positive behaviour support techniques.

Our mental health services support people with a wide range of mental health needs, including a growing number of people with learning disabilities, working in partnership with clinical partners. Our emphasis is on wellness and recovery and where possible early intervention to help prevent more severe problems from occurring.

Through our work, we support people to exercise choice and control. We work alongside them so they can achieve the outcomes they want and meaningfully contribute to their communities. We have a strong track record of supporting people to build their independence, whether young disabled people transitioning into adult services or adults moving out of hospital settings. We are person-centred in our approach, working around the routines and activities of each person so they can be active citizens.

Wider disability communities and the health and social care sector benefit from our campaigning and influencing work.



Keeping people safe

Keeping people safe, well and protected from abuse is at the heart of what we do. To achieve this, we work with our partners, such as local safeguarding boards, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Ofsted. We have an established Safeguarding Forum with an independent Chair with extensive professional experience in safeguarding policy and practice.

We train and support our staff to follow our safeguarding and whistleblowing policies and procedures, implementing various control measures and processes such as risk assessment, person-centred planning and positive behaviour support planning. We also provide staff with detailed guidance on the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty (DOLS) legislation. Staff attend regular training and receive communication updates on safeguarding practices in our internal briefings. We encourage and welcome the involvement of the families and friends of the people we support. This acts as a safeguarding measure and an essential aspect of the quality of life of the people we support.

Our plan: Shaped by People

We launched Shaped by People in 2020 with eight strategic intentions where we said that we would:

1. Offer excellent person-centred support, enabling people we support to live as active members of their local communities
2. Promote wellbeing at work and empower colleagues in a more participatory, less hierarchical organisation
3. Operate in a financially sustainable manner making a virtue of our not-for-profit status
4. Speak out with people we support and families, to ensure the voice of disabled people is heard
5. Harness the power of digital working to deliver efficiency and more enjoyable ways of working
6. Invest in diversification to enable people we support to achieve wider outcomes and to broaden our range of revenue sources
7. Develop a recognised brand for our work. Proud of our achievements, confident that we learn from both our successes and our failings
8. Collaborate with others to deliver our aims

So that we can say: *We offer networks of support rooted in local communities backed up by the resources of a national organisation.*

This report shows how we have worked towards achieving these aims.

Trustee's report

Introduction by Malcolm McCaig, Chair of the Board of Trustees

This year has been one of delivering outstanding service to enable the people we support to live their lives to the full, whilst faced with challenges beyond our expectations. The UK witnessed one of the most politically and economically turbulent years. The cost of living soared, and the Russia-Ukraine war disrupted global supply chains whilst the country still recovered from the impact of the pandemic.

The funding deficit in adult social care has placed providers under considerable strain for several years. Still, in the current economic climate, the sector is faced with maintaining financial sustainability. The Sector Pulse Check report from charity Hft and membership body Care England highlighted that 42% of providers had no option but to close parts of their organisation or hand back care contracts. We are also amid a recruitment dilemma – with Skills for Care's annual workforce data highlighting that social care vacancies rose by 52%.

We are committed to shaping a sustainable future for United Response. But to achieve this, we have had to make some difficult decisions. Sadly, we are not alone in this situation. Many providers find that local authority rates do not meet rising inflation, soaring energy prices and the cost of paying staff a fair and decent wage. We and many others have had to draw on limited reserves to meet these costs. This can only ever be a short-term fix.

Towards the end of this financial year, we began to hand back services where local authority fees did not meet the total cost of delivering good quality care and support that we aspire to deliver. This has meant saying goodbye to people we support and colleagues, some of who we have been connected with for a very long time.

Even against this challenging backdrop, we have made significant achievements and great strides in progressing with our plan, Shaped By People. We have drawn on our charitable reserves to invest in the future. Work has started to adopt new digital methods of working. This will improve our productivity on day-to-day activities and free up our colleagues to spend more time on creativity, innovation and delivering great support.

Our dedication to maintaining the quality of our support was evidenced in our CQC ratings which saw 94.5% of our CQC-registered services rated 'Good'. These ratings are a testament to our frontline staff's commitment to providing safe, effective, caring and responsive support.

With some fantastic results, we have stepped up our commitment to campaign for meaningful change. We highlighted the increasing levels of disability hate crime, which had more than doubled from when we first started gathering data from police forces nationwide in 2017. We jointly produced the 'Say No to Disability Hate Crime' report with Leonard Cheshire Disability, calling for the national curriculum to directly address ableism, funding for Disability Liaison Police Officers and a cross-government approach to tackling disability hate crime.



This year also saw us launch the My Vote My Voice campaign, working in partnership with Mencap, Dimensions and Ambitious About Autism, with grant funding from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust. Our goal is to make voting accessible to all and to increase voter turnout amongst people with learning disability and autistic people at the next general election.

We have continued our strategic development to diversify our footprint into areas such as housing, education, skills development and employability, all connected to the people we support. As these areas develop, our resilience as a charity will increase.


After 44 years as our President, Sir Martyn Lewis stepped down, having been a strong advocate for our cause. During his tenure, Martyn has championed all aspects of our work, lending his interviewing skills at various national and local events, parliamentary receptions and Christmas carol services. He also lent his support to the launch of our flagship accessible news magazine, Easy News, and accessible campaigning work. I want to thank Martyn for his commitment to United Response formally and wish him well as he moves on to new ventures.

A number of my fellow Trustees have also moved on after several dedicated years of service. On behalf of the board, best wishes for the future to Helen England, retiring Vice-chair, and Trustees Paul Mariner and Katherine Rake.

We warmly welcome Nikki Pawsey to the Board whose fundraising expertise will support our growth ambitions in that area, Vicky Whelan, who brings experience of healthcare and business transformation, and Lisa Odendaal, who steps up from her co-opted position on the Audit and Risk Committee.

Our directors' team has also seen some departures. Thanks to Andy Ward, Director of Finance and Joe Anichebe, Interim Director of Finance, both of whom had substantial roles in navigating the organisation through complex financial waters. Also, to Mark Ospedale, our Corporate Services Director, for his years of service. Joining the Executive leadership team are Pete Thomas as Finance Director, Jenny Tremewan as Head of Human Resources and Jack Sheppard as Head of IT. We welcome them to their new roles.

I am pleased to thank every staff member at United Response for another year of sustained hard work, creativity and dedication in what continues to be a complex social care landscape. As we enter our 50th anniversary, we will capture incredible stories of the people who make United Response what it is and highlight how much life has improved for those who draw on social care support. The following 50 years could tell a truly incredible story, as we continue to be dedicated to the people we support, our staff and our communities. Collectively, we will work to fulfil our purpose.



Malcolm McCaig
Chair

Our year at a glance

During 2022/23 we

- Supported around 2,300 people
- Employed over 3,000 dedicated people
- Were contracted by 80 local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups.
- Delivered services worth £99.8M
- Raised £0.5M in voluntary income

Our regulators told us

- 94.5% of CQC rated services are Good.
- 100% of our education services are Good
- 100% of CIW services fully compliant in all areas

People we support and families told us

- 95% feel safe when with their support staff
- 96% say their support workers listen and talk to them
- 88% say they like where they live
- 93% of families rate the quality of our support as good or excellent
- 81% of families think that our staff are caring and have the right values

Our reach

- We have had 8% more unique visits to our website than 2021/22.
- Our website resources were downloaded 23% more times than 2021/22.
- 134% more people enquired about support than 2021/22.
- Our social media following has grown 2% from 2021/22.
- People engaged with our social media content 150% more than 2021/22.

Our services

- 55 registered care services
- 25 registered care homes
- 30 supported living services
- 1 Shared Lives service
- 5 supported employment services
- 1 further education college
- 12 skills, learning and wellbeing hubs
- 2 farms
- 4 allotments
- 1 online shop
- 1 donation station

What we've achieved

Networks of support rooted in local communities

Across England and Wales, **we are rooted in local communities offering networks of support** for people who have a learning disability, are autistic or have mental health conditions. We do this so they can say:

- I am connected
- I have relationships
- I have choice
- I have strengths
- I am respected

But the adult social care sector has faced unprecedented challenges over 2022 – 2023 due to strained local authority budgets post-pandemic and the ongoing workforce crisis. This has put considerable financial pressure on providers meaning we, and many others, have had to make difficult decisions to secure long-term financial stability. Despite great promises of social care reform, we have seen little evidence of this.

Responsive and dedicated support

Despite our challenges, we have shown resilience as an organisation, recovering and rebuilding after the pandemic. Our CQC ratings remain high, with 94.5% of services rated as “Good” against a sector average of 86.4%, highlighting how we continue improving the quality of support we provide. This is a testament to the creative and dedicated support of our workforce.

At the beginning of 2023, we commissioned an independent review of our response to Covid to find out what worked and what didn't. One of the recurring themes in the study is the hard work on everyone's part to save lives. It highlighted how we reacted quickly, always taking a person-centred approach to protecting people. The report also suggests how we could do things differently, from sharing learning to strengthening the data we record.

We will realise this through Nourish, a digital care records management system that will change how we record and work with information — ultimately ensuring that we continue to be responsive and adaptive to the needs of the people we support. This will help us achieve our strategic intention to **embrace and use technology across all areas of our organisation**.

Spaces for community connections

We work with communities, not just in them, because we know communities thrive when they are united. We see this play out through our green projects and community hubs, where grant funding and legacy donations have enabled us to support the wellbeing of the people who draw on our care and support as



well as whole communities. From Blackpool to Bristol, our community allotments draw support from local businesses and individuals eager to contribute to their development and help us realise our strategic intent to deepen community connections.

In Cwmbran South Wales, we've been transforming the local area and a piece of derelict land used for fly-tipping into a thriving community garden. The project aims to enable the people that draw on our support to be at the heart of the community and change the dynamics of power so they are giving consent to others. Alan Slade, local Cwmbran councillor told us:

"Helping deliver this project is a real labour of love for me. It will absolutely transform this neglected piece of land into a valuable community asset. I hope that we can rally lots of community support to develop a green space that we can all be proud of."



In Bristol, our Potters Den allotment has also been shifting the narrative of social care. People we support who maintain the allotment have been supplying vegetable boxes to families from a local primary school living below the poverty line. A food parcel beneficiary wrote to us, saying:

"I am very grateful for the food boxes that I receive, they have been a great help for me and my children. They also help my children understand and learn what goes into their food and how to make fresh meals using the produce we get from the food boxes."

In Teddington, we have deepened our roots in the local community, delivering wellbeing workshops open to all. Creating safe spaces for people to encourage and empower one another to share their feelings. Josh told us:

"Before I had lots of things on my mind. The workshops helped me to learn to control my thoughts and taught me to speak about them in the group instead of holding them in. I used to get very anxious but now I feel calm and confident. My confidence is higher than my anxiety. I would recommend the group to anyone who is anxious – it will help you how it helped me."

Meanwhile, in Cheriton, our Community Network project has hosted activities and events to draw in the local community to address pressing social issues, from a series of events on Black History Month to establishing a 'People's Larder' thanks to grant income, so we can reduce food waste and help people during the cost-of-living crisis. Community Network Co-ordinator Rachael said:

"It's great that we're being recognised for what we've been doing for the community during the cost-of-living crisis. This money will help us to offer even more for people we support and local residents."

Ways to learn and opportunities to work

Over the year, we have seen a growth in student numbers at ROC College in Devon, increasingly supporting students with social, emotional and mental health needs. And, up in York, we provide non-accredited bespoke learning packages for post-16 learners with Education Health Care Plans, focusing on media skills training, hospitality, retail and customer service training.

Our community-based approach to further education helps young people like Elliot prepare for adulthood and independence. In November, we opened The Cottage Café in Torquay to provide supported internship opportunities for students from ROC College. Elliot has been learning new cooking and barista skills and customer service – all of which will be essential when applying for permanent roles. Elliot told us:

“I’ve really liked my experience working here, as I’ve always wanted to work in a restaurant or café. It’s been a really good part of my time at ROC College.”

We received a grant from the Department of Work and Pensions to work in partnership with Bradford Metropolitan District Council to provide a five-step employment support programme for 100 autistic people. One of the intentions in our plan, Shaped By People, is to make meaningful work available to the people we support, and it is great to see this taking shape. The programme will help Connor as he starts his new role at Bradford Royal Infirmary. Connor said:

“I am really happy I will have the extra support when I start my job. During the interview process I was asked about my autism and how they could help support me, which was really helpful. I’m excited to start my job and I hope more autistic people will get whatever extra support they need to showcase their skills.”



Support to live in a place to call home

We all want to live in a place we call home with the people and things we love. This is at the heart of our housing strategy. To achieve this, we appointed a Director of Housing to support United Response to forge new funding partnerships and develop co-housing approaches in collaboration with local communities. As a result, we have launched a new maintenance and stock improvement plan and invested in a digital tool, Homemaster, to improve how we work as we grow our role as a supported housing landlord to secure our long-term financial sustainability as an organisation.

Time for collective action

We began to roll out our campaigning and policy strategy to support our strategic ambitions to become better known and speak out with the people we support. Building on our partnership with Leonard Cheshire Disability we highlighted the impact of disability hate crime, successfully securing 146 items of coverage for the launch of our research report, which reached 46 million readers, listeners and viewers. We had spokesperson requests for broadcast and radio coverage across Channel 4, national and regional BBC and Talk TV.

Democracy campaigning has been a longstanding cause for United Response, but this year we ramped up our activity thanks to Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust funding. We are working with Mencap, Dimensions and Ambitious About Autism to ensure that the 2 million people with learning disabilities or autism in the UK can exercise their right to vote.

We launched My Vote My Voice in parliament at a reception attended by MPs, civil servants, self-advocates and campaigners.

Alex, who we support, spoke at the event, telling MPs:

“Progress needs to be made to include people with disabilities so they can vote with honour, respect and dignity.”

The campaign has 14 MP champions and 50 organisations signed up to the charter. In the lead-up to the general election, the campaign will produce easy-read guides to politics and voting, run accessible political events and develop leading research into the accessibility of elections.



Supported by the resources of a national organisation

We can offer networks of support rooted in local communities because of our size and scale as a national organisation. To do this effectively, we have had to change how we work, our culture and how we support and engage with our staff.

Financial sustainability

Despite a challenging year, we have a robust financial position with healthy reserves and clear plans for a sustainable future. In line with other social care providers, 2022/23 has been heavily affected by the end of the pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine War, the cost-of-living crisis and workforce pressures.

United Response has navigated each of these challenges effectively and, at the same time, maintained the quality of provision to the people we support. The underfunding of the social care sector is unlikely to go away, and we will continue lobbying to address this. Still, commissioners need to be bolder in designing and commissioning services. We need to think differently about addressing the issues we all face.

Digital transformation

We have strengthened our use of technology and taken advantage of modern digital tools to drive efficiency and grow impact across all areas of our work. During the year we planned for the delivery of new finance and HR systems, selected a digital rostering system together with a new digital care records system. Taken together, these new platforms will modernise the way we work, from frontline services to

back-office functions, as we prepare to meet the demands of a changing sector. We have also successfully began rolling out mobiles phones for all staff and finished implementing Microsoft Teams.

Lobbying for better pay

Pay remains a central issue for our staff. Our public affairs work has prioritised lobbying the government to introduce pay parity with the NHS for the social care workforce to support our ambitions to pay our staff the Real Living Wage.

We work hard at a local level to negotiate fees that meet our strategic intent of following the Real Living Wage and improving our benefits and remuneration. Sadly, local authority fees do not always meet this ambition, so we have used reserves to fund these pay uplifts. However, this is unsustainable.

To address this, United Response is working with Certitude, Choice Support, Dimensions and MacIntyre under the name 'More Than A Provider' to influence the government to improve social care for the people we represent and our workforce.

Following the publication of the Next Steps to Put People at the Heart of Care, we wrote to Helen Whately, Minister of State for Social Care, to raise our concerns about the decision to halve funding for the workforce. We worked with MPs to submit parliamentary questions on the issue. Our letter received coverage in the trade press, raising the profile of our lobbying group and United Response.

Strengthening our brand

We commissioned an audit to understand how our brand is currently performing. The report confirmed that we do not yet have a brand that inspires a positive gut feeling in our key audiences, and we need to change if we're going to realise the goals of the Long-Term Plan and thrive in a consistently challenging environment.

Employee engagement

Without our staff, we could not exist. That is why we have a strategic commitment to make sure all our colleagues feel valued and listen and work together more as an organisation. Despite the challenges we have faced as an organisation, our colleagues have continued to provide exceptional levels of care and support, and we are truly grateful for that.

Reward and recognition

We expressed gratitude and improved staff engagement through various approaches. Colleague nominations for our quarterly UR Stars awards have increased by 25%, demonstrating how engaged our people are, both in going the extra mile and in taking time to highlight the success of others.

We held awards events for our North and South divisions, recognising staff commitment to the people we support and the organisation. We honoured our graduating apprentices and awarded individuals and staff teams who have gone above and beyond in their work.

We acknowledged a team for inventing creative and engaging activities to keep people we support in Littlehampton happy and engaged through multiple lockdowns. Another received a standing ovation for reacting quickly in an emergency, protecting people we support from serious harm.

Listening to our staff

We moved to a hybrid structure for national meetings of United Voice, our quarterly staff forum. Every colleague in the organisation can join via MS Teams or, if the session is local to them, face-to-face.

We're working hard on improving the accessibility and utility of our HR policies, handbooks and contracts to save colleagues time and ensure consistency across the organisation.

A great place to work

Amidst a sector-wide recruitment crisis, we're proud that our staff turnover rate is 22.7%, 6.3% below the sector average as reported in Skills for Care's 2022, [The State of the Adult Social Care Sector and Workforce in England](#).

We've achieved this through a range of measures such as renewing our focus on making internal promotions and increasing secondment opportunities. Our turnover rate would have been lower had we not had to say farewell to a number of long serving colleagues this year when we handed back unsustainable contracts.

We sent wellbeing gift boxes to every staff member during our annual Wellbeing Week. We asked colleagues to connect, talk, listen and inspire each other by sharing wellbeing pledges. We also recruited our first team of Wellbeing Ambassadors, who received specific mental health training and are available in multiple locations to support anyone within the organisation seeking support.

Our new Women's and Men's Health Working Groups are well-attended. These groups look to tackle specific health inequalities and give colleagues from across the organisation the opportunity to share their views and experiences to improve things for everyone.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Creating an equitable, diverse and inclusive workplace continues to be a priority for United Response. Our Diversity Forum meets quarterly to ensure that we continue to promote diversity across our organisation and that all our practices and processes are inclusive.

Last year we evaluated our workforce data and learned that 9% of our frontline workers are Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds but this group only makes up 5% of managers. In response to this disparity, we invested in development training for aspiring managers from this group. This training allowed participants to learn new skills and reflect on their professional growth.

We also delivered unconscious bias training to managers so they could recognise the importance of understanding the problem of bias in the workplace, address their own biases, and create a more inclusive workplace. This training was highly oversubscribed, demonstrating a real commitment by our colleagues to learn and improve.



Fifty colleagues completed neurodiversity training, including our recruitment team. Attendees came away with an understanding of the positives of thinking differently and the ways to unlock the potential of neurodiversity in our workforce.



In September, we arranged our first-ever Cultural Week, encouraging people we support and staff to celebrate and learn about each other's cultural backgrounds by sharing recipes, dance, art and sport. The Enterprise Hub in Teddington enjoyed a special visit from Brentford Club Ambassador Marcus Gayle and Ellie Crabb from the Chelsea FC Foundation. One person we support said:

"I liked Cultural Week. It made me think and remember that we are all different – from different places all over the world, and we can all be friends."

Fundraising activities

Now generating nearly 1% of our total income, fundraised income helps us create inclusive communities where everyone recognises the value people we support bring and the difference they make. We have committed to scaling up our fundraising activity to secure our long-term financial future as part of our strategic work programme.

Our fundraising activity includes:

- Securing philanthropic donations from trusts, foundations and corporate partners
- Providing opportunities for people to leave a gift to us in their will
- Supporting people to take part in challenge events and raise money on behalf of United Response
- Promoting appeals and fundraising asks people who have already shown an interest in our work
- Community-based fundraising activity.

This year we have begun work to expand our fundraising income streams and build on existing activity. Through trusts and grants fundraising we focus on service-led projects and strategic projects that require multi-year funding. We have been developing existing relationships and creating new national corporate partnerships to facilitate brand recognition, skill sharing, employment opportunities, staff engagement and income.

Our community-based fundraising has focused on engaging those we support, their families and the local communities we operate in to have fun, recognising the need to expand our fundraising offer to individuals. We have opportunities for people to reflect on their Will and consider leaving us a gift. We have a small society lottery provided through One Lottery (Gatherwells). We market these opportunities gently to staff and the general public and have the necessary guidance in place.

Ethical fundraising

We adhere to the Charity Commission guidelines and we are members of the Fundraising Regulator and Chartered Institute of Fundraising. We comply with our regulator's guidelines and the Code of Fundraising Practice for the UK and we protect vulnerable people in line with the requirements of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016.

There have been no complaints about fundraising activity during the year.

We are currently developing our fundraising policies in line with our strategic plans for the growth of our income streams.

We review changes in guidance and legislation related to fundraising, such as the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice and GDPR legislation, ensuring our data is efficiently and securely captured and stored.

Apart from communicating with people who have supported us in the past, we use neither direct marketing nor external third parties to raise funds. We ensure we maintain consistent communications with those fundraising for us. These numbers are low-level at the moment. In advance of this activity increasing, we are developing our donor journey pathway and communications within it, ensuring all data is recorded on Donorfy, in an accurate and timely way.

Public benefit

We have taken into account the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities.

Thank you to our supporters

We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of our supporters, donors and partners. Your support enables us to extend our support beyond the walls of our services and into local communities.

The Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust

The Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust generously supports the My Vote My Voice campaign. This funding has supported our public affairs and policy team to build a powerful coalition of providers, charities, MPs and self-advocates to improve access to democracy and politics.

Sparking new ideas

We have a valued 10-year relationship with the Clothworkers' Foundation, who generously donate £35,000 annually. This funding supports our Small Sparks scheme, where services and communities across United Response can submit project proposals, focusing on 'sparking' a new community initiative.

A recent project, 'Cinema Social', was devised jointly by Simon Copper, URTEC service manager, and Jamie Wilkinson, who we support

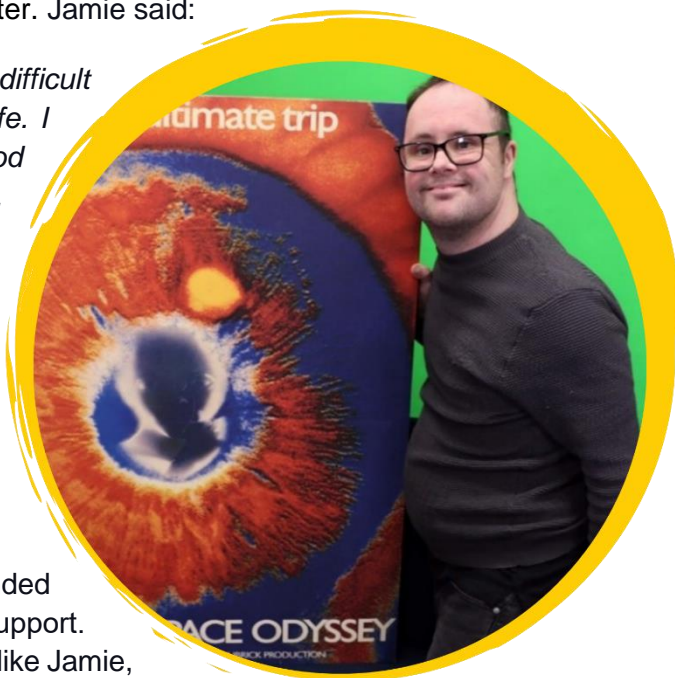


at the service. Jamie plans to organise events around a cinema film screening, with opportunities for people to socialise over games and activities before and after. Jamie said:

"I think it's really important that people who find socialising difficult have something to go to that feels grown-up, fun and safe. I want our "Cinema Social" to be the beginning of good friendships and memorable nights out for everyone in York."

Simon added: *"When speaking to lots of the people we support, they feel like they are talked down to at many learning disability events and don't have enough independence and freedom within them. As well as being brilliant in its own right, I also hope that people we support will pick up lots of transferable skills, such as planning, communication and money."*

This is just one example of the thousands of projects funded over the last ten years with the Clothworkers' generous support. Funding empowers people supported by United Response, like Jamie, to take the lead and shape the projects that provide the most benefit.



Running for miles

Kate Knight is a talented runner, former nurse and veteran United Response fundraiser. Her brother-in-law has learning disabilities and mental health needs, giving her a personal connection to our charity. Running a marathon for charity is an experience you will never forget. Kate ran her first London Marathon for United Response in 2004, telling us:

"The elation when I got to the finish line was just absolutely amazing. I kept focused all the way through. I thought 'I'm doing this for my brother-in-law'."

The 2023 London Marathon marked Kate's twentieth marathon for us, but she's done over 100 in total despite a knee replacement in 2016. Thank you to Kate and all of our incredible 2023 marathon runners, who have raised over £30,000 for United Response.

Building green spaces

We are also incredibly grateful to Wolseley, a plumbing, heating and cooling specialist merchant, for their generous support of our Community Allotment, Potter's Den. Their donation of 50 tonnes of hoggin self-compacting gravel forms the surface of our site, and without it, the site would not be accessible to many of the people we support. Tracy from Wolseley said:

"We were excited to get involved with supplying the hoggin for Potter's Den to help with the accessibility of the allotment, making the space safe and creating an area that can be enjoyed year-round. We understand the importance of boosting wellbeing at Wolseley, and we recognised Potter's Den as offering a lifeline in our local Bristol community supporting people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs. We were glad we could support the incredible work to help those who need it."

We also sincerely thank AMS Construction for their work on the build, which they provided at a reduced rate. Toby Lyons, Lead Senior Support Worker, said:

“AMS Construction have supported us through the whole build and having their support has made such a difference to the project.”



Plans for the future

We are at an exciting moment in our history as we head into our 50th anniversary. We have successfully bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a ground-breaking oral history project that will support people with learning disabilities to engage with their history. People we support will explore the heritage of ‘disability’ and our history as an organisation.

We also mark three years into our organisational strategy. To support our plans for the future, we will relaunch that strategy as Our Big Plan: United Communities, simplifying our goals and aligning our projects and plans under seven change communities:

Supporting people well

Ongoing work to strengthen practice leadership across the organisation will further our commitment to being a learning organisation. We will see the rollout of tools, training and communities of practice to support staff to deliver excellent support. We will continue to roll out our successful health strategy and recruit Health Coaches to maintain good health and wellbeing for the people we support.

United people

We will continue to invest time in improving our employee engagement, embedding our values thoroughly in our internal communications and staff engagement. Our new recruitment website will provide a better user experience for applicants, and we will also develop a career path initiative for our colleagues to maximise ways for them to build and grow. We will invest in consultancy from external experts to support us in producing a measurable strategy to improve equity, diversity and inclusion at United Response.

Integrated communities

Building on the learnings and successes of our community hubs, we will continue to develop networks of support in local areas. We will work with our commissioners to secure funding agreements that help our financial sustainability and work creatively with partners such as policing teams, community wardens and mental health teams to ensure people get the proper support in every aspect of their lives.

A stronger collective voice

We will develop avenues for people we support and families to have their say in the way we are run through people forums and co-production. Our campaigning work will offer opportunities for people to take action on social issues so everybody has equal access to the same rights and opportunities. We will grow our campaigning team to include paid roles for the people we support.

Growth and development

Our education, skills and employment offer will expand into new areas to increase the number of people who draw on our support, providing learning hubs nationwide. We have several exciting housing developments in the pipeline across the country, supporting our aim to broaden the sources of income we receive. We will continue to develop our brand so we are better known for what we do and increase our marketing support to our areas of growth and development.

Financial sustainability

We will secure our long-term financial future by continuing to grow our community-based approach to delivering bigger, better lives for people with disabilities. As a supported housing landlord, we will expand our role by offering good-quality, accessible accommodation. We will build further on our successful education, skills and employment programme delivery, develop our commercial offer in events, training and consultancy and scale up our fundraising.

Digital Transformation

We will continue to rollout our digital transformation and taking advantage of new technologies to maximise the impact of our work. The launch of our digital care records system, is already providing powerful benefits to the way we deliver person centred support across our services. In the coming year we will follow this with an e-rostering platform that will streamline the way we support, co-ordinate and manage staff teams across the country.



Our environmental impact

An integral part of our plan is supporting and sustaining better outcomes for the people we support, our communities and our environment. We aim to embed responsible and sustainable business practices at the heart of everything we do through the services we deliver and our community and environmental programmes.

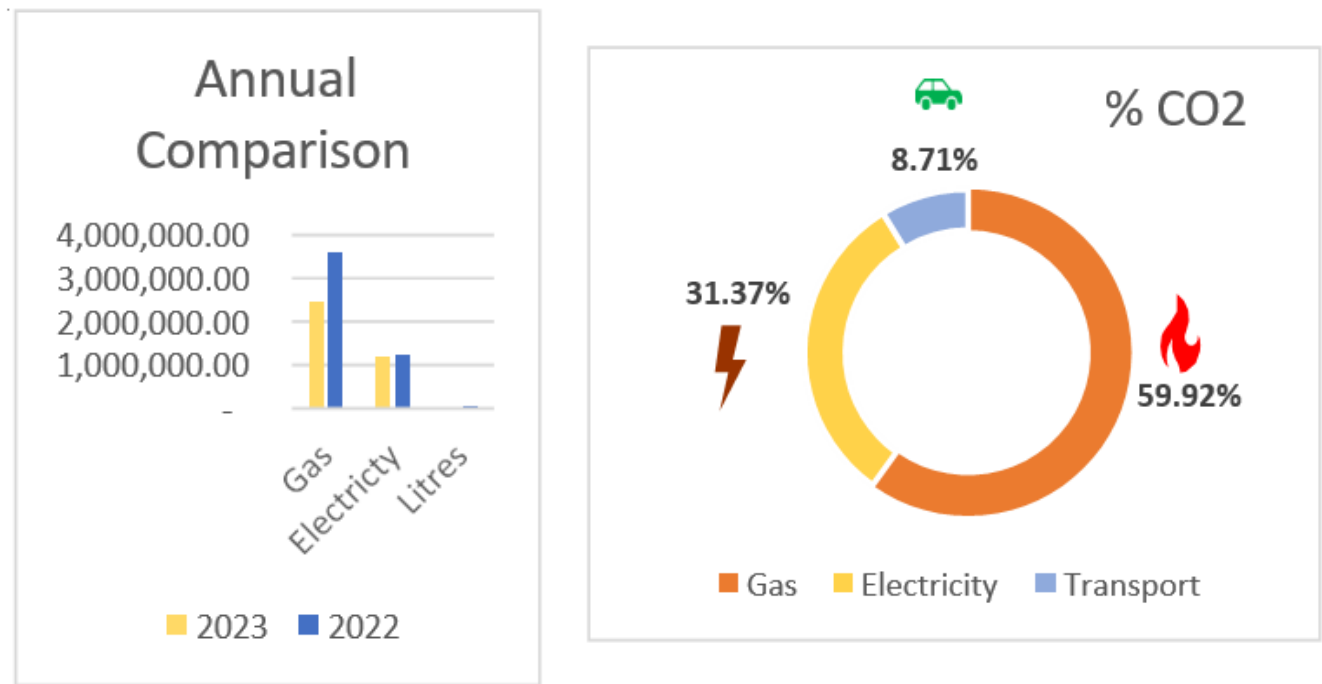
We take positive action to promote biodiversity on our farms and within our national community-based environmental and horticultural projects. We strive to enable the people we support to actively contribute to improving the biodiversity of their environment for the benefit of all, and optimise the learning experiences and opportunities this offers to those we support, our staff and the wider community.

Energy and carbon consumption

This is the third year of Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR). A high-level breakdown is highlighted in table below.

	Gas	Electricity	Transport	Total
kWh	2,452,866.43	1,212,080.92	276,295.70	3,941,243.05
kg CO2e	447,746.24	234,392.21	65,099.96	747,238.41
tCO2e	447.75	234.39	65.10	747.24
% of CO2	59.92%	31.37%	8.71%	100.00%

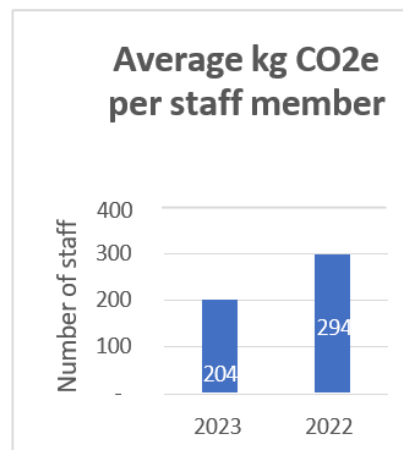
Our total CO2 emission breakdown is highlighted in Diagram 1. The primary scope 1 and 2 carbon emitters are gas and electricity consumption, needed for operational buildings and residences for supporting people with disabilities. This combined consumption equates to 91% of United Response's total CO2 emissions, with the remaining 9% emitted via the transportation of staff members alongside those associated with supported learning and living facilities.



Intensity metric

An intensity metric gives United Response an indicator of carbon performance based on an operational figure of staff members. This table shows 3,663 members emitting, on average, 204kg CO₂/per staff member. In 2023, United Response reduced the previous year's operational intensity by 90kg CO₂e (psm).

Intensity metric	2023	2022
Number of staff	3,663	3,489
kg CO ₂ e	747,238.4	1,009,788.5
Kg CO ₂ e PSM	204	294



United Response initiatives

We have several energy and carbon improvement projects underway. We will introduce electric and hybrid vehicles into United Response's current fleet. The installation of Smart Meters across our premises will enable a closer look at peaks and troughs in energy usage and where we can apply energy-saving measures.

Methodology

Energy data was collected and collated by our energy brokers. Mileage and fuel consumption information is recorded and kept internally.

United Response are measuring scope 1 and 2 emissions. Our energy suppliers collated all energy data with transport data and staff numbers collated internally. Scope 1: Fleet vehicles and gas, Scope 2: Electricity supply.

	Litre	kWh	CO ₂ e
Gas	NA	1	0.18254
Electricity	NA	1	0.19338
Petrol	1	9.5	2.1
Diesel	1	10.6	2.5

Financial review

The development and performance of the charity's business during the financial year and future outlook

We continue to operate in an increasingly challenging environment. Economic recovery post-pandemic was weaker than expected and household incomes continued to fall. Throughout the period there was extreme economic turmoil as a result of government decisions on fiscal and monetary policy with inflation reaching record numbers impacting on almost every aspect of business and everyday life. The Russian-Ukraine war impacted on the UK economy with increased uncertainty impacting on growth and higher commodity prices.

Despite the turbulent economic context, the need for our services continues to grow and we have seen revenues slightly increase by £3.8m to £100.8m. Negotiated fee uplifts were the main driver for income growth, alongside rising activities in growth areas, particularly Education, Skills and Employment. We returned unsustainable contracts to local authorities as United Response responded proactively to challenging market conditions. We received £0.4m of additional Covid 19 support from local authorities as the pandemic ended. Separately, a restricted grant of £0.4m from the NHS supported the purchase of a property in Northamptonshire.

United Response will continue diversifying its funding base in line with the Long-Term Plan. Housing, Education and Fundraising all need to increase as a percentage of overall revenue. In 2022/23, income from these activities grew to 8.6% of total revenue (2021/22: 7.9%). We are pleased with the progress in diversifying our income streams towards our long-term target of 25%. Plans for 2023/24 project further growth in these areas to over 10% of total income.

Results – business

External market conditions led to a significant operating deficit in 2022/23 as costs rose rapidly and the labour market tightened. United Response acted rapidly to protect both services and staff during the year, drawing on a strong base of reserves built up over previous years. In the context of rising inflation, an unbudgeted pay uplift was applied in October 2022 at a cost of £1.2m. Investments in growth and development were maintained, most notably the multi-year investment in digital transformation. Overall, this approach enabled the organisation to continue delivering effective and high-quality support across our services.

Looking ahead, the use of reserves to maintain activities is only ever possible in the short-term. Mindful of this but also of the continuing external challenges, Trustees have agreed future financial plans predicated on a return to break even operations by the end of 2024-25.

The financial position of the company at the end of the year

The charity recorded a decrease in reserves of £8.3m (2021/22 – an increase of £0.3m). This net deficit results from £3.5m of planned investment in new digital platforms, an in-year decision to invest £1.2m from reserves for an additional pay uplift for staff and a £4.2m operating deficit together with a £0.6m increase in restricted funds. The operating deficit was driven by a combination of growing inflationary pressures, a tight recruitment market leading to rising agency staff costs and failure of statutory funders to recognize these costs in the level of fee uplifts.

Whilst this represents a significant decrease in reserves in the year, it reflects an active decision to utilise reserves to maintain operations while continuing to invest in development and growth.

The total unrestricted operations, through both general and designated funds, but before the effect of gains on investments and sales of fixed assets, recorded a deficit of £9.1m (2021/22 – a surplus of £0.5m).

Overall income increased by £3.8m to £100.8m in 2022/23 (2021/22 - £97.0m). The principal sources of funding continue to be through contracting with local authorities in England and Wales for the provision of statutory services for clients with learning disabilities in a supported living or residential care environment. In 2022/23 contractual income of £98.8m contributed 98.0%, marginally up year-on-year by £4m (2021/22 - £94.8m / 97.7%). This rises to 98.5% if the Covid-19 grant support of £0.5m (2021/22 - £1.6m / 99.4%) is taken into account.

Total expenditure increased by £12.3m to £109.0m (2021/22 - £96.7m) over the same period primarily due to the increase in the national living wage to £10.42 (£9.50) plus an in-year pay rise given to all staff of £1.8m. The costs of direct charitable expenditure increased by £7.1m to £91.0m (2021/22 - £83.9m).

Unrestricted freehold property has a net book value of £4.6m within designated reserves. It is anticipated that in the current market a sale of our freehold properties would realise significant premiums over the net book value.

Overall support costs spent on charitable activities increased by £1.7m to £14.3m (2021/22 - £12.6m). As lockdowns lifted, we experienced increases in travel, training and recruitment costs when compared to the previous financial year. In addition, the commencement of projects previously delayed by the pandemic also resulted in increased spending.

Total net assets decreased by £8.3m to £20.7m (2021/22 - £29.0m). The net movement in working capital saw a reduction in Creditors <1 Year of £0.3m, increase in Debtors of £1.9m, decreases in Cash at bank of £0.7m and Investments decreasing by £9.8m.

United Response Services Limited (URS) had gross income of £53.7m (2021/22 - £52.4m) and recorded a trading surplus of £1.1m (2021/22 - £1.0m) which has been gift aided to United Response Limited. URS holds contracts with local authorities for welfare services which are sub-contracted to United Response which ensures that the taxation position of the group is effectively managed.

United Response in Business Limited's objective was to provide employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities or mental health needs by running social enterprises. These activities, where still carried on, are part of United Response's activities. This entity is dormant and was liquidated on 19 July 2022.

Investment Policy and Performance

The Trustees have broad investment powers, set out in the Memorandum and Articles. The Board establishes the charity's investment policy and reviews the target return annually. During the year Trustees determined that a proportion of long-term reserves, initially £2.0m, should be invested with a reputable fund manager. After a competitive tender process, Brewin Dolphin were selected and funds were transferred in November 2022. Oversight of these long-term investments will continue to be provided by the Finance & Resources Committee.

Changes in Fixed Assets

Changes in the charity's fixed assets are shown in notes 10 and 11 to the accounts.

Reserves

The total funds held by United response at 31 March 2023 was £20.7m (2021/22 - £29.0m) of which £2.0m was held in restricted funds (2021/22 - £1.4m), please refer to the details of restricted funds included in note 17 to the accounts.

The Trustees have designated some reserves for specific purposes, at 31 March 2023 the total designated reserves were £6.0m (2021/22 - £6.5m). Due to the nature of the funds, the total of these has not changed significantly over the last two years, see details in note 19 to the accounts.

United Response's free reserves represent unrestricted general funds which have not been designated for a specific purpose and are therefore available for use within the charity's objects. United Response needs reserves to protect it against risks and to ensure financial sustainability, including an adequate level of working capital to provide a financial buffer, particularly in such times of uncertainty. Reserves also enable us to take advantage of opportunities to develop our activities, and to enhance support to people, over and above that which we can provide from income received under contract.

At 31 March 2023, the balance of free reserves of £12.7m (2021/22 - £21.0m) and cash holdings of £15.3m (2021/22 - £25.8m) exceeded the minimum reserves target of £7.0m set by the Finance and Resources Committee in June 2022. This calculation of free reserves also excludes freehold property that had a net book value in March 2023 of £4.8m.

The cost of winding up the organisation in an orderly fashion is estimated at £6.5m. The Trustees consider such an event a remote possibility as the majority of services supplied are of a statutory nature and staff would be transferred under TUPE regulations to an alternative provider, thus significantly reducing the exposure.

Going concern

United Response considers its position to remain strong to continue its focus on the services it provides. Our good relationships with key funders, a proven ability to retain and secure new services, combined with strong liquidity and sufficient reserves underline this. United Response's liquidity is evident with unrestricted reserves which stand at £18.7m (2021/22: £27.5m), of which 82% (2021/22: 94%) are held as cash and investments. United Response's free reserves continue to be considered sufficient to provide cover for any short unexpected changes in income and expenditure.

In the face of challenging market conditions, proactive action has been and continues to be taken. Performance to date has been robust in terms of maintaining income generation and also cost control. Contingency measures, detailed monitoring and robust risk management are in place and overseen regularly by the Board. Alongside an organisation wide focus on financial improvement, our financial plans are actively structured to deliver a return to break even. We are able to do this because of the strength and scale of our reserves and cash balances held after many years of growth and solid financial performance.

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis because there is a reasonable expectation that United Response has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and the Trustees believe that there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the charity's ability to continue.

Risk management

United Response continues to make positive strides to improve the way that we identify and manage risks to the organisation, the people we support, and our colleagues. Dependent on their severity or magnitude, we document our risks within our suite of risk registers, ranging from our project & functional risk registers, right up to our corporate risk register. The corporate risk register is produced and managed by the directors' team with support from the Head of Risk and Internal Audit. The Audit and Risk Committee and Board of Trustees also regularly review the document. As part of a well-embedded, cyclical process, the directors' team is responsible for assessing the probability and impact of our key (corporate) risks, ensuring that appropriate mitigations are in place, and reporting on this to Audit & Risk Committee & the Board.

Ongoing initiatives and process improvements

We have developed a risk assurance framework to ensure that we monitor the wide range of risks we are subject to and that sufficiently robust mitigation is agreed and implemented. Throughout 2022 and 2023, we enhanced our focus on risk management and internal assurance in several ways, including by appointing a Head of Risk and Internal Audit, who has been leading numerous initiatives to improve the approach to risk management across the organisation. These initiatives include:

- Improvements to the corporate risk register and escalation process
- Initiation of departmental risk documentation to enhance organisational visibility
- Introduction of risk appetite statements to enable and define an organisation-wide approach to key risk areas
- Launch of a robust framework for project risk management to promote improved delivery of strategic, tactical and tertiary projects.
- Improved risk documentation
- A robust, risk-based approach to internal assurance and audit planning and delivery
- Risk management training
- Development of a risk-based financial adversity recovery plan.

Next year we aim to continue to improve our risk management approach and deliver several initiatives to ensure that our practice remains suitable, adaptive and robust. These include:

- Enhancing our approach to risk horizon scanning to ensure that we are able to capture emerging risks appropriately
- Reviewing and upgrading our existing framework to ensure that our approach aligns with best practice
- Utilising risk appetite statements to support organisational decision-making to ensure that critical decisions align with our agreed willingness to take risk
- Continuing to build relationships across the charity and care sectors to share best practices and ideas, share successes, failures and lessons learned
- Improving risk reporting to ensure that our stakeholders have suitable visibility of our key risks and how we manage them.

Key risks and how we manage them: Corporate Risk Register Top 5

Risk	Description of risk	Annual Trend	How we mitigate the risk
Financial Sustainability	The charity faces challenges around financial sustainability as a result of increased costs not being matched by increased income. There is a risk that we are unable to overcome these challenges.	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In year, a heavy focus on financial performances at service level was undertaken, with underperforming services handed back to local authorities. A financial adversity recovery plan has been developed and implemented Negotiations with local authorities for new end renewed contracts. Viability of contracts under constant review Proactive monitoring of financial performance Financial training for colleagues is now being rolled out to reduce service level discrepancies and errors
External Environment	The environment within which United Response operates is challenging. The nature of current funding streams continues to present volatility given the squeeze on local authority funding and neglect of social care. There is further risk that our environmental conditions continue to decline.	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing development of strategic initiatives with enhanced focus on income stream diversification Ongoing lobbying and work with other organisations to influence the external environment in relation to social care Technological advances through development of systems such as Oracle & Nourish
Staff Retention & Recruitment	That the business is unable to recruit and retain effective staff of the right calibre throughout the organisation in order that it can operate effectively to the level desired and to meet its contractual and regulatory requirements	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff rewards (financial & non-financial reviewed within year. Pay uplifts awarded and effected in 2022 & 2023 Internal audits of recruitment, learning & development and exit process conducted in 22/23 with recommendations in delivery. Employee handbook development underway to streamline HR systems & processes Improved succession planning Exploring numerous initiatives to address ongoing crisis
Change Management	That United Response is unable to successfully implement and deliver change programmes and initiatives in a manner that prioritizes those that will drive and deliver most benefit in terms of operational efficiency and enabling strategic objectives to be met.	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated governance structure and personnel utilised across change workstreams Organisational change lead onboarded May 2023 Regular programme prioritisation reviews undertaken with resequencing implemented at appropriate time Significant focus on internal communications and training to facilitate change Internal auditing of key change projects, as well as change management delivered / planned for 23/24 Appointment of Head of Change – to commence role in Autumn 2023
Fraud	That fraud is not identified in a timely manner or is committed and not identified. Cases of fraud are not reported appropriately, and the organisation fails to learn from the cases that take place. In this instance, "fraud" refers to both fraud committed against UR either internally or by a third party. Fraud that affects the people we support is detailed as a separate risk within our corporate risk register	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust control processes and ongoing system of review of their suitability and implementation. Regular checks and reporting on key processes and areas of operation to identify potentially fraudulent activity; Annual schedule of internal audit activity Staff training to raise awareness of how fraud can be committed in all areas of business processes and operations. Intentional shaping of financial controls to include a balance of system, process and people controls. Rolling programme of review and improvements to financial controls targeted on areas of highest risk Improved delegations of authority

Key risks and how we manage them: Other key risks and emerging risks

Senior management continuously consider and evaluate the risks that United Response is exposed to. Numerous additional risks are captured in our corporate risk register, as well as other risk registers managed across the business. A number of our core risks and emerging risks are briefly highlighted in the table below:

	P Political	E Economic	S Social	T Tech	L Legal	E Enviro	M Misc.
Other Corporate Risks	> Ongoing financial pressures placed upon local authorities / commissioners	> Failure to provide appropriate controls & support around PWS money > Fraud impacting the people we support	> Safeguarding (Operational & Reputational) > Health & Safety: Property compliance > Reputational risk	> Cyber-security & data compromise	> Legal or regulatory breach		> Governance & Behaviours > Strategic priorities & implementation capabilities > Pandemic
Emerging risks	> Further unanticipated outcomes of Ukraine conflict > Essential social care reform may become a lower priority for government	> Hyper-inflationary impact on funding > Impact of significant market volatility on investments and pensions	> Eroding social cohesion > Traditional vs hybrid work patterns that have emerged post-pandemic may create challenging conditions	> Technological threats will continue to evolve at a rapid pace. > Failure to keep up with innovation such as: Artificial intelligence/automation/robotics > Challenges ensuring that our services & properties have adequate network connectivity impacting launch of digital projects	> Potential changes in government accountability resulting from legislation currently under review > Lack of responsiveness / adaptation to CQC > Reduced engagement from Local Authorities	> Climate change and sustainability > Challenges evidencing progress, or meeting demands, relating to increased focus on social value and environmental initiatives > Env. issues affecting services, staff and planned diversification	

Structure, governance and management

The charity is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. United Response Services Limited is a company limited by shares, with United Response being the only shareholder. The directors of this subsidiary are the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and two Trustees of United Response. United Response in Business Limited was a wholly owned subsidiary of United Response and ceased trading and struck off Companies House on 19 July 2022.

Board of Trustees

United Response is governed by a Board of Trustees led by the Chair. The Trustees, who have the powers and obligations of directors under the Companies Acts 2006, are responsible for United Response's leadership and strategic direction, stewardship, overall financial and organisational control, monitoring progress and ensuring compliance. The board is also responsible for protecting the organisation's reputation and values, setting the long-term vision, and holding the Chief Executive and directors' team to account whilst maximising their performance for delivering United Response's policies, strategies and objectives.

During this year the trustees were:

Chair – Malcolm McCaig

Vice-Chair – David Willis (Chair of Finance and Resources Committee)

Vice-Chair – Helen England (Chair of Operations Committee) – resigned March 2023

Honorary Treasurer - Charles Garthwaite

Mark McLaughlin (Chair of Audit & Risk Committee)

Alastair Ballantyne

Bill Hodson

Paul Marriner – resigned September 2022

Katherine Rake – resigned July 2022

Satya Samal

Bronagh Scott

Alison Stanley

Deborah Tavana

Guy Van Dichele

Lisa Odendaal – appointed July 2022

Nicola Pawsey – appointed July 2023

Vicky Whelan – appointed July 2023

The Board of Trustees meet at least four times per year. Four committees feed into the work of the board:

The Finance and Resources Committee oversees our work's critical financial aspects, which stem from finance, HR, investment and other resource-related strategies.

The Operations Committee focuses on the quality and safety of services to the people we support, using and interrogating various data sources to triangulate and provide assurance.

The Education and Skills Scrutiny Group reports through the Operations Committee. It has responsibility for oversight and scrutiny of our education, skills and employability provision.

The Audit and Risk Committee oversees external audits and internal controls across United Response, including quality assurance systems and health and safety arrangements.

The Nominations Committee acts on behalf of the board to ensure that appropriate governance arrangements are in place, including the recruitment of new Trustees.

Each committee or sub-committee can appoint up to two co-optees to enhance their work should the Nominations Committee chair and members feel this would add value to the committee's work. This also provides us with greater flexibility enabling us to draw on a broader range of skills and involve advisors without them having to assume broader governance responsibilities. During this year the co-optees were:

Jon Barton – Audit and Risk Committee Co-optee

Julie Beadle Brown –Operations Committee Co-optee

Patricia Dennison - Chair of Safeguarding Forum

Linda Owen - Education Standards Advisor Co-optee

Stephen Maltby - Education Standards Advisor -Co-optee

Lisa Odendaal –Audit and Risk Committee Co-optee until July 2022

Directors' team

The directors' team consists of the senior paid employees of the organisation; they are responsible for managing the organisation. The Chief Executive leads the director's team, reporting to the Chair of the Trustees. Through the Chief Executive, the directors' team is responsible for the day-to-day management and implementation of the strategy approved by the board and leadership of the organisation, for drawing up and implementing the corporate plan and budget and for proposing any strategic changes not encompassed within the corporate strategy. Members of the director's team attend board and sub-committee meetings to brief the Trustees on organisational matters.

The directors' team of United Response

Chief Executive – Tim Cooper

Director of Quality and Practice Development – Sarah Battershall

Director of Operations North – Julia Casserly

Director of Operations South – Mike Crowhurst

Director of Housing and Development – Be McCarroll

Director of Finance and Company Secretary – Pete Thomas – appointed October 2022

Head of IT - Jack Sheppard – appointed July 2023

Head of Human Resources – Jennifer Tremewan – appointed July 2023

Director of Corporate Services – Mark Ospedale – resigned June 2023

Director of Finance – Joe Anichebe – resigned December 2022

Remuneration of the directors' team

The Finance and Resources Committee has responsibility for overseeing the pay and reward of the Chief Executive and executive directors. The committee undertakes benchmarking with multiple sources, using external advice, to ensure that the pay and reward of senior staff are appropriately reviewed against comparable organisations in the charitable sector and are proportionate to the pay and reward of staff overall in the charity. The committee reports its findings to the Board of Trustees.

Stakeholders and relationships

The relationships forged and held by United Response are the backbone of the organisation's history and future, and are deep-rooted in all of our work on both a regional and national level. Among these are business relationships with local authorities, commissioners, funders and partnering health organisations. No less significant are the ties held with the charity's core stakeholders – the people we support, their families and the wider community.

Maintaining and fostering each of these relationships is a key priority for the charity, its Directors' Team and board. Principal decisions taken by the company during the financial year carefully take into account the importance of these relationships.

Section 172(1) statement

The Trustees confirm that in accordance with Section 172 (1) of the Companies Act, they act in a way they consider would most likely achieve the organisation's purposes. In making this assessment, the Trustees have considered the following:

The likely consequences of any decision in the long term

The long-term sustainability of the operating model is considered by the directors as set out in the going concern section of the directors' report. Specifically, the directors consider both short- and longer-term financial projections and the key risks that could negatively impact the sustainability of United Response. The directors regularly review management information, budgets, forecasts, cash flow projections, and progress against the financial recovery plan. We embed risk management at all levels across the organisation. We discuss the most significant risks at each board meeting.

The interests of the company's employees

Without our staff, we could not exist. As such we maintain effective employee engagement as outlined on [page 13 to 14](#). The company has complied with the UK's Equality Act 2010 Regulations 2017, which require the publication of information on the gender pay gap for UK employees annually. The 2022/23 report is available on the United Response website.

The need to foster the company's business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

The relationships forged and held by United Response are the backbone of the organisation's history and future. They are deep-rooted in all of our work on both a regional and national level. Among these are business relationships with local authorities, commissioners, funders and partnering health organisations. The ties held with the charity's core stakeholders are no less significant – the people we support, their families and the wider community. Maintaining and fostering these relationships is a crucial priority for the charity, the directors' team and the board. Principal decisions taken by the company during the financial year carefully consider the importance of these relationships.

The impact of the company's operations on the community and the environment

The Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting report details our environmental impact on pages [19 to 20](#).

The desirability of the company maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct

Our procurement strategy supports employees to undertake processes that demonstrate fairness and integrity, comply with relevant laws and regulations, keep the information confidential and secure, and ensure we follow procurement best practices. United Response intends to fully comply with the obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Our annual transparency statement for the year ended 31 March 2023 is on our [website](#). United Response takes a zero-tolerance approach towards fraud, bribery and corruption. It is committed to complying with all applicable laws and regulations relating to fraud, bribery and corruption wherever it operates. The company has vetting processes that set requirements for performing an appropriate level of due diligence on organisations and individuals to which it provides funds or support, related decision-making procedures, procedures for reporting and disclosure of specific situations of concern by staff.

The need to act fairly as between members of the company.

The Trustees have a conflict-of-interest policy contained in their working rules.

Reference and administrative details

United Response is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission and a company limited by guarantee.

Registered Address and Principal Office	7th Floor, Knollys House 17 Addiscombe Road Croydon London CR0 6SR	
Telephone	020 8016 5678	
Website	www.unitedresponse.org.uk	
Email	info@unitedresponse.org.uk	
Twitter	@unitedresponse	
Facebook	facebook.com/UnitedResponse	
Instagram	@unitedresponse	
Charity Registration Number	265249	
Company and VAT Number	01133776 / GB317764974	
Bankers	Lloyds Bank 3rd Floor 25 Gresham Street London EC2V 7HN	
Auditors	Crowe U.K. LLP 55 Ludgate Hill London EC4M 7JW	
Solicitors	Capsticks 1 St George's Road London SW19 4DR	Trowers and Hamlins LLP 3 Bunhill Row London EC1Y 8YZ
	Bates Wells 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE	Brabners LLP Horton House Exchange Flags Liverpool L2 3YL
Insurance Brokers	Marsh UK Ltd 39 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling, ME19 4ER	

Trustees' Responsibility Statement

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

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

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions, 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 and the provisions of the charity's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as each of the Trustees of the charity at the date of approval of this report is aware there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the charity's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report) of which the charity's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the steps that he/she should have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

Auditors

A resolution to re-appoint Crowe U.K. LLP as auditors will be proposed at the annual general meeting.

Approved by the Board of Trustees of United Response on 18 October 2023 including, in their capacity as company directors, the strategic report contained therein, and signed on its behalf by:



Malcolm McCaig
Chair

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of United Response

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of United Response (the “charitable company”) and its subsidiaries (the “group”) for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Group Statement of Financial Activities, the Group and Company Balance Sheets, the Group Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the groups and the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of the group's 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 group 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 trustee's 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 Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. 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 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 our 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 strategic report and the directors' 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 light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the Trustees' report.

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

- the parent company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the parent company 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 Trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 34, 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.

Details of the extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations are set out below.

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

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error, and discussed these between our audit team members. We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company and group operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011 together with the Charities SORP (FRS 102). We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which might be fundamental to the charitable company's and the group's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. We also considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company and the group for fraud. The laws and regulations we considered in this context for the UK operations were General Data Protection Regulation, Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulations, employment legislation, taxation legislation and health and safety legislation.


Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be within the timing of recognition of contract income, recording the impact of CQC regulatory reviews and the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management, internal audit and the Audit & Risk Committee about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases, reviewing regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

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.



Tim Redwood

Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of

Crowe U.K. LLP

Statutory Auditor

London

23 November 2023

United Response

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 March 2023

(incorporating a consolidated income and expenditure account)

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		2023	2023	2023	2022
	Notes	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	2	306	199	505	358
Charitable activities	4	99,428	421	99,849	96,599
Investments	3	207	-	207	13
Other activities	3	235	-	235	-
Total income		100,176	620	100,796	96,970
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	5	233	-	233	246
Charitable activities	5	105,264	34	105,298	96,376
Other activities	5	3,515	-	3,515	66
Total expenditure		109,012	34	109,046	96,688
Net deficit on operations		(8,836)	586	(8,250)	282
Net gain/(loss) on investments		(6)	-	(6)	-
Net (expenditure)/income before transfers between funds		(8,842)	586	(8,256)	282
Transfers between funds	19	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(8,842)	586	(8,256)	282
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds at 1 April 2022		27,528	1,442	28,970	28,688
Total funds at 31 March 2023	16	18,686	2,028	20,714	28,970

The notes on pages 39 to 57 form part of these accounts.

All the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above. If income and expenditure from Other Activities are ignored, the net deficit would be - £4,970,000 (2021/22 surplus of £348,000).

United Response

Consolidated and Charity Balance Sheets

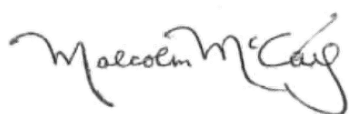
As at 31 March 2023

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fixed Assets					
Intangible assets	10	4	8	4	8
Tangible assets	11	5,557	5,449	5,557	5,449
Investments	12	8,989	18,779	8,989	18,779
Total fixed assets		14,550	24,236	14,550	24,236
Current Assets					
Stocks		40	40	40	40
Debtors	13	11,302	9,434	7,733	6,025
Cash at bank and in hand		6,293	7,041	6,288	7,036
Total current assets		17,635	16,515	14,061	13,101
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	14	(11,058)	(11,368)	(7,486)	(7,956)
Net current assets		6,577	5,147	6,575	5,145
Total assets less current liabilities		21,127	29,383	21,125	29,381
Provisions for liabilities	15	(413)	(413)	(413)	(413)
TOTAL NET ASSETS	16	20,714	28,970	20,712	28,968
FUNDS OF THE GROUP:					
Restricted Funds					
Restricted funds	17	1,423	1,254	1,423	1,254
Restricted property fund	18	605	188	605	188
Total restricted funds		2,028	1,442	2,028	1,442
Unrestricted Funds					
General Funds	19	12,664	21,000	12,662	20,998
Designated funds	19	6,022	6,528	6,022	6,528
Total unrestricted funds	19	18,686	27,528	18,684	27,526
TOTAL GROUP FUNDS	16	20,714	28,970	20,712	28,968

The notes on pages 39 to 57 form part of these accounts.

The deficit for the financial year, dealt within the financial statements of the parent charity, with company number 1133776, was - £8,256,000 (2021/22 surplus of £282,000) after gift aid from subsidiaries.

These financial statements were approved by the Board and authorised for issue on 18 October 2023.



Malcolm McCaig - Chair



Charles Garthwaite - Treasurer

United Response
Consolidated Statement of Cashflows
For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash generated / (used) in operating activities	A	(10,515)	(158)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Dividends and interest from investments		207	13
Purchase of Investment Portfolio		(2,000)	-
(Decrease) / increase in cash held for reinvestment		11,784	(512)
(Decrease) / increase in property, plant and equipment		(598)	(211)
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment		374	-
Net cash generated / (used) in investing activities		9,767	(710)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(748)	(868)
Cash & cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		7,041	7,909
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	B	6,293	7,041

A. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flows from operating activities

Net income for the reporting period	(8,256)	282
(as per the Statement of Financial Activities)		
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation and amortisation charges	355	359
Returns on investments	6	-
Dividends and interest from investments	(207)	(13)
(Gain) / loss on sale of fixed assets	(235)	18
Decrease / (increase) in stocks	-	12
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(1,868)	680
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(310)	(1,496)
Net cash provided by operating activities	(10,515)	(158)

B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

Cash in hand	149	85
Cash at bank	6,144	6,956
Total cash and cash equivalents	6,293	7,041

The notes on pages 39 to 57 form part of these accounts.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

Charity Information

United Response is a public benefit entity registered as charity in England and Wales and a company limited by guarantee.

It was incorporated on 11 September 1973 (company number: 1133776) and registered as a charity on 2 October 1973 (charity number: 265249).

The address of the registered office is 7th Floor - Knollys House, 17 Addiscombe Road, Croydon, London, England, CR0 6SR.

1. Accounting Policies

a) Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the second edition of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and Companies Act 2006.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemptions in FRS 102 from the requirements to present a charity only Cash Flow Statement and certain disclosures about the charity's financial The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

b) Group financial statements

These financial statements consolidate the results of the charity and its wholly owned subsidiaries: United Response Services Limited, United Response in Business Limited and Robert Owen Communities (dormant) and are referred to as "the Group".

A separate statement of financial activities and income and expenditure account are not presented for the charity itself following the exemptions afforded by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

c) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

We have set out in this report a review of United Response's financial performance, the reserves position and principal risks and uncertainties.

Based on the assessment of these, United Response considers its position to be strong to continue its focus on the services it provides. Our good relationships with key funders, a proven ability to retain and secure new services, combined with strong liquidity and sufficient unrestricted reserves underline this.

United Response's liquidity is evident in review of the consolidated reserves which stand at £18.7m (2021/22 - £27.5m) and £12.7m as free reserves (2021/22 - £14.8m), of which almost all is held as cash and short-term fixed deposits.

The current economic climate has been challenging due to a soar in the cost of living, the disruption of global supply chains and a recruitment crisis. We have maintained some remedial actions, using reserves and proceeds of sold properties from services we handed back where local authority fees did not meet the total cost of delivering good quality care and support. United Response's free reserves continue to be considered sufficient to provide cover for any short term unexpected changes in income and expenditure.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting Policies (continued)

c) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis (continued)

The trustees therefore have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements and are not aware of any other material uncertainties which may adversely affect the organisation. Accordingly, the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

d) Critical accounting judgements and key sources of uncertainty

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying value of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an on-going 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 the current and future periods.

The following matters contain assumptions concerning the future, or estimation affecting assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date, that may result in a material adjustment to their carrying amounts in the next financial year:

Note 13 Debtors - Accrued income and Doubtful Debt provision

In the view of the trustees, other than those matters disclosed above, there are no assumptions concerning the future or estimation uncertainty affecting assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date likely to result in a material adjustment to their carrying amounts in the next financial year.

e) Income

Any funds received are accounted for as income when United Response can meet the following recognition criteria: it has entitlement, there is probability (more likely than not) that it will be received, and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Sources of funds include Charitable contractual income, Grants, Legacies, Gifts in kind/Donation and investment income. Any funds received in advance are deferred until the contracted service has been provided at which point United Response is entitled to record it.

Where there are terms or conditions attached to incoming funds, particularly grants, then these terms or conditions must be met before the income is recognised. Where terms or conditions have not been met or uncertainty exists as to whether they can be met then the relevant income is not recognised in the year but deferred and shown on the balance sheet as deferred income.

Grants are recognised on the performance model, when the charity has complied with any conditions attaching to the grant and the grant will be received. See Note 4 for revenues recorded related to additional Government grants and funding for the pandemic.

1. Accounting Policies (continued)

f) Expenditure

Costs of raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income. Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the provision of support to people with learning disabilities or mental health needs and include both the direct and support costs relating to these activities. Governance costs are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to one of the charity's activities they have been allocated on the basis of estimated time spent.

g) Operating leases

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the period.

h) Pension schemes

United Response operates a non-contributory stakeholder pension scheme for eligible staff members. Current employer's contributions amount to 3% of pensionable earnings. The charity also contributes to the NHS pension scheme, the West Yorkshire Pension Fund and the Nottinghamshire County Council Pension Fund in respect of staff members who have transferred from other employers. These are defined benefit schemes which we account for as defined contribution schemes as it is difficult to identify the charity's share of the underlying assets and liabilities; we hold £100,000 in reserve relating to these schemes should we be required to supplement our contributions.

i) Intangible fixed assets

Computer software costs have been capitalised within intangible assets as they can be identified with a specific project anticipated to produce future benefits. Once brought into use, they are amortised on the straight line basis over four years.

j) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £2,000 are capitalised and shown at cost. Depreciation has been charged to write off all fixed assets, except for freehold land, over their estimated useful lives, at the following rates:-

Freehold buildings and improvements	2% to 25% on cost
Leasehold buildings	over period of lease
Furniture and equipment	25% on cost
Motor vehicles	25% on cost

k) Financial instruments

United Response has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Financial assets held at amortised cost comprise cash at bank and in hand, together with trade and other debtors. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise overdrafts and trade and other creditors.

Investments, including bonds held as part of an investment portfolio, are held at fair value at the balance sheet date, with gains and losses being recognised within income and expenditure.

These are detailed in note 12 to these accounts. Investments in subsidiary undertakings are held at cost less impairment.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting Policies (continued)

l) Investments

All investments held are included in the balance sheet at market value.

m) Stock

All stock is held at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Since 2016, stock holdings included farm stock from the Robert Own Communities (ROC) acquisition and small supplies for the Café.

As a result of the pandemic, stock now includes holdings of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in a privately managed distribution warehouse. Once PPE is distributed to the services, it is recorded as an expense.

n) Provisions

United Response has commitments to make good dilapidations and carry out repairs under various property leases. A provision is made for all leased properties that may be subject to a potential dilapidation charge and is based on the experience of recent actual costs incurred when vacating premises.

o) Funds

Income received subject to specific conditions imposed by the donor is included in restricted funds. Revenue expenditure is allocated against these funds as incurred. Restricted funds which have financed fixed assets are reduced by amounts equivalent to any depreciation charge over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned. The analysis of restricted funds is shown in note 17 to the accounts.

p) Cash at bank and in hand

Liquid resources are defined as cash at bank and in hand immediately available to meet working capital needs. Other cash not required for working capital requirements are classified as investments.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

2. Analysis of Donations and Legacies	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Donations from trusts		
National Lottery	50	-
Wolfson Foundation	43	-
Clothworkers' Foundation	35	35
Waterloo Foundation	15	-
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	15	-
Active Londoners	-	19
Arts Council	-	13
Good Things Foundation	-	13
Other	28	39
Total donations from trusts	186	119
Legacies		
- Mrs J Moore	41	-
- Mrs J Wilson	-	15
- Shield house	-	116
- Other	1	4
Total donations from legacies	42	135
Total other voluntary income	277	104
Total donations and legacies	505	358
3. Analysis of Income from Investments and Other Activities		
Investment income is made up as follows:	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Bank interest	207	13
Total investment income	207	13
Other income is made up as follows:	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Gain on sales of fixed assets	235	-
Other income	235	-

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

4. Analysis of Income from Charitable Activities

	Contractual Income £'000	Grants £'000	Trading Income £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Learning disability residential services	12,471	-	-	12,471	12,142
Learning disability supported living services	76,719	-	-	76,719	70,911
Other learning disability services	6,080	-	-	6,080	7,545
Mental health services	1,425	-	-	1,425	2,337
Employment Opportunities - People We Support	2,076	-	160	2,236	2,027
Government funding - Covid 19 & WRRF	-	497	-	497	1,637
Capital Grants	-	421	-	421	-
Total income from charitable activities	98,771	918	160	99,849	96,599

Contractual income is made up as follows:	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Income from statutory authorities	93,851	89,285
Income from people we support and other sources	4,920	5,561
Total contractual income	98,771	94,846

Grant income is made up as follows:	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Government funding - Covid 19 & WRRF	497	1,629
NHS England property grants	421	-
Skills for care	-	14
Government funding - Furlough	-	8
Grants to support employment (various)	-	8
Total grant income	918	1,659

NHS England granted restricted capital funding to United Response in order to acquire a property in Aylesbury. The clients using the facilities are mainly people who have either been originally discharged from long stay NHS institutions or who would have been admitted to such institutions if the community care facilities were not available.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

5. Analysis of Total Expenditure	Direct Costs £'000	Support Costs £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Raising funds	222	12	233	246
Charitable activities				
Learning disability residential services	11,750	1,300	13,050	12,299
Learning disability supported living services	71,376	11,801	83,177	73,239
Other learning disability services	4,639	688	5,327	6,300
Mental health services	1,025	265	1,290	2,546
Employment Opportunities - People We Support	1,765	264	2,029	1,571
Governance costs	425	-	425	421
	90,980	14,318	105,298	96,376
Other	-	3,515	3,515	66
Total expenditure	91,202	17,845	109,046	96,688

Other costs of £3,515,000 (2021/22 - £66,000) relates to the implementation of the new Oracle Enterprise Resource Planning system.

6. Analysis of Support Costs	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Regional support and training	5,807	5,311
Service development and quality	1,114	1,093
Communication and policy	512	400
Financial, HR and legal	3,817	3,711
Information Technology	1,882	1,518
General management	1,186	553
Total support costs	14,318	12,586

Support costs have been allocated to activities on the basis of estimated time spent.

7. Net Surplus on Operations for the Year	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
This is stated after charging:		
Depreciation and amortisation	355	359
Auditors' remuneration including VAT	50	60
Other fees paid to Auditors including VAT	13	3
Amounts paid under operating leases		
- Land and buildings	1,053	1,640
- Motor vehicles	256	289

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

8. Trustee benefits and expenses

A total of £1,969 was paid to 5 trustees during the year (2021/22 - £0). The expenses reimbursed to trustees cover travel and subsistence costs only.

Indemnity insurance is provided for the trustees as part of the overall management liability policy, the total premium paid during the year amounted to £18,956 (2021/22 - £18,956).

9. Staff Costs

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Total staff costs for the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	71,952	67,406
Social security costs	6,365	5,697
Pension contribution costs	1,631	1,597
Total	79,948	74,700

Wages and salaries include £331,000 (2021/22 - £157,000) of redundancy and termination payments which were paid out in accordance with our redundancy policy and legal requirements.

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Average number of staff employed		
Direct charitable activities	3,134	3,228
Support and governance	309	261
Generating voluntary income	-	-
Total	3,443	3,489

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Number of employees whose remuneration (including taxable benefits) exceeded £60,000 during the year		
£60,000 - £70,000	11	13
£70,001 - £80,000	8	5
£90,001 - £100,000	1	-
£100,001 - £110,000	4	4
£110,001 - £120,000	-	1
£140,000 - £150,000	1	1
£150,000 - £160,000	1	-
Total	26	24

Total pension contributions outstanding at the year end were £266,000 (2021/22 - £364,000).

The Executive Team consists of the Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Operations North, Director of Operations South, Director of Quality and Practice Development, Director of Housing and the Director of Corporate Services. During the year an interim Finance Director was employed which resulted in a period of double running costs.

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Executive Team Remuneration		
Total pay and benefits of the Senior Executive Team	1,005	768

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

10. Intangible Fixed Assets

	Total £'000
Cost	
1 April 2022	419
Additions	-
Disposals	-
31 March 2023	419
Amortisation	
1 April 2022	411
Charge for the year	4
Disposals	-
31 March 2023	415
Net Book Values (Group & Charity)	
31 March 2023	4
31 March 2022	8

Intangible assets relate to capitalisation of computer software costs.

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Freehold property £'000	Leasehold property £'000	Furniture & equipment £'000	Motor vehicles £'000	Total £'000
Cost					
1 April 2022	6,133	1,294	2,116	52	9,595
Additions	380	84	126	8	598
Disposals	(207)	(6)	-	-	(213)
31 March 2023	6,306	1,372	2,242	60	9,980
Depreciation					
1 April 2022	1,443	938	1,718	47	4,146
Charge for the year	125	102	119	5	351
Disposals	(70)	(4)	-	-	(74)
31 March 2023	1,498	1,036	1,837	52	4,423
Net Book Value (Group)					
2023	4,808	336	405	8	5,557
2022	4,690	356	398	5	5,449
Net Book Value (Charity)					
2023	4,808	336	405	8	5,557
2022	4,690	356	398	5	5,449

Freehold property includes two properties with a net book value of £605,000 (2021/22 - £188,000) which are subject to the restrictions set out in note 18.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

12. Fixed Asset Investments

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Market value at beginning of year	18,779	18,267
Purchases at cost	2,000	-
Disposals at book value	-	-
(Decrease) / increase in market value	(6)	-
Increase / (decrease) in cash held for reinvestment	(11,784)	512
Market value at end of year	8,989	18,779

The value of the investment was made up as follows:-

	Historical Cost		Market Value	
	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
UK Fixed Deposits	6,995	18,779	6,995	18,779
UK Bonds	111	-	111	-
Overseas Bonds	159	-	159	-
UK Equities	386	-	382	-
Overseas Equities	872	-	858	-
Global Investments Funds	129	-	133	-
Absolute Return Funds	70	-	71	-
Cash	78	-	78	-
Property	59	-	58	-
Other	150	-	144	-
Total investments	9,009	18,779	8,989	18,779

13. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade debtors	8,063	5,875	2,903	2,271
Amounts owed by group & associated undertaking	-	-	2,070	1,419
Prepayments	670	930	670	930
Accrued income	2,016	2,195	1,537	971
Other debtors	553	434	553	434
Total	11,302	9,434	7,733	6,025

Trade debtors are stated net of a general doubtful debt provision based on the age of debts of £417,000 (2021/22 - £826,000).

Accrued income is an estimate of income earned but not yet invoiced.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

14. Creditors - Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	Group		Charity	
	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade creditors	1,488	1,166	1,488	1,166
Accruals	3,063	3,168	3,041	3,153
Deferred income	1,133	1,278	694	740
Taxation and social security	3,351	3,158	460	550
Other creditors	2,023	2,598	1,803	2,347
Total	11,058	11,368	7,486	7,956

15. Provision for Liabilities and Charges

	Provision for Dilapidations	Total Provision	Total Provision
	2023 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Opening balance	413	413	413
Utilised in year	-	-	-
Released unused during the year	-	-	-
Additional amount provided	-	-	-
Closing balance	413	413	413

The provision for dilapidations provides for the cost of repairs arising as a result of obligations under property leases.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

16. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	Total				2023
	General Funds	Designated Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Intangible fixed assets	-	4	4	-	4
Tangible fixed assets	-	4,611	4,611	946	5,557
Investments	8,989	-	8,989	-	8,989
Current assets	15,146	1,407	16,553	1,082	17,635
Current liabilities	(11,058)	-	(11,058)	-	(11,058)
Provisions for liabilities & charges	(413)	-	(413)	-	(413)
Total net assets 31 March 2023	12,664	6,022	18,686	2,028	20,714

2022 Comparative Disclosures

	Total				2022
	General Funds	Designated Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Intangible fixed assets	-	8	8	-	8
Tangible fixed assets	-	5,109	5,109	340	5,449
Investments	18,779	-	18,779	-	18,779
Current assets	14,002	1,411	15,413	1,102	16,515
Current liabilities	(11,368)	-	(11,368)	-	(11,368)
Provisions for liabilities & charges	(413)	-	(413)	-	(413)
Total net assets 31 March 2022	21,000	6,528	27,528	1,442	28,970

17. Restricted Funds

	Balance 31 March 2022	Transfers during the year	Generated during the year	Utilised during the year	Balance 31 March 2023
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Time For You	15	-	-	-	15
Accessible Voting	6	-	15	-	21
North Division	124	158	25	(9)	298
South Division	241	84	106	(11)	420
South West Division	42	(42)	-	-	-
North West Division	134	(134)	-	-	-
Devon ESE (formerly ROC)	228	7	51	(10)	276
Other restricted funds	123	(73)	2	-	52
Subtotal	913	-	199	(30)	1,082
Represented by tangible fixed assets:					
North Division	2	8	-	-	10
South Division	142	5	-	-	147
South West Division	1	(1)	-	-	-
North West Division	8	(8)	-	-	-
Devon ESE (formerly ROC)	188	(4)	-	-	184
Other restricted funds	-	-	-	-	-
Total excluding restricted property fund	1,254	-	199	(30)	1,423
Restricted property fund (see note 18)	188	-	421	(4)	605
Total	1,442	-	620	(34)	2,028

17. Restricted Funds (continued)

The purposes of the principal funds shown above are as follows:

Time for You - this is a grant from Ipswich Borough Council in relation to the Suffolk Short Break Demonstrator Project, involving the provision of respite to family carers of people with learning disabilities. The grant was originally awarded to Ipswich Council for Voluntary Service, but was transferred to United Response during 2012.

Accessible Voting - this is a grant from the UK Democracy Fund a Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust initiative. This is a grant to develop a campaign to get people with a learning disability and autistic people registered to vote and casting their vote in the next general election.

North Division - the largest element of the income and expenditure relates to York training and Community Services. The offering consists of a Café, Health & Wellbeing Outreach, The Base for independent living workshops, the Autism Hub, supported employment coaching and the media centre. Grants have also been provided by Trafford MBC, Knowsley MBC and Wigan MBC to enable us to develop employment and social opportunities for people with autism. As well as Liverpool to tackle bullying.

South Division - the largest element of the income and expenditure relates to the Donation Station, our charity shop, which raises money for The Community Network, and teaches employment skills to the people we support.

Devon ESE - in 2016 United Response merged with Robert Owen Communities and this fund represent the balance of restricted funds acquired at that time and the net movement in restricted revenue funds since. ROC College is a specialist college that provides education for young people between the ages of 16 and 25 within Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. We also offer other supported employment opportunities and services such as Boscawen Farm where People we Support and Students can learn transferable skills.

Funds represented by tangible fixed assets - these funds relate mainly to improvements to properties, including houses owned by United Response in West Sussex and Devon and leased in Suffolk, Essex and Kent.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

17. Restricted Funds (continued)

2022 Comparative Disclosures					
	Balance 31 March 2021 £'000	Transfers during the year £'000	Generated during the year £'000	Utilised during the year £'000	Balance 31 March 2022 £'000
Time For You	15	-	-	-	15
Cornwall Supported Employment	3	-	1	-	4
Carers' Project	98	(98)	-	-	-
North East Division	114	-	19	(9)	124
South West Division	34	-	8	-	42
South East Division	195	-	82	(36)	241
North West Division	133	-	4	(3)	134
COVID-19 Funding	271	-	1,358	(1,629)	-
Devon	200	-	39	(11)	228
Other restricted funds	125	-	-	-	125
Subtotal	1,188	(98)	1,511	(1,688)	913
Represented by tangible fixed assets:					
North East Division	2	-	-	-	2
South West Division	140	-	2	-	142
South East Division	1	-	-	-	1
North West Division	8	-	-	-	8
Devon (formerly ROC)	188	-	-	-	188
Total excluding restricted property fund	1,527	(98)	1,513	(1,688)	1,254
Restricted property fund (see note 18)	192	-	-	(4)	188
Total	1,719	(98)	1,513	(1,692)	1,442

18. Restricted Property Fund

The original restricted property fund of £184,000 (2021/22 - £188,000) represents the value of a freehold property provided by the South East Kent District Health Authority to house a service in Folkestone. The property, which was acquired at no cost to United Response, is registered in the name of the charity and has been included in fixed assets at the cost of acquisition and refurbishment borne by the Health Authority, less depreciation. In the event of the service terminating, United Response has undertaken to transfer the property back to the Health Authority for £nil consideration.

During the year £421,000 of restricted property funding was received from NHS England for the purchase of a property in Aylesbury. The property, which was acquired at no cost to United Response, is registered in the name of the charity and has been included in fixed assets at the cost of acquisition and refurbishment borne by NHS England, less depreciation. In the event of the service terminating, United Response has undertaken to repay a 100% portion of the market value of the property back to NHS England less disposal costs.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

19. Unrestricted Funds	Balance 31 March 2022 £'000	Transfers during the year £'000	Generated during the year £'000	Utilised during the year £'000	Balance 31 March 2023 £'000
Property fund	1,061	-	-	-	1,061
Pension fund	100	-	-	-	100
Maintenance fund	250	-	-	-	250
Intangible Fixed Assets	8	(8)	-	-	-
Tangible fixed assets	5,109	(498)	-	-	4,611
Total designated funds	6,528	(506)	-	-	6,022
Unrestricted general funds	21,000	506	-	(8,842)	12,664
Total unrestricted funds	27,528	-	-	(8,842)	18,686

Funds have been designated for the following purposes:-

Property fund - to help fund the purchase of properties to support the development of the charity's activities. These funds are likely to be utilised over the next five years.

Pension fund - to cover the potential liability associated with membership of one multi-employer defined benefit local government pension schemes. It cannot be estimated when this will be utilised.

Maintenance fund - to provide funding for major repairs of properties which the charity has responsibility for. These funds are used, reviewed and maintained ongoing.

Intangible fixed assets - relates to the portion of reserves invested in intangible fixed assets to be used by United Response in its operations.

Tangible fixed assets - relates to the portion of reserves invested in unrestricted tangible fixed assets to be used by United Response in its operations. This decreased during the year by £497,000 due to a transfer from unrestricted general funds.

2022 Comparative Disclosures	Balance 31 March 2021 £'000	Transfers during the year £'000	Generated during the year £'000	Utilised during the year £'000	Balance 31 March 2022 £'000
Property fund	1,061	-	-	-	1,061
Pension fund	100	-	-	-	100
Maintenance fund	250	-	-	-	250
Intangible Fixed Assets	-	8	-	-	8
Tangible fixed assets	5,284	(175)	-	-	5,109
Total designated funds	6,695	(167)	-	-	6,528
Unrestricted general funds	20,275	265	460	-	21,000
Total unrestricted funds	26,970	98	460	-	27,528

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

20. Capital commitments

There were no capital commitments in either 2022 or 2023.

21. Operating Lease commitments	Land and buildings		Vehicles	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
payments under non cancellable operating leases:				
within one year	653	951	125	188
within two to five years	452	808	153	35
after five years	118	24	-	-
Total	1,223	1,783	278	223

22. Subsidiary Undertakings

All subsidiaries have their registered address as the same as United Response: 7th Floor Knolly's House, 17 Addiscombe Rd, Croydon, CR0 6SR.

In January 2019, United Response Services Limited (URS) was formed as a wholly owned subsidiary of United Response. URS is registered as company number 11788717 and £100 share capital was invested by United Response. On 1st April 2019, the entity commenced trading. United Response Services Limited carries out trading activities with local authorities on behalf of United Response Limited.

United Response has a wholly owned trading subsidiary, United Response in Business Limited, company number 3787676. It was incorporated in Great Britain to carry on trading activities in accordance within the objects of the charity. Operations ceased as at 31st March 2021 and net asset balances were transferred to the parent on 21st December 2021.

In 2016 the charity acquired Robert Owen Communities (ROC), a UK charitable company with registered charity number 517845 and company number 02038915. ROC has been dormant since 2019.

The tables overleaf show the impact of the subsidiaries on the results of the Group.

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

22. Subsidiary Undertakings (continued)

Financial activities of Subsidiaries in 2023	2023 URS £'000
Sales revenue	53,560
Other income	172
Total turnover	53,732
Salaries and wages	-
Other costs	52,665
Total operating costs	52,665
Trading profit	1,067
Gift aid due to parent	(1,067)
Retained profit	-
Retained loss brought forward	-
Retained profit carried forward	-
Gross Assets	5,554
Gross Liabilities	(5,554)
Total Net Assets	-

2022 Comparative Disclosures	2022 URS £'000
Financial activities of subsidiaries in 2022	£'000
Sales revenue	52,386
Other income	-
Total turnover	52,386
Salaries and wages	-
Other costs	51,346
Total operating costs	51,346
Trading profit	1,040
Gift aid due to parent	(1,040)
Retained profit	-
Retained loss brought forward	-
Retained profit carried forward	-
Gross Assets	4,833
Gross Liabilities	(4,833)
Total Net Assets	0

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

23. People We Support bank accounts

The charity administers holding bank accounts on behalf of residents for the receipt and payment of the residents' personal allowances. These bank accounts have not been reflected on these financial statements as an asset or liability. The value held at 31 March 2023 was £557,000 (2021/22 - £551,000). The bank accounts are held separately from those of the charity.

24. Transactions with Related Parties

There have been no related party transactions in the year to 31 March 2023 that require disclosure other than transactions with the subsidiary companies, URS and UR's trustees. Transactions with URS are set out below and those with the trustees are disclosed under note 8

In 2022/23, the charity charged URS £52,658,000 (2021/22 - £51,339,000) in respect of the delivery of operational services.

In 2022/23, URS paid the charity £52,153,000 (2021/22 - £58,313,000) of monies collected on invoices settled.

In 2022/23, under a deed of covenant, URS will make a gift aid payment to the charity of £1,067,000 (2021/22 - £1,040,000). Payment will be made to the parent charity during the 9 months following the relevant reporting date.

As at 31/03/2023, URS owed the charity £2,072,000 (2021/22 - £1,421,000).

United Response

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

25. Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2022

(incorporating a consolidated income and expenditure account)

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £'000	Restricted Funds 2022 £'000	Total Funds 2022 £'000
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	202	156	358
Charitable activities	95,241	1,358	96,599
Investments	13	-	13
Other	-	-	-
Total income	95,456	1,514	96,970
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	246	-	246
Charitable activities	94,750	1,692	96,442
Total expenditure	94,996	1,692	96,688
Net surplus on operations	460	(178)	282
Transfers between funds	98	(98)	-
Net movement in funds	558	(276)	282
Reconciliation of funds:			
Total funds at 1 April 2021	26,970	1,718	28,688
Total funds at 31 March 2022	27,528	1,442	28,970