

Report of the Board of Trustees and the Financial Statements

For Year Ended 31 March 2021



Providing housing and personalised support for 30 years

CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED

31 MARCH 2021

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CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED
Legal and Administrative Details
as at 31 March 2021



Status: Community Benefit Society with Charitable Status

Register Number: 27440R

Regulator of Social Housing: No 4689

Regulated by: Financial Conduct Authority (FCA Mutuals)

Registered Office: Wellington House
131, Wellington Road South
Stockport
SK1 3TS
www.creativesupport.co.uk

Honorary Officers: Darrell Johnson (Chair)

Principal Staff: Anna Lunts (Chief Executive and Company Secretary)

Bankers: Barclays Bank PLC
UK Banking
1 Churchill Place
London
E14 5HP

Solicitors: Sintons LLP
The Cube
Barrack Road
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE4 6DB

Trowers & Hamblins
Heron House
Albert Square
Manchester
M2 5HD

Auditors: Beever & Struthers
St Georges House
215/219 Chester Road
Manchester
M15 4JE

Board of Trustees Report

The Board of Trustees presents its report and the audited financial statements for the Society for the year ended 31 March 2021. The financial results are presented in the form of the following:

- Statement of Comprehensive Income
- Statement of Financial Position
- Statement of Changes in Reserves
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Notes to the Financial Statements

Introduction to Creative Support

Creative Support is a not-for-profit organisation with a strong commitment to developing and delivering person-centred services for people with care and support needs and preventative services for people who are at risk of social exclusion. We provide high quality supported living, community support, supported housing, residential care and other services in the North West, North East, Yorkshire & Humberside, the Midlands, London and the South East. Creative Support has a reputation for being dynamic, enterprising and customer-focused and for finding innovative ways to deliver services. We are committed to co-production with the people we support and to working in partnership with the local voluntary sector and other agencies to find creative solutions to individual and community needs.

A Brief History of Creative Support

Our organisation was established in 1990 as 'Manchester Housing Consortium' with the aim of developing a range of housing and support services for people with mental health needs in the City of Manchester. In 1991, we registered as an Industrial and Provident Society with charitable status. We changed our name to Creative Support in 1993 to reflect our ambition to become a national provider of charitable services and to emphasize our commitment to developing creative responses to support needs. In January 2012, we registered as a provider of social housing with the TSA (now the Regulator of Social Housing), after managing high quality homes for over 20 years. We became a Community Benefit Society with charitable status in accordance with the new Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

We merged with the innovative charity known as the Space Centre in October 2013, which is now re-branded as the Creative Space Centre. Based in Preston, the Creative Space Centre provides amazing sensory experiences for children and adults with a wide range of needs. We are well-supported by the independent charity "Friends of Space" which is dedicated to raising funds for equipment and improvements for the sole benefit of the Creative Space Centre.

Creative Support purchased the private company Delos Communities Limited in 2014. Delos was well known and well regarded within Northamptonshire and the surrounding area for providing high quality, person-centred support for people with a learning disability. In January 2016, the assets and liabilities of Delos formally transferred to Creative Support. The ex-Delos services are now fully integrated into Creative Support's service provision in the East Midlands and Delos no longer exists as a registered company.

Range of Services

Creative Support currently provides a wide range of person-centred services for people with a learning disability, mental health needs and other support needs and for older people with care needs. Our service portfolio includes supported living services, community support, specialist outreach services, residential care, respite services and domiciliary care. Creative Support is a major provider of supported housing and we are proud of the quality of our accommodation schemes. Our supported housing for people with mental health needs has a strong reputation for promoting recovery, rehabilitation and empowering service users to move on to greater independence.

The supported living services we deliver for people with a learning disability are recognized as being innovative and person-centred. We provide a number of creative day services which offer service users the opportunity for personal development, social inclusion and pathways into work. We offer individually tailored support for people with autistic spectrum conditions and physical disabilities, while our complex needs services support individuals with a wide range of needs, including experience of trauma and behaviours of concern. Our Extra Care services enable older people with care needs to retain their independence and to enjoy improved quality of life. We offer personalised support for people with dementia and memory loss.

We are pleased to have built up our portfolio of dementia-specific services, which includes the highly regarded Wilshaw House Day Service in Tameside and the Laurels Care Home in Carlisle. We aim to be recognised as a skilled and committed provider of highly personalised care for older people and people with dementia at a time when the demand for such specialist care is increasing.

We continue to provide services that enable people to grow in independence and confidence and to experience enhanced choice and control over their lives. During the last 12 months we have supported over 6,000 people with care and support needs to enjoy independence, choice and wellbeing. A further 1,239 tenants have benefitted from the provision of high quality supported housing.

Our Mission

Creative Support promotes the independence, inclusion and wellbeing of people with support needs. We do this by working with the people we support, their families and partner agencies to deliver innovative, high quality services that meet individual needs and aspirations in a person-centred way.

Our Philosophy & Aims

Creative Support is committed to a person-centred philosophy of service delivery. We aim to:

- Promote rights, equality, inclusion, opportunity, choice and wellbeing
- Offer respect and unconditional positive regard to the people we support
- Practice in ways that are inclusive, non-discriminatory and anti-oppressive and challenge discrimination, disadvantage, oppression
- Empower people to express their views, be themselves and take control of their own lives
- Provide personalised, compassionate care which promotes the self-esteem, dignity and safety of the people we support
- Use an assets and strengths-based approach which builds upon the abilities, preferences, resources and aspirations of service users
- Provide active and enabling support which promotes confidence, skills and independence
- Be accountable and committed to providing high quality, safe, evidence-based care and support which achieves positive outcomes
- Promote service user involvement and co-production in service design, delivery and evaluation
- Facilitate meaningful activities, social opportunities and relationships, build social networks and encourage informal family and peer support, thereby reducing reliance on formal services
- Create pathways towards education, training, volunteering and paid employment
- Enable people to enjoy a valued lifestyle, to be active citizens and be fully included in their communities
- Deliver social value through working in partnership, engaging with communities and contributing to local social, environmental and economic strategies

Our Charitable Objectives

Creative Support continues to operate in accordance with our constitution and charitable objectives as stated in our charitable rules, which state that *'The association is formed for the benefit of the community. Its objects shall be to carry on for the benefit of the community:*

- *Providing and managing houses, hostels or social housing and any associated amenities for persons in necessitous circumstances upon terms appropriate to their needs.*
- *Providing for aged, disabled, handicapped (whether mentally or physically) or chronically sick persons in need thereof houses or hostels and any associated amenities specially designed or adapted to meet the disabilities and requirements of such persons.*
- *Providing services including care, support, day services, training, supported employment, counselling, advice or assistance, repairs, maintenance or improvement to property, in each case upon terms appropriate to their means, to aged, disabled, handicapped (whether mentally or physically) or chronically sick person in need together with the provision, procurement or management of facilities and amenities of any kind for such persons.*
- *Any other charitable objects that can be carried out from time to time by an Industrial and Provident Society registered as a provider of social housing with the regulator.*

How Our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. As detailed in our mission statement, the driving motivation for our organisation is to achieve positive outcomes for the people we support and the wider community. This aim is inherent in all of the activities we undertake and we are required to evidence that beneficial outcomes are being achieved in order to demonstrate value for money to all stakeholders. Public benefits include:

- **Enjoying and Achieving**
We directly enhance people's quality of life through support to access a wide range of meaningful opportunities within the wider and local community. This includes activities relating to education, training, volunteering, paid work, and social and leisure activities, which widen people's social networks and reduce reliance on paid services.
- **Enhanced Economic Well-being**
We promote the economic and financial inclusion of the people we support through maximising income (i.e. benefits and welfare entitlements, access to paid work or volunteering and education opportunities which will lead to paid work), minimise debt, develop daily living skills in relation to budgeting and saving and through strong partnership working with relevant agencies.
- **Making a Positive Contribution**
Our service users experience improved levels of inclusion within their communities through support to make a positive contribution to their local community. This includes enjoying legal and civil rights, undertaking volunteering opportunities and partnership working within local neighbourhoods to promote community cohesion.
- **Staying Safe**
We work hard to keep vulnerable people in the community safe who would be at risk without our support. We support people to develop an awareness of personal safety issues and to wherever possible avoid activities which will cause them harm. We support people to access aids and assistive technologies which keep them safe whilst enabling independent living in the community.
- **Being Healthy**
We promote health and well-being for people as a key theme in all support delivery, including advice and support around good diet and nutrition, exercise, relaxation and a range of health initiatives, including smoking cessation. We support people to access the full range of resources available to them (including primary and secondary health care services) and to enjoy an equal, if not better, level of healthcare than the general population.

- **Equality of Opportunity**

Creative Support is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all, including staff and service users. We ensure this through fair access to services, anti-discriminatory practice, culturally appropriate service provision and the proactive recruitment of a diverse workforce.

- **Investing in People**

As an Investor in People (Silver Award) and the employer of a significant workforce of over 5,000 people, we pride ourselves on the level of investment we make in the development of our staff. This includes free access to accredited training schemes and opportunities for career progression. We have also participated in a number of apprenticeship and work placement schemes to enable people to gain work experience and valuable qualifications.

Accountable and Cost Effective Governance

The Board is committed to ensuring effective governance and financial viability and to the further development of the strategic planning, risk management and control framework, within which we manage our housing assets and social care services. Creative Support has adopted the NHF's Code of Governance and is moving towards the adoption of the 2020 version. The trustees have undertaken a recent compliance review and the Board confirms that it complies with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard.

As a not-for profit Registered Provider of Social Housing and provider of social care services, all our assets and resources are used to further our charitable objectives. Our Board and senior managers have a strong commitment to our charitable ethos. This is reflected in the remuneration policy. Our Board of Trustees do not receive any payment for their governance duties, other than for expenses incurred.

We held seven full Board meetings over the year 2020-21 and a well-attended AGM took place over zoom on 24 September 2020. Our committees in the areas of Finance & Audit, Quality, Human Resources and Housing have met regularly throughout the year. In addition, 'task and finish' meetings have completed pieces of work covering a range of issues, including Health & Safety, Risk Management and Governance. Our trustees have also made informal visits to services and held a virtual 'Meet the Board' event for the people we support in December 2020. Two of our trustees provides oversight of the governance of our Complex Care Case Register.

We maintain a record of attendance at Board meetings, which is published below. This does not fully reflect the wider work of the trustees. We would like to thank all of the trustees for attending Board meetings but also for giving their time and expertise on a voluntary basis to attend other meetings and events, undertake interviews, visit services, preside over appeals and offer constructive challenge and professional advice.

Our trustees bring with them a range of valued knowledge and experience from diverse fields, including housing, social care, business consultancy, education, finance and human resources. We would especially like to thank the trustees who chaired the Committees during the year, including Paul Calland, Joolz Casey, Pete Gibbs and Sharon Burns. We would also like to thank Lorraine Gainsborough who has provided excellent support and assistance to the trustees in her role as PA to the Board. Lorraine retired at the end of July 2021 after 16 years of service with Creative Support. To mark her retirement she received warm speeches of appreciation and gifts from the Chair and trustees.

Record of Attendance at Board Meetings 2020 - 2021

The attendance of trustees at Board meetings held throughout the year is as follows:

Trustee	May 2020	July 2020	Sep 2020	Sep AGM 2020	Oct 2020 Special Meeting	Nov 2020	Jan 2021	Mar 2021	Total
Darrell Johnson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AP	✓	✓	7/8
Kashif Ali	✓	✓	AP	✓	AP	✓	AP	✓	5/8
Paul Calland	✓	✓	✓	AP	✓	✓	X	✓	6/8
Joolz Casey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8/8
Sharon Burns	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AP	✓	7/8
Darren Cormack	✓	✓	✓	AP	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/8
Pete Gibbs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AP	7/8
Fiona King	✓	✓	✓	✓	AP	✓	✓	✓	7/8
Mark Pearson	✓	✓	AP	AP	✓	✓	✓	✓	6/8
David McKnight	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AP	✓	AP	6/8
John Rodgers	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	0/8

Key	
✓	Attended
AP	Gave apologies
X	Did not attend or send apologies
S	Sickness

Key Strategic Business and Financial Aims

Our Board of Trustees and Management Team devised a 4 year Strategic Business Plan in 2016. A number of key business and financial aims emerged from the plan and from subsequent reviews. Our achievements in relation to these key aims in 2020-21 are set out below.

	Aims	Outcome	Comments
1	To grow our national social care and supported housing business in a sustainable way	Achieved	We continue to deliver a wide range of services and housing options to customers in 66 local authorities across six English regions. Our turnover increased by £7.5 million during 2020-21 (5.8%).
2	To be successful in over 50% of our tender and framework submissions	Achieved	We were successful in 58% of tender and framework submissions in 2020-21, as compared with 67% in 2019-20 and 47% in 2018-19.
3	To continue to invest in new social housing assets	Partially Achieved	As the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic lessens, we have begun making modest plans to acquire or build properties for use as supported housing in the years ahead. The first such property acquisition was completed in September 2021 in Fleetwood, Lancashire, for use by homeless people with complex needs.
4	To maintain over 90% 'Good' and above ratings in our CQC inspections and to achieve at least two 'Outstanding' ratings	Partially Achieved	We had achieved a quality rating of 'Good' or above in 87% of our CQC inspected services as at 31 March 2021, as compared with 86% at 31 March 2020. Two 'Outstanding' CQC ratings were achieved by our services in Doncaster and Essex at their first inspection in 2020.
5	To increase our operating surplus	Achieved	We delivered a surplus of £11.8 million in 2020-21 (8.8% margin) as compared with £5.0 million in 2019-20 (4% margin).
6	To increase our cash reserves	Achieved	As at 31 March 2021, we held cash balances of £16.1 million compared with £7.5 million in 2019-20, an increase of 115%.
7	To reduce our total and percentage spending on agency staff	Achieved	We spent £4.4 million on agency staff during 2020-21, as compared with £9.8 million in 2019-20, a reduction of £5.4 million (55%). The contribution of agency staff costs to total staff costs over the period fell from 9.3% to 4.1%.
8	To increase the productivity of our staff	Achieved	The productivity of our staff increased from 122.2% at the end of 2019-20 to 128.0% at the end of 2020-21.
9	To reduce our overall borrowings and expenditure on interest payments as part of a medium term financial strategy	Achieved	As at 31 March 2021, we had loans of £18.0 million compared with £26.6 million in 2019-20, a reduction of £8.6 million (32%). Borrowing has further reduced since the year-end, with total loans standing at £17.1 million at August 2021. Interest costs arising from loans amounted to £659,000 in 2020-21, as compared with £903,000 during 2019-20, a reduction of £244,000 (27%).
10	To further build our charitable reserves and balance sheet	Achieved	As at 31 March 2021, our total reserves (net worth) stood at £73.9 million, compared with £63.3 million in 2019-20, an increase of £10.6 million (16.9%).

Principal Financial Risks and Challenges

Our Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team have worked together to maintain and to regularly review and update our corporate Risk Register, which identifies the main areas of risk and ensures that effective controls are in place to mitigate these risks, wherever possible. We have identified the following principal financial risks and challenges.

Principal Financial Risks	Approach to Reducing & Managing Risks
<p>Social Care Contracts</p> <p>Continued reduced funding in real terms for local authority funded social care has resulted in higher eligibility thresholds, reduced care packages and increased charges to service users. This could result in under-funded or loss-making services and unsustainable contracts.</p> <p>Prevention Services</p> <p>Prevention services are under threat as hard-pressed councils shift attention and resources towards statutory provision. There is a risk that prevention services will be further cut or de-commissioned.</p> <p>Commissioning Environment</p> <p>Some local authorities are taking outsourced services in-house or creating arms-length wholly owned care companies. Commissioners may decide to use some freedoms post-Brexit to award contracts other than by transparent and competitive processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We work collaboratively with commissioners and care managers to remodel services so as to increase their viability, while maximising outcomes. • We engage positively with initiatives such as the 'Three Conversations Model,' 'Just Enough Support' and the implementation of assistive technologies, which may reduce costs, whilst advocating for the people we support. • We promote the beneficial outcomes and whole system efficiencies arising from investment in preventative services. • We seek full cost recovery for commissioned services, which reflects the impact of increased staff salaries and other costs. • We ensure that the customer experience for all service users, including people who pay towards or self-fund their care is positive. • We review our services and contracts, giving notice on contracts which are no longer sustainable or declining to tender for services that are not viable. • We ensure that our services are considered attractive and cost-effective in comparison with in-house alternatives.
<p>Supported Housing</p> <p>The loss of housing-related support funding could affect the sustainability of supported housing.</p> <p>The continued use of housing benefit to fund rents and service charges in supported housing is assured in the short run but may be subject to future review and restrictions.</p> <p>Housing surpluses contribute positively to the success of Creative Support's housing business. Customer demand and needs are changing and some models of provision such as shared housing may prove less attractive in the future, reducing occupancy levels and threatening viability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We review the sustainability of individual schemes, dispose of loss-making provision and seek to make efficiencies in the management and maintenance of our supported housing. • The financial and social returns on our housing assets are maximised by careful scrutiny and efficient management. • We ensure that our supported housing schemes are regarded as strategically relevant to local authorities and represent value for money. • We review and invest in our housing portfolio to ensure that our schemes are fully occupied, well maintained and continue to be attractive to customers and stakeholders. • We dispose of properties that are no longer fit for purpose or attractive to customers and referring agencies.
<p>Increase in Staff Costs</p> <p>Regulatory changes relating to the National Living Wage will drive up staff costs, alongside the increased cost of pension auto-enrolment, the Apprentice Levy and the future increase in employers national insurance rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will seek fee uplifts commensurate with the uplifts in the NLW, incorporate the cost of these employment-related changes in our service budgets and aim to achieve full cost recovery. • Services will be redesigned where possible to reduce the impact of increased workforce costs. • We will work with other providers and bodies representing our sector to advocate for contract fee increases that reflect rising staff costs. • We will seek to end contracts which cannot achieve full cost recovery.

<p>Workforce Challenges</p> <p>Labour market pressures driven by Brexit, controls on immigration and post-pandemic vacancies in the wider economy, as well as competition from the NHS and other social care employers make it harder to recruit and retain staff, increasing expenditure recruitment and agency staff.</p> <p>Compulsory vaccination for staff working in care homes will result in some departures and may deter some applicants.</p> <p>Social care is widely perceived as hard and under-valued work, deterring new entrants to the workforce.</p> <p>Demographic changes and an ageing workforce present challenges.</p> <p>High quality senior staff and Registered Managers are particularly hard to recruit in a dynamic labour market.</p> <p>Our senior staff profile does not reflect the diversity of our wider workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive recruitment strategies are used, tailored to particular services and geographical locations. • We have invested in on-line platforms and social media to recruit staff. • We seek to retain our valued staff through targeted retention measures, career development opportunities and showing appreciation by a variety of awards and rewards. • As a Mindful Employer, we will further develop our offer to employees to support their welfare and wellbeing. • Expenditure on agency staffing is carefully monitored with targets for reduction and replacement with permanent staff. • We will aim to significantly increase our team of flexible bank staff and ensure that they are fully trained and effectively utilised. • Talent management and investment in training will create pathways towards management roles. • BAME staff will be positively encouraged and supported to take up training and promotional opportunities. • Our Black Lives Matter Manifesto sets out some of the changes and investment needed to support diversity at all levels.
<p>Cash Flow Pressures</p> <p>Cash flow pressures arising from changes in local authority commissioning and payment processes, disaggregated funding streams and delayed payments will create liquidity problems, and require increased resource to manage the administrative burden of these changes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will increase the resourcing and efficiency of our billing and credit control processes. • We will ensure that invoicing and income collection processes are tailored to the needs of people who pay towards or self-fund their care. • We will undertake pre-legal and legal action more readily to recover delayed payments. • We will scrutinise our debtors on a frequent basis and report outturn data against agreed targets to the Board. • We will encourage a proactive attitude among staff to engage in process improvement and solutions.

Our Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic

The biggest challenge we have faced during and since the 2020-21 financial year has been the unprecedented global coronavirus pandemic. In March and April 2020, an increasingly grave situation was unfolding, with escalating numbers of Covid-19 infections, hospital admissions and deaths. There were fears that the NHS could be overwhelmed like the health system in parts of Northern Italy. It was clearly imperative to support our front line staff and services to keep going through challenging times. We agreed that our priorities were to:

- **Protect** life and reduce pressure on the NHS
- **Provide** essential care services
- **Prevent** transmission of the virus
- **Promote** morale and wellbeing
- **Plan** effectively to meet the coronavirus challenge

The adoption of this clear set of principles guided us through the especially challenging early days of the pandemic. We established an agile Coronavirus Response Team to quickly devise new policies, scan the ever-changing government and public health guidance, record and follow up Covid-19 cases, advise and support managers and staff, promote adherence to infection control measures and deploy resources in accordance with priorities. The Coronavirus Response team is still in place and issues are discussed in the Executive Team on an ongoing basis.

We immediately adjusted to our role as keyworkers. To protect staff and service users and prevent transmission of coronavirus we implemented social distancing, promoted effective hand hygiene and ensured that our staff always had access to essential PPE. To achieve this we created a dedicated PPE purchasing team to order, manage and distribute PPE across the country. We established a network of office and 24 hour staffed locations to provide access to PPE on a planned and emergency basis as required. As government assistance with the cost and supply of PPE gradually became available from summer 2020 this supplemented our own supplies. Access to testing was very limited during this early period but we fully pursued all testing opportunities for our staff and service users as these became available.

Thanks to the dedication and resilience of our staff, all of our care services continued to provide essential care for vulnerable people. Our preventative services changed their offer to provide on-line, phone and socially distanced support. A small number of services, such as day services, closed during the national lockdown and staff were redeployed to other provisions.

We adopted a suite of HR measures and resources to support our staff with their finances and wellbeing, including the award of full pay during periods of Covid-19 related sickness and self-isolation, provision of welfare grants and loans; access to counselling and support from dedicated HR advisers. Some of our staff fell into clinically vulnerable groups, were required to shield and were therefore 'furloughed'. We worked hard to ensure that furloughed staff received regular contact and support for their wellbeing.

We established a Covid-19 Hardship Fund in the first 12 weeks of the lockdown to support staff and service users with grants and loans. We awarded a total of £18,409 in non-repayable grants to 78 staff and 6 service users. One staff member told us: *"I want to thank you all at Creative Support for helping me at such a worrying and hard time. All I can say is out of all the companies I have worked for Creative Support is by far the best company. This company has supported me with any issues I have had as best as they could and it makes me feel grateful to work for such a caring company. This company supports their staff as well as their service users."*

Our Out of Hours Team continued to operate 7 days a week and our Head Office team provided essential support for front-line services by implementing social distancing, home working (where possible) and effective infection control and prevention (ICP) and other measures, including twice-weekly testing once this became available. We acted quickly to adopt new ways of working, using phone and virtual meetings and introducing on-line induction webinars and mandatory training. Weekly senior staff online briefings and Heads of Department meetings helped us to stay informed, share good practice and solve problems. Our Board of Trustees remained responsive and flexible and offered extra strategy meetings. The senior management team felt very supported by the Board with access to efficient and informed decision making.

In some cases, we were obliged to advocate very assertively with health colleagues and services to ensure that the health needs of older people and vulnerable people with a learning disability were met and that their health rights as equal citizens were respected. This included challenging assumptions about individuals' quality of life and priority for treatment whilst also respecting their preferences. We monitored the health status of individuals through use of oximeters and thermometers.

As the pandemic progressed we received welcome offers of financial support from the majority of the local authorities in which we work, funded by central government. These supported us with the escalating cost of PPE, ICP and measures to sustain workforce levels and support staff to stay safe by adhering to self-isolating and other guidance. In the summer of 2020, whole service weekly Covid testing in care homes was introduced. This was extended to other regulated social care settings during the autumn/winter of 2020, enabling early identification of infection, isolation of staff and service users and proactive measure to prevent transmission.

From the outset of the pandemic, we have kept up to date statistics and live data regarding staff and service user Covid cases. This has provided the intelligence to manage outbreaks and direct resources, ensuring that our services always had good contingency plans, stocks of PPE, infection control products and devices such as thermometers and oximeters to monitor health status and to proactively identify signs of deterioration requiring medical intervention or emergency hospital admission. Our HR team proactively contacted all employees who tested positive for Covid, sending oximeters and health information and supported staff who acquired symptoms of long Covid to return to the workplace when appropriate and receive follow up support.

The second wave of Covid infections hit the nation in January 2021 as the new Delta variant circulated. This was the hardest of times and sadly, we lost a number of service users and staff members during this stressful and difficult period. We have no doubt that the relaxation in social distancing to enable people to spend times in each others' homes over Christmas fuelled this second wave and led to widespread community transmission. We worked closely with public health bodies and infection control experts to prevent and manage outbreaks. To maintain our focus and morale we initiated our 'Doing the very BEST we can' campaign, promoting the unifying message of **Being Prepared**, **Engaging others**, **Showing appreciation** and **Together fighting Covid**.



In January 2021, Covid-19 vaccinations began being made available to older and clinically vulnerable people and staff working in health and social care. We quickly devised and drove through a comprehensive campaign to promote take up of vaccinations, including the provision of information, briefings, webinars, social media, a regular vaccination blog and a dedicated vaccination supervision for every staff member. We enabled staff to attend vaccinations in work time and offered our permanent staff vaccination incentive payments of £100 for the first vaccination and £50 for the second. Our bank staff were offered £50 for the first vaccination and £50 for the second. All our staff who were vaccinated were sent a thank you letter, an enamel badge and promotional tote bag displaying the message "I'm proud to work in social care, I'm proud to have had the vaccine, I'm proud to help fight Covid".

We also worked hard to promote vaccinations for services users and offered our mental health clients a £20 incentive to get vaccinated, encouraging vulnerable people to take action to protect themselves. We enabled a number of service users who were terrified of injections to undergo de-sensitisation and other interventions to enable them to have the vaccine. All of these measures ensured a rapid take up of vaccination by the majority of our staff and service users. We quickly saw that vaccination was a 'game changer' breaking the link between the incidence of infection and serious illness, hospital admission and death.

In addition to the national lockdowns and restrictions, many of our staff and service users live in areas that were subject to long periods of stringent local restrictions, including parts of the North West and Midlands, with Bolton, Blackburn and Leicester being particularly impacted. All of these adverse conditions affected our staff and service users and impacted on their quality of life.

In the latter half of 2020-21, CQC carried out a number of focused CQC inspections which targeted infection control measures and without exception these were very positive, commenting favourably on our provision and use of PPE, infection control measures and our provisions to support staff welfare and service user health.

During this challenging period, we maintained occupancy levels in our supported housing and carried out all mandatory safety checks and essential maintenance work. Some refurbishment work and non-essential repairs were delayed due to government restrictions and shortage of available contractors. However, we quickly made headway in programming these works.

As we finally eased out of lockdown in the spring of 2021, we found ways to safely provide services that had closed or reduced in scope. Our priority remained the prevention of coronavirus transmission and a huge effort was made to ensure high standards of infection control. In some cases we have been able to use government grants to help pay for ICP measures.

The full financial and business impact of the pandemic is not yet fully known, as further waves of infection may occur, but the principal financial impacts in 2020-21 were as follows:

- A small reduction in actual turnover compared to budget, due to services which have been reduced or unavoidably suspended
- Significantly higher expenditure on PPE, ICP measures and staff support
- Increased spending on staff sick pay for periods of sickness and self-isolation (made worse by poor availability of testing and delays in receiving test results)
- Reduced use of and spending on agency staff to prevent transmission
- Improved timing of cash receipts as local authorities act to support the social care sector through advance payments and other measures

Despite the challenges, we developed close partnerships with agencies such as Public Health Teams and we experienced stronger relationships with many of our stakeholders during this time. A local authority commissioner told us that during the pandemic, Creative Support have been a stand-out provider, sharing positive news, keeping residents safe and being innovative in the way we have approached activities.

It was very distressing for families who were not able to visit their loved ones in services and we worked hard to facilitate safe visiting policies where this was possible, working closely with public health bodies to follow up-to-date advice, whilst advocating for the people we support. Families have appreciated regular, personalised and open communication and gave us lots of positive feedback, such as *"please pass on to the staff team that they have done a fantastic job (during lockdown), I can see how happy and settled J is when we FaceTime. I can't imagine how she would be doing if she was still in her previous placement."* A family member giving feedback regarding a supported living service in Trafford.

In the summer of 2021, the Government announced that it intended to pass legislation making vaccination mandatory in care homes. We took the difficult but significant decision not to employ new staff in any roles after the beginning of August 2021 who have not been vaccinated, unless medically exempt, and to stop using the services of relief staff who have not been vaccinated as of November 2021. Through these measures, we are moving towards becoming a fully vaccinated workforce and setting a standard in our sector for protecting our service users and colleagues.

We remain vigilant and going forward we will be staying on high alert, maintaining our focus on being prepared, collecting data in real time, planning ahead and doing everything possible to keep our staff and service users safe, whilst working to maintain and develop their quality of life and to safely enjoy new freedoms.

THANK YOU



**FOR SUPPORTING THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID
AND GETTING FULLY VACCINATED!**

Going Concern Statement

The Society's activities, its current financial position and factors likely to impact on its future development and prospects are set out within the Trustees Report. The Society has a strong balance sheet, well-structured debt facilities, cash reserves, and generates positive cash flow from surpluses generated by operational activities. These elements combine to provide sufficient resources to continue delivering high quality accommodation and care services whilst maintaining and investing in the Society's assets.

The ongoing Coronavirus pandemic will continue to present challenges to social care and supported housing providers, and has significant wider social and economic impacts. However, the success of the national vaccination programme and the Society's rigorous adoption of testing and infection control measures have proved successful in preventing the spread of infection and managing cases of Covid-19. The overall demand for adult social care and supported housing remains strong and the level of activity is expected to increase or remain at current levels.

During 2020-21, the Society made significant repayments of debt. The Society's forecasts demonstrate that it can make planned debt repayments and service its debt facilities whilst continuing to comply with lenders' covenants. On this basis, the Board has a reasonable expectation that the Society has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of at least twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in the financial statements.



Achieving Value for Money

We are committed to achieving Value for Money across all our activities in accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Value for Money Standard. As a Registered Provider of Social Housing, we are required to:

- Adopt a strategic approach to achieving value for money in meeting our objectives
- Robustly assess the performance of our assets and resources (considering financial, social and environmental returns and taking into account our charitable status and the interests of our stakeholders)
- Manage our resources economically, efficiently and effectively to provide quality homes and other services
- Plan and deliver on-going improvements in value for money

We achieve Value for Money in the following principal ways:

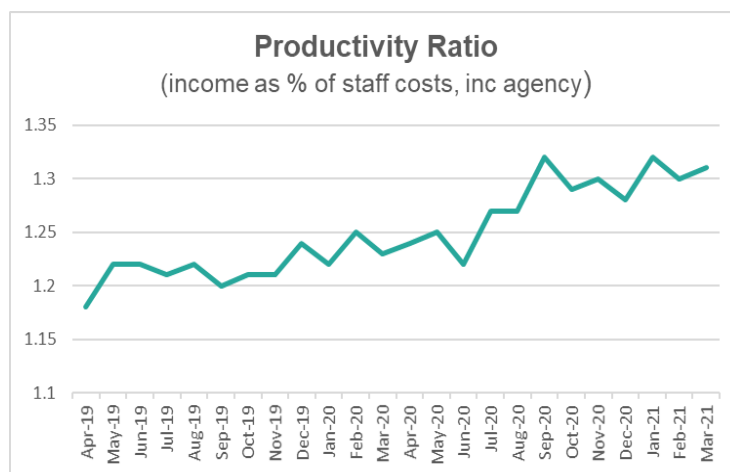
- Developing and funding new supported housing provision
- Efficient management of our housing and other assets
- Using and managing our resources (including human resources) efficiently to maximise beneficial outcomes by delivering cost-effective, high quality housing and social care services
- By delivering public benefit and added social value to our services users, stakeholders and the communities within which we operate.

We are pleased to be able to demonstrate:

- Continued investment in maintaining the quality of our housing assets
- Review and planned disposal of housing assets which are not contributing to our financial or strategic plans
- Improvements in fire safety and access for disabled tenants
- Efficient expenditure on infrastructure and back office costs
- Increased labour productivity
- Effective policy to manage cash reserves and to reduce debt levels and interest payments
- Evaluation of tenders and housing opportunities to achieve optimum use of available resources
- Geographical considerations of new business to ensure efficient local infrastructure.

We have an efficient and lean central infrastructure and senior management team, which is kept under periodic review to ensure sustainability. The contribution of senior staff pay to our overall expenditure is lower and more cost-effective than for many comparable providers, demonstrating a commitment to fairness and value for money. However, we balance cost with productivity and the achievement of our charitable objectives. Talent management and investment in professional and management training underpins the effectiveness and retention of senior staff. We have created internal pathways towards middle and senior management roles and we are pleased to have enhanced our senior team through internal development as well as external recruitment.

Reports of our performance in relation to business targets and KPIs are made to the Committees and the full Board on a bi-monthly basis. For example, we have reported on our staff productivity ratio, which has demonstrated improvement over the last 2 years.



Value for Money Standard

In April 2018, the Regulator of Social Housing published a new Value for Money Standard, which stipulates that we report against a number of standardised metrics in our financial statements. The standardised metrics for Creative Support are published below with a brief commentary. The metrics are compared with a peer comparator (a specialist provider of supported housing) and with the average results for the social housing sector. We have included results against the mandatory metrics for 2020-21, with comments on the performance achieved. Projected metrics have been set for the 2021-22 financial year.

Key Metrics - Value for Money Standard

Ref.	Metric description	Detail	Creative Support			Peer Comparator	RSH Global Accounts 2019 - Median
			Actual 2019/20	Actual 2020/21	Projected 2021/22	2019/20	2019/20
1	Reinvestment %	During 2020-21 we focused on investing in existing stock, including the Hollins Drive scheme which has been brought back into letting. We anticipate an increase in such investment in 2021-22.	0.59%	0.57%	3.33%	4.20%	7.20%
2A	New supply delivered (Social housing units) %	In 2020-21 we concentrated on investing in existing social housing units and reducing debt levels. We plan to re-commence investment in developing new housing units in 2021-22	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.10%	1.50%
2B	New supply delivered (Non-social housing units) %	Not applicable	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
3	Gearing %	Greatly reduced gearing in 2020-21 reflects our planned approach to paying down debt in the light of positive cash flow. We expect this to fall further in 2021-22 with additional ad-hoc re-payments of debt in excess of scheduled payments.	24.98%	2.44%	-7.37%	1.40%	44%
4	Earnings before Interest, Tax, Depreciation, Amortisation, Major Repairs Included (EBITDA MRI) Interest Cover	This much-improved metric reflects the increased surplus on operating activities in 2020-21. We expect this to improve further in 2021-21.	634.21%	1892.14%	1915%	478.00%	170.00%
5	Headline social housing cost per unit	Supported housing is widely acknowledged as being more expensive to operate than general needs social housing, although we compare well with our peer comparator.	£7,103.00	£7,680.00	£8,110.00	£12,486.00	£3,830.00
6A	Operating margin (social housing lettings only) %	The improved operating margin on social housing reflects the effective control of costs during 2020-21. However, we expect costs to rise in 2021-22, impacting somewhat on the margin.	14.96%	23.37%	19.17%	10.10%	25.70%
6B	Operating margin (overall) %	The increase in the overall margin is related to improved financial performance over the wider business in 2021-22.	4.55%	9.14%	6.54%	4.10%	23.10%
7	Return on capital employed (ROCE) %	The increased ROCE reflects improved operating performance in 2020-21.	8.87%	13.08%	8.91%	1.80%	3.40%

Overview of the Funding Environment

The social care system in the UK is widely regarded as being chronically under-funded and not being fit for purpose. It is failing the people who rely on it, with high levels of unmet need and providers struggling to deliver the quality of care that people have a right to expect. These combine to place great pressures on families and carers. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated many of these problems, including increasing levels of unmet need and further destabilising the already fragile care provider market.

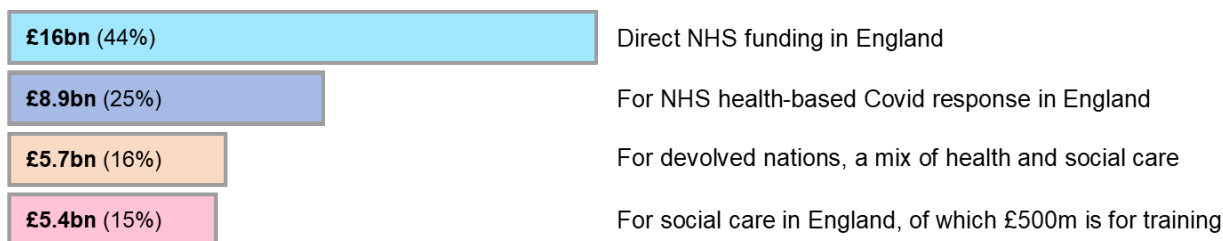
Nearly 1.4 million people aged 65 and over and 560,000 people of working age requested support from councils in England in 2019-20. This will soon rise to over 2 million people, as demand increases, fuelled by demographic changes and against a backdrop of a post-Covid backlog of people awaiting needs assessment. Local authorities spent £23bn on adult social care in 2019-20, up more than £1bn from the previous year, according to the King’s Fund. However, despite rising demand, in real terms, it is only £100m higher than in 2010-11. In contrast, the total NHS England budget is £136bn.

Successive governments have pledged, and then failed to ‘fix’ the funding crisis in social care, putting off fundamental reforms and opting instead for short-term measures. In the past 20 years, there have been numerous failed attempts to find a way forward, including 12 White Papers, Green Papers and other consultations about social care in England as well as 5 independent reviews and commissions. Boris Johnson launched the government’s new social care funding reforms on 7th September 2021, promising a once-in-a-generation shake-up of adult social care and how it is funded, which will also help pay for a post-Covid catch-up programme for the NHS. A plan was outlined to finance adult social care through tax changes, to modernise the social care system and ensure it is better integrated with healthcare. In the short term, much of the money being raised will fund the NHS to catch up with elective surgery and other delayed treatments.

The new funding will come from an additional 1.25% increase in national insurance contributions for all employees earning more than £9,500 per annum, employers and the self-employed, with the same rise in dividends tax, as of April 2022. The tax rise will be re-branded as a Health and Social Care Levy from April 2023, which will appear separately as such on people’s tax records. These tax rises will disproportionately impact on the working age population (a typical 25-year-old today will pay an extra £12,600 over their working lives). In contrast, pension and rental income will not be subject to the Health and Social Care Levy.

The Levy is expected to raise an additional £12bn a year for health and social care. Over the next three years, £36bn will be raised, with £5.4bn earmarked for social care in England, including £500m protected for training. £16bn will be used for direct NHS England funding, £8.9bn will be used by NHS England for what is termed a ‘health-based Covid response’ and £5.7bn will go to the devolved nations (Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) to cover both health and social care.

How the new £36bn revenue over three years will be spent:



A new means testing system will be introduced in 2023. Currently in England, if people have assets over £23,250, they pay for all their social care, and there is no cap on costs, meaning some people have to sell their homes to fund these. Under the new system, anyone with assets below £20,000 will not have to pay anything from these, although they might have to make a contribution from any income. Those with assets from £20,000 to £100,000 will have to contribute, on a sliding scale, although the details are not set out, and it depends on contributions from local authorities, which deliver much of social care. However, people in this bracket will not contribute more than 20% of their assets each year, and once their assets are worth less than £20,000, they would pay nothing more, although they might still contribute from any income. Those with assets above £100,000 must meet all fees until their assets fall below £100,000. There will be a maximum lifetime payment towards care of £86,000, calculated as being equivalent to three years full time care.

It is not clear what proportion will be allocated to social care at the end of this three-year funding programme. The Government insists that the exceptional demands on the NHS will reduce, and there will then be more money available for social care. However, NHS budgetary demands have rarely, if ever, gone down in the past. The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has claimed that the funds raised will leave negligible amounts to fulfil the government's renewed commitment to "fix" social care. The IFS pointed out that in all but two of the 39 years between 1982 and 2020 the NHS in England has ended up getting more money than ministers had planned. The health service has typically begun the year with a 2.7% budget boost but ultimately received a 4.1% rise, it said. In an analysis of how the proceeds of the hike in national insurance will be used, the IFS concluded that: *"The experience of the last 40 years shows that NHS spending plans are almost always topped up. If history repeats itself, the 'temporary' increases in NHS funding announced this week could end up permanently swallowing up the money raised by the tax rise"*. By 2024-25, with the extra money that the NHS is due to receive, it will be consuming 44% of all public service spending, up from 27% in 1999-2000. The Resolution Foundation states that the "Health and Social Care Levy *"means Britain is set to become more and more of an NHS-dominated state"*.

The funding has been fairly positively received by bodies representing the NHS. The King's Fund comments: *'Overall, we welcome the historic levels of investment in both the NHS and social care announced today. However, a large dose of realism is needed. Social care will see only £5.4 billion over three years, with no guarantees of sustainable funding beyond this. The cap on care costs – which will consume nearly half the funding – will protect people from the very high costs of long stays in residential care, but setting it at £86,000 means it will help relatively few people. The changes to the means test are very welcome and will bring thousands more people into the publicly funded system. However, there is a real risk this will leave inadequate funding to bring about meaningful change in areas such as workforce, access and quality.'*

The Health Foundation said the £1.8bn a year for the sector would not "fix" social care, which will need an extra £9.3bn a year by 2024/25 to meet the growing demand for care caused by the ageing population, to improve the quality of care, "stabilise" the care home market and pay care staff better. Their analysis suggests that at least £6bn extra a year is needed to keep social care from further deteriorating in England and that the £1.8bn new funding for social care falls well short. The Government's 32-page plan states that councils will have access to sufficient funds to meet their social care demands, but local authorities have complained that they will be left short.

Social care sector leaders and other bodies have become increasingly concerned about the meagre resources set out in the proposals. Natasha Curry of the Nuffield Trust said the government's plan had left social care *"feeling short-changed and bitterly disappointed at the proposed funding levels and timing of reform, the ability to make real improvements to care services will now depend on whether these funds can be excavated from the health service further down the line. Taking money away from the NHS is a task that has not been done before."* Nadra Ahmed, Chairman of the National Care Association, which represents independent care operators, commented *"Boris Johnson's claim that this was about 'fixing' social care was misleading because the body of the plan was about NHS recovery. This is a recovery plan for the NHS and that is very obvious. The funding pot being talked about for social care is not sufficient to even address the issues of today."*

For Creative Support, the increase in funding for social care, whilst welcome, seems woefully inadequate in the context of current demands and historic underfunding of the true cost of care. Fee levels rarely keep up with increases in the minimum wage and fall far short of the funding levels required to offer decent salaries to attract and retain care workers and managers in the current competitive job market. From April 2022, we will face a 1.25% hike in employer's national insurance, adding significantly to payroll costs and the prospect of increasing competition for skilled staff from a more generously funded NHS. The 1.25% increase in NI will reduce the take home pay of our staff and will add to the fiscal burden on working people on low and modest incomes, further increasing expectations for wage increases.

We need a level of funding which is adequate to meet today's demands, to pay our staff properly for the skilled and responsible work they do and to ensure a sustainable future for social care, which enables long-term planning and a focus on prevention to reduce the future demand for care. In the meantime, we expect to see hard-pressed local authorities struggling to balance the books and to keep trying to resist calls for funding to providers to match the rising cost of care.

Introduction to our Audited Financial Statements for 2020-21

Creative Support acquired Delos Community Limited in 2014. We successfully integrated the operations of the Northamptonshire services into the Creative Support infrastructure 5 years ago. Since then, Delos Community Limited has been dormant and has subsequently been dissolved as a separate legal entity. Group accounts are therefore no longer required, and the financial statements presented in this report are for the Society for the year ended 31 March 2021, with comparatives for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Turnover

During the 2020-21 financial year, the Society's total turnover arising from all activities grew by 6% with an increase of £7.5 million to £135.37 million, as compared with £127.87 million in the previous year. Total turnover included £12.12 million in respect of social housing lettings, £111.38 million generated by community care contracts and £7.75 million for prevention and wellbeing services. The increase in turnover was mainly attributable to growth in income from community care contracts which increased by £5.1 million (4.8%). Additional income was received via Central Government contribution to Covid related costs including the Infection Control Fund and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Expenditure

Total operating expenditure for the year increased by a modest £0.93 million (0.8%) from £121.92 million in 2019-20 to £122.84 million. The increases in expenditure on staffing and overheads were offset by the significant sustained reduction in expenditure on agency staffing, which fell from £9.8 million in the previous year to £4.4 million, a reduction of £5.4 million (55%). The proportion of agency staff costs to total staff costs over the period fell by 55% from 9.3% to 4.1%. This downward trend in agency staff costs was sustained throughout the financial year.

Surplus on Activities

The operating surplus for the year amounted to £12.5 million, a margin of 9%, representing a 211% increase on the £5.9 million operating surplus achieved in 2019-20. The increase in surplus reflects the successful control of expenditure, particularly the reduction in the use of agency staffing. We spent £4.4 million on agency staff during 2020-21, as compared with £9.8 million in 2019-20, a reduction of £5.4 million.

There was a reduction in interest payable from £0.9 million to £0.6 million (27%) due to the reduced loan value, and the surplus for the year after interest was £11.8 million, an increase of 134% from 2019-20.

The Trustees regard the increased surplus as a very positive outcome, particularly whilst maintaining safe and effective services throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, combined with a challenging external funding environment. As a not-for-profit company, our surpluses are scrutinised by our Board of Trustees to ensure that we maintain a sufficient level of working capital and to support future investment in supported housing and our charitable activities.

Cash Flow

Cash flow was stronger during 2020-21, as compared with the previous year, which itself showed an improving cash flow position. Net cash generated from operating activities was £17.7 million, compared to £6.5 million in 2019-20. At 31 March 2021, the Society held cash balances of £16.18 million as compared with £7.51 million at the end of the previous year. The increase in cash was principally associated with the increased surplus from operating activities, less the amounts used to reduce debt during the financial year.

Loans

As at 31 March 2021, the Society held loans of £18.0 million compared with £26.6 million at the end of 2019-20, a reduction of £8.6 million (32%). Our loans were successfully re-financed on competitive and flexible terms in July 2020. A revolving credit facility (RCF) was also secured. Barclays were selected from a shortlist of high street banks and alternative lenders generated by a rigorous re-financing process commencing in 2019-20. Additional capital repayments of £1m have been made since the refinance date, and the RCF was unutilised at the year-end.

The restrictions in place due to the Covid-19 pandemic led to a reduced capital development programme, with a focus on remedial and improvement work to properties. However, as we emerge from the pandemic and associated restrictions, the reduction in gearing has put us in a strong position to commence investing in new housing options going into 2021-22.

Reserves and Fixed Assets

Total reserves for the Society have increased by 16.8%, from £63.3 million to £73.9 million. This increase of £10.7 million relates to the total comprehensive income for the year, which includes the actuarial losses relating to defined benefit pension schemes as at 31 March 2021.

Our reserves are principally represented by the equity in our fixed asset portfolio. By the end of the financial year, tangible fixed assets for the Society had reduced slightly from £77.72 to £75.83 million, following planned disposals of properties that meet our disposal criteria.

Social Housing Provision and Development

Creative Support is proud to have become a significant provider of social and supported housing. Over the years, we have built our property portfolio by re-investing the surpluses generated by our business into the purchase and development of properties, and latterly by the construction of new homes, for rental to our service users. The number of social housing tenancies directly owned or leased by the Society at the end of March 2021 was 735, a decrease of 18 units over the financial year. Our portfolio of leased and managed housing decreased overall by 108 units, principally due to cessation of the contracts for two hostel services.

We are pleased to report strong demand for our supported housing with voids available for letting averaging 5.1% in 2020-21, against a target of 5%.

We regularly review the quality and demand for our directly owned and managed properties to ensure that all properties remain viable to manage, are attractive to customers and fit for purpose. The sale of properties that are no longer required has supported the planned reduction in debt levels. We generated receipts of £1.03 million from the sale of five properties that were no longer required. We will continue to make strategic sales and disposals in order to fund our capital expenditure plans and development strategy. Further disposals of low demand properties are planned for 2021-22, releasing funding of around £1.1 million. This will support our plans to develop new supported housing provision, without the need for additional borrowing.

Capital Spending

During 2020-21, capital expenditure on properties totalled £0.47 million. In addition, there was significant IT investment to facilitate remote working, and reduce unnecessary travel whilst the Covid-19 restrictions were in force.

Our Board has approved a total capital expenditure budget of £3.4 million in 2021-22, which includes the commencement of a planned new build scheme on our Reading site, and continuing investments for improving and refurbishing existing properties. The remaining capital expenditure relates to leasehold improvements, acquisition of vehicles and IT upgrades.

Fundraising and Grants Received

We have been very grateful for the award of a number of grants during 2020-21, amounting to £211,989. We would like to acknowledge these grants and thank the grant providers for these invaluable funds:

- Friends of Space - £22,849 to purchase new equipment for the sensory rooms
- Skills for Care Workforce Development Grant - £73,900 for delivering accredited training
- Sports England funding via Blackburn with Darwen Council's 'Together an Active Future' programme of £110,000, and £5,240 via Active Lancashire towards the provision of grass roots football and inclusive wellbeing activities for men and women with mental health and other needs through our "Creative Football" project.

Social Care Contracts and Services

Our Tendering and Business Development Team enjoyed another successful year, although the number and variety of tendering opportunities was reduced due to the impact of Covid-19.

We continued to tender for inclusion on frameworks for health and social care services. Over the year, we were awarded places on eight frameworks and approved lists for health and social care services across the country. These frameworks are used by local authorities and CCGs to commission services for supported living, extra care, home care and community support. Success in these areas ensures continued access to the market for commissioned health and social care services.

We also had a busy programme of tendering for existing and new services and we were pleased to retain many contracts whilst being awarded new contracts to provide recovery-focused mental health support, person-centred care and supported living for people with a learning disability, home care and extra care services for older people.

We submitted proposals and tenders for 38 contracts and frameworks in total across 7 English Regions including the North West, North East, Yorkshire & Humberside, West Midlands, East Midlands, London and the South East. We were successful in over half of these submissions (22 contracts representing a success rate of 58%), which will contribute an additional income stream of £3 million per year. A high proportion (45%) of the contracts awarded arose from frameworks demonstrating the increasing importance of gaining places on frameworks in order to access contract opportunities.

During the year, we were delighted to be awarded contracts with two new local authorities, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Oxfordshire County Council, complementing our presence and existing work in adjoining boroughs.

Setting up new services and mobilising these contracts has involved forging partnerships with commissioners, landlords and community stakeholders and getting to know new service users, their families and multi-disciplinary teams. In some cases, this included carefully planned person-centred transition work to enable people to move successfully from family homes and other placements into their own homes. Five of the new contracts involved the TUPE transfer of staff from outgoing providers to our employment.

Type	No	Description	Locations
Frameworks & Approved Lists successfully applied for	8	Supported living services (4) Care & support services (1) Care and support at home (1) Domiciliary care services (1) Support and accommodation (1)	Gateshead Essex LB Waltham Forest Cheshire West Staffordshire Cumbria Northamptonshire Midlands Foundation Trust
New contracts awarded from competitive tendering	13	Learning disability supported living (4) Care and support at home (7) Mental health recovery services (1) Mental health supported living (1)	Gateshead Durham Birmingham Oxfordshire Cheshire West Wolverhampton Tameside Trafford
Existing contracts re-awarded on tendering	1	Mental health recovery services (1)	Birmingham
Total	22		

Services in the North West

We have continued to enjoy significant growth in the North West and to implement new service developments for people with mental health needs and learning disabilities. In this region, we were successful in our applications for commissioning frameworks in Cheshire West and Cumbria for supported living and community support. During the year, we were awarded our first contract in Cheshire West for four supported living services for people with a learning disability, located in Ellesmere Port. These services are now well integrated into our infrastructure.

Liverpool City Council has re-awarded us the funding to re-open the Liverpool Night Café, an innovative mental health crisis café which provides a warm, welcoming and supportive environment for people who are experiencing mental distress or crisis. This preventative service provides an alternative to hard-pressed statutory mental health provision.

A new intensive support service for six people with a learning disability and autism who have complex needs opened in Warrington in 2020, using newly refurbished self-contained housing in a pleasant residential area. A further service for people with complex needs has been commissioned in two adjoining purpose built bungalows in the Borough and transition work is now underway.

Our service in Fleetwood, Lancashire for people with complex needs continues to flourish. In September 2021, we completed the purchase of a property to be converted into six flats for people who require move-on accommodation with flexible, outreach support.

In Tameside we were awarded the contract for a mental health outreach service which transferred to our management in April 2021, complementing our existing mental health service provision in the Borough. Following competitive tendering, we were delighted to be awarded one of two contracts to provide supported living services to people with a learning disability in Trafford, although disappointed that some of our existing, well-respected services and staff were transferred to a new provider as part of this tendering exercise.

The Creative Together Centre, located in Swan Street, Manchester was transformed during the pandemic into a base for our national zoom programme for service users, delivering up to 10 on-line events and activities a week, including an amazing monthly disco. It continues to provide a base for our Manchester Recovery Service which provides short-term mental health recovery-focused support. During the Covid-19 lockdown, our skilled outreach workers found creative ways to safely support people to cope with isolation and mental distress. A service user wrote to us to tell us about her transformative experience of using this service: *“I was struggling with life pre CS. I know without her support and guidance over these difficult few months I would not have navigated life and avoided a hospital admission. I have had two admissions (last year and the year before). I have been able to look at positives (I find this hard!). So this is immense. I am just so thankful! I feel extremely lucky!*

Last year we were pleased to gain a place on the Greater Manchester Framework for people with a learning disability and autism who have complex needs, including additional mental health issues, behaviours of concern and forensic histories. Our complex care team are now carrying out development work in relation to individuals referred through this framework

Services in the North East

We continue to develop and extend our services in the North East, with a regional office in Teeside. We now provide services in 11 local authorities in the region, including North Tyneside, Gateshead, Newcastle, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Durham, Hartlepool, Redcar & Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough and Darlington. During the year, we were admitted to a commissioning framework in Gateshead. We also provide support from this region to people living in the town of Whitby on behalf of North Yorkshire Council. We were awarded a further contract by North Yorkshire Council to provide a supported living service for three women with a learning disability in Northallerton. The service opened in June 2020.

During the year, we successfully opened a new supported living service in the City of Newcastle, in the middle of the pandemic. The service is described as a 'Step-up, Step-down' service' for younger people with mental health and other needs. We have offered a highly responsive and person-centred service which has received positive feedback from our referrers and commissioners.

Our new service in Gateshead, known as Swanway, which offers a concierge service and personalised support to people with a range of needs living in 12 flats has flourished. We were awarded a number of community support packages for individuals following mini-tenders. Also in Gateshead, the contract for our well-respected prevention service was further extended, based on the positive outcomes we achieve for people with complex support needs, including people experiencing mental ill-health, substance misuse, homelessness and those at risk of offending.

In County Durham, we have maintained person-centred services for people with complex needs and our specialist scheme for people with personality disorders has thrived. After many years of effective, person centred support and the use of PBS strategies, we are pleased to report that the requirement for physical intervention has been removed from the care plans of all the people we support. We were successful in our submission to Durham Council as part of the Durham Mental Health and Wellbeing Alliance, enabling a platform for collaborative working with commissioners and seven other providers. The contract for our mental health housing-related support service in Hartlepool was extended for a further year.

We have been working within the new Teeside PBS framework for people with complex needs and have started a new support package with a young man to enable him to access sports such as the gym, badminton and a football group. In Middlesbrough we are developing a new mental health service which will include short stay supported accommodation as well as the provision of housing with longer term mental health support. We have also been awarded a new package which will involve supporting a woman with complex needs to move on from hospital into her own home with 24-hour support.

Services in Yorkshire and Humberside

Creative Support is pleased to provide prevention and social care services in Calderdale, Kirklees, Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield, Doncaster, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire for people with a learning disability, autism and mental health needs. In addition, we were awarded a contract by Wakefield Council to provide extra care and support for older people in the Whinn Dale scheme. The service is now well established and complements our long-standing extra care service in neighbouring Leeds.

We act as the contract manager for the Youth in Mind service, an integrated, community-based mental health service for young people with mental health needs in Bradford, Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven, funded by three CCGs. The service is a partnership between health, local authority and voluntary sector organisations working closely to help young people feel less isolated, more connected, safer and more in control of their lives and wellbeing. The Youth in Mind partnership offers a menu of support that can be accessed by young people as soon as they need it. This contract sits alongside our existing Safer Spaces Project, which offers an alternative crisis pathway for young people experiencing mental distress.

We began delivering a large contract in 2019 for the provision of supported living services for service users with a learning disability in Doncaster. A year later, we were delighted to be awarded an 'Outstanding' rating across all five quality domains at the first CQC inspection for the service. Since then the service has continued to flourish and grow. We now support nearly 80 service users with a wide range of needs in a variety of shared and single tenancy models. The service has worked very creatively throughout the pandemic to enable people to enjoy safe activities and to maintain their connections with loved ones and the wider community. The service has received many compliments and accolades in the last year. Highlighted achievements include one of the service users winning a competition in which her design was selected for the local learning disability ambassador workforce badge and one of the managers won Creative Support's Registered Manager of the year award.

The contract for our successful mental health floating support service in Doncaster has been extended for 2 years. We were pleased to be awarded a new contract for people with a learning disability in Sheffield although disappointed to lose the contract for our mental health service, known as Sevenaires, on re-tendering. We had provided this service in Sheffield for 6 years.

In North Lincolnshire, a new supported living service known as Poplar Tree Avenue opened in October 2020, with Creative Support appointed as the core support provider. Poplar Tree Avenue offers purpose-built, self-contained flats and bungalows and independent tenancies to up to 20 people with a wide range of support needs. We have already achieved some great outcomes as people transition to independent living and enjoy enhanced quality of life. More recently, we were awarded a new contract to provide floating support to people with mental health and complex needs in North East Lincolnshire and we are currently building up a skilled team to deliver this service.

Services in the West Midlands

Services in the West Midlands were provided in 10 local authorities including Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell, Birmingham, Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. We were also admitted to a new framework with Staffordshire County Council.

We continued to provide our mental health recovery service from hubs in East and South Birmingham as part of the wider Birmingham Mental Health Recovery & Employment Service contract, commissioned by the CCG and delivered by a consortium of voluntary agencies including Better Pathways and Birmingham Mind. The service offers individual recovery planning, activity groups, peer support and pathways to employment, with the aim of promoting recovery, inclusion and independence. In the autumn of 2020, the service was re-tendered on the basis of a revised specification. We submitted a partnership bid with Birmingham Mind which was successful. The new contract commenced in April 2021 and we have built an even stronger partnership with Mind, together launching a new and attractive website.

In Stoke-on-Trent, we de-registered our mental health residential care home, Robert Heath Street and successfully re-modelled it as supported accommodation. The service has been fully occupied ever since and now provides a more recovery-focused model of support, with a number of people moving onto greater independence. Our care home known as Leonora Street was the first of our services to undergo an Infection Prevention and Control focused CQC inspection and received a very positive inspection report.

We were awarded a new contract in Wolverhampton for an existing mental health service known as Firsbrook House which supports 20 tenants with mental health needs. We were pleased to welcome a team of staff who transferred to our employment under TUPE from the outgoing provider, Birmingham Heart, with whom we have established a good relationship in their continuing role as landlord for the accommodation.

We consolidated our services in Warwickshire as the remaining tenancies at Lanchester Court in Rugby were filled. We now offer support to up to 54 people across the County. In Worcestershire we have been offered the contract to provide recovery-focused support to 12 tenants with mental health needs in a new-build scheme in Redditch. The service is now being mobilised and is expected to open in November 2021.

In March 2021, we were delighted to be awarded our first contract in Oxfordshire for an existing service to support people with a learning disability. Known as Hope House, the service is located in Oxford and provides core and personalised support to 17 people with a wide range of needs. We are working in partnership with specialist landlord, Advance Housing to improve the service and the outcomes achieved.

Services in the East Midlands

Across the East Midlands, we provide supported living and community support services for people with mental health needs, learning disabilities and autism in Bedford, Derby, Leicester, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. We also provide extra care services for older people within three schemes in Central Bedfordshire.

Following a mini-competition in March 2020, we were awarded the contract to deliver supported accommodation to 20 younger adults with support needs, known as Brookfields in Great Glen, Leicestershire. The scheme is now fully established and has enabled eight people to transition towards independent living. This new service complements our other services in the County where we are the lead provider for services for a designated area of the county which includes Market Harborough.

In Leicester, our long-standing mental health supported accommodation service, Orchard House, has been re-modelled to provide a more recovery-focused service. A further contract for a mental health recovery service has been awarded by Leicestershire Council for a service known as Forrest Road.

We have a large service in Bedford to provide seven supported living services and five residential care homes for 83 people with a learning disability and autism. In the previous year we invested a lot of effort in mobilising the contract with over 150 staff transferring to our employment from three providers. Since then there has been a lot of work to fill inherited staff vacancies and to further consolidate the service improvements.

In Northamptonshire, we are now working with two unitary authorities. The newly formed Northampton (West) Council has recently asked us to provide a new mental health recovery service called Moray Lodge, in purpose-built accommodation. We have gained a place on the 'Commissioning for a Good Life: Brighter Futures Framework' which will be used to procure services for people with complex needs. We now hold regular meetings with the local commissioning team with good prospects for further development in the area

Services in London and the South East

Our Services are currently provided in five London boroughs, Barnet, Bromley, Camden, Tower Hamlets and Wandsworth. We also support older people and people with a learning disability or mental health needs in West Berkshire, Wokingham, Reading and Slough. We have gained admission to frameworks for procuring supported living services with Hertfordshire County Council, London Borough of Lewisham, Reading Council and more recently, the London Borough of Waltham Forest and Essex County Council.

We have been providing services for people with a learning disability who have very complex needs in Braintree, Essex since 2018 under the Transforming Care programme. We are building on the positive reputation and Outstanding CQC rating achieved by this innovative service. One of the service users is a very talented artist and his artwork has been selected for our annual calendar. A new service user has recently moved into the service after spending his entire life in long-stay hospitals and other institutions and experiencing a very restricted lifestyle. His transition was very carefully planned and coordinated with the wider multi-disciplinary team. His transition has gone very well and he has been supported to do many things that he has never been able to do before, such as buying furniture, shopping for food and having free access to a games console. As part of his transition to the service, he has been attending various activities and making friends with the other people living in the service.

Pelham House, our supported living service for people with a learning disability in Newbury, West Berkshire was inspected for the first time and was rated as 'Good' by CQC. During the lockdown and closure of local day services, the staff team at Pelham House converted their large communal lounge into their own pop-up day service, putting on a full day of structured activities throughout the lockdown. This provided positive routine, entertainment and skill-building for all of the tenants in the service. Melody Road, our supported living scheme for people with a learning disability in the London Borough of Wandsworth has enjoyed very positive feedback from commissioners and the multi-disciplinary team. We are very proud that one of our service users has started a voluntary job at Tate Modern. This is a fantastic role for her as she is a very talented artist.

We provide extra care services to around 300 older people in London, including three services in London Borough of Bromley, one in Wandsworth and six in Tower Hamlets. We have worked hard during the pandemic to maintain a programme of enjoyable and stimulating activities whilst keeping our service users as safe as possible. We are delighted that our contract for providing extra care services in Bromley has been extended for two years and we were pleased to report that Apsley Court was inspected and rated as 'Good' following their CQC inspection in August 2021.

Prevention Services

Funding for prevention and floating support services has been challenged by the loss of local authority funding from the Supporting People programme. However, we were pleased to have secured extensions to existing contracts for many such valued services. These included the extension of well-regarded prevention contracts in Dudley and Gateshead. The Liverpool Floating Support service for socially excluded groups has continued to deliver targeted interventions to people at risk of homelessness and exclusion in an area of significant deprivation.

Our prevention services have supported more than 3,000 people across the country by providing advice, enablement and short-term support to prevent homelessness, promote inclusion, resilience and wellbeing. Many of these services incorporate co-production, peer support and volunteering as part of the delivery model and reduce the demand for statutory health and social care services.

Transforming Care Services

During the period April 2020 to March 2021, we have continued to contribute to the national Transforming Care Agenda through the further development of bespoke services for individuals with a learning disability and/or autism. Our focus has remained on supporting individuals who have complex needs or challenging behavior to live in the community, with the right support, rather than in hospitals and institutions.

During 2019-2020, we had begun to develop Transforming Care Services in Lancashire and Essex delivering support to around 15 individuals with a learning disability, behaviour which challenges and some individuals with an offending risk or history. Since then, our development work has grown significantly and we are now working with 24 individuals who are either placed in new bespoke placements or are undergoing transition.

Service	Number of individuals supported
Thistley Green – Essex	10
Strawberry Gardens – Lancashire	6
Hollins Drive – Warrington	6
Perth Close – Warrington	2
Manchester Consortium	Under Assessment



Our key focus is to support individuals in a person-centred way to develop goals and live lives that are full of joy, achieving desired outcomes, reducing restrictions wherever possible and avoiding breakdown of placement or readmission to hospital. During the period 2019-2021, no individuals in these services have been readmitted or recalled, despite the challenges we have all faced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Creative Space Centre

Since the Creative Space Centre was deemed as essential by the Council, its dedicated team has been working hard to ensure that the centre remains a Covid-safe space by following rigorous cleaning protocols and Covid-related measures. This has allowed service users in the area to continue accessing the Centre's highly valued support and services. The Space Centre is busy moving forward with the development of their garden, an area including two fully accessible lawns with ramps, flowerbeds and a pergola decorated with bright colours and benches for seating. The Centre hopes that the new space will encourage service users to enjoy the outdoors. £50,000 has been ring-fenced for the development of the garden, funds generously donated by Friends of Space who continue to support the Centre. The Centre continues to be well booked and highly popular among service users and family members. The Space Centre has undergone an exciting new re-brand and will be hosting a launch party next spring.

Creative Football

Despite the constraints of the pandemic, Creative Football was able to offer more support than ever. Continually adapting our model as restrictions changed, Creative Football offered one-to-one coaching & fitness sessions, group sessions, walk 'n' talks, bicycle rides and on-line courses along with practical and emotional support. Our Blackburn-based project, funded by the Sport England grant and supported by Together an Active Future (TaAF) also teamed up with the Casey Group, a national company within the construction and environmental sectors. Casey employed two of our participants and continues to work closely with the project, providing sponsorship and opportunities for participants to gain experience and insight into the construction industry.

Events and Added Value

Creative Support has continued to work closely with service users, volunteers, community members and partner agencies to add value to the services we provide and the communities we work in. Some examples from this year include:

- Our 2021 Creative Support calendar was launched in November 2020 featuring a selection of service user artwork. We had 94 entries from service users to the competition to have artwork featured in the calendar – our most popular competition yet.
- During the pandemic, we launched our Patchwork Challenge Competition to make a Creative Support patchwork tapestry using patchworks created by services users. We received enough patchworks to make three tapestries and we plan to display these towards the end of 2021.
- In March 2020, we launched a Creative Writing competition with the aim of producing a creative writing anthology. In March 2021, we were thrilled to launch the Anthology, a collection of 25 creative writing pieces written by our staff and service users featuring poems, short stories and reflective writing pieces.
- We have produced three copies of our Service User magazine Creative Life, co-produced with Service Users.
- In November 2020, our Winter Wellbeing Grant was launched to help service users improve their overall wellbeing during the winter months. Service users could apply for up to £250 for a specific project or select from specific items such as bird feeders and boxes, yoga starter kits and a slow cooker. We received 95 applications, which resulted in £7,000 being awarded to services.
- January 2021 saw the launch of Kindness Week, a campaign centred on the importance of kindness and its positive contribution to our day-to-day lives.
- Due to the success of our art competitions, we have launched a monthly creative competition. Each month service users send in their artwork, photography's and crafts to be in with the chance of being crowned Monthly Creative Champion. We have so far received over 110 entries.
- As part of our Celebrate Diversity Campaign, throughout 2021 we have highlighted a theme each month and produced a newsletter and social media campaign to share stories from our staff and service newsletters, information and resources. Topics covered included;
 - LGBT+ History Month in February
 - BAME Appreciation Month in March
 - Autism Awareness in April
 - Mental Health in May
 - Learning Disability in June
 - Dignity in Care in July
 - Alzheimer's Month in September
- In May 2021, to coincide with Mental Health Week's 'Nature and the Environment' theme, we launched our Green Grants programme, an opportunity for services and service users to apply for funding to improve their garden spaces and encourage service users to get outdoors. We awarded over £6,500, which went towards helping services refresh their gardens, purchase bikes and go on day trips to areas like Lake District.

- To launch our 30th birthday celebrations, in July 2021 we released our community Creative Rocks competition. We are asking service users to decorate a rock with colours, designs and words and place it somewhere in their local community. Local service users are then encouraged to let us know when they have found one.

As of September 2021, we have been shortlisted in the Stockport Business Awards for Employer of the Year Award, Investors in People Employer of the Year Award and Inside Housing Innovation Award.

Online Service User Activities

To help our service users stay connected, in 2020 Creative Support launched a programme of virtual activities and events for service users and tenants across the country. The programme has been coordinated and delivered by the team at our national Co-Production Centre, Creative Together. After a successful few months of weekly sessions, with 166 people across the organization taking part, it was then rolled out to a weekly calendar with online activities taking place every day.

Activities ranged from cooking and creative writing to gardening, quizzes, and even a monthly disco. So far, over 950 people have taken part in these national sessions. As well as being facilitated by staff, service users have also led a number of sessions, including quizzes and arts and crafts sessions.

Employing a Large and Diverse Workforce

At the end of March 2021, Creative Support employed 5,453 contracted full time, part time and sessional employees amounting to around 3,637 whole time equivalents. The average length of service of our permanent employees is just under six years (if previous TUPE service is included) and 4.5 years (if TUPE service is not included). This is a strong indicator of high employee satisfaction and retention, demonstrating that Creative Support has a lower rate of annual staff turnover than the average for the care sector (which was running at 30.8% nationally according to recent Skills for Care figures). We continue to build our team of relief workers to ensure that we can manage peaks in workload in an efficient manner and prevent the use of more expensive agency staff. On average, around 500 of our relief workers work for us each week and all have access to our training programmes and many of our benefits.

During 2020-21, we employed 1,512 new permanent and bank staff. This includes people who have never worked in care who have been motivated by their experience of the pandemic to seek secure and meaningful employment in social care, as well as graduates and people with prior care experience. We have also welcomed back many previous employees during the year. Our HR team successfully managed 14 staff TUPE transfers over the 2020-21 financial year and welcomed 250 staff into the company.

Since Covid-19 restrictions have eased, releasing pent up demand in the wider economy we have seen the job market become highly competitive, putting huge pressure on the social care sector. In September 2021, it was announced that employment had returned to pre-pandemic levels with over 1 million advertised vacancies across the UK, the highest level for 20 years. Despite this challenging context, we received around 250 completed job applications a week throughout 2020-21, generated by comprehensive recruitment methods. The effective use of social media recruitment platforms has contributed significantly to our successful efforts to reduce the use and associated cost of agency staff. The average turnaround for on-boarding new employees and ensuring comprehensive pre-employment checks and due diligence is 34 days.

We aim to provide structured career pathways which attract new staff and enable all our employees to flourish and develop their career in social care. We participated in a number of initiatives to enable people who have been unemployed or are disadvantaged in the labour market to join our workforce and to experience high quality vocational training. We use Work Trials to give people without experience of social care the opportunity to gain supported work experience and training. We have successfully employed paid graduate interns and have recruited apprentices for trainee roles in our head office as well as our care services.



Staff from BAME groups made up 28.1% of our workforce on 31 March 2021. This demonstrates the diverse profile of our workforce and the wider social care sector and the communities in which we work. Our staff gender breakdown shows that 77% of our employees are female and 23% male. We are pleased to report that our last gender pay gap was slightly in favour of female employees in contrast with the national picture. This reflects the number of senior roles in our organisation that are filled by women. As a response to the Black Lives Matter movement, we have adopted a Manifesto for Action which includes investment in a specific post to focus on equality, diversity and inclusion and to provide dedicated HR advice and support to our BAME Workforce. In October 2021, we plan to undertake a race pay gap audit, which will help to inform our plans to support our BAME staff to develop and progress their careers within Creative Support.

Retaining our valued staff continues to be a high priority. Our salaries and benefits are competitive and are benchmarked positively against similar organisations. We know that our staff appreciate our charitable status, person-centred values, high quality training, structured career opportunities and the support and coaching they receive from highly motivated managers. Our staff awards scheme 'Achieve Q' seeks to acknowledge the hard work and many achievements of our staff, with over 250 awards being made to our exceptional staff in 2020-21. Over the year, more than 90 employees have been selected as winners of our weekly prize draws which offer £100 of vouchers to our permanent staff and £50 to £100 to our relief staff.

Staff welfare has been a major priority during the Covid-19 pandemic. Initiatives to support staff to maintain their health, wellbeing and resilience have included payment of full sick pay for staff self-isolating, provision of hardship grants and confidential advice and counselling from our partner EAP provider, Health Assured. Our EAP offers free counselling and legal advice to all employees and members of their household. During 2020-21, 553 people accessed this service, with 441 people benefitting from telephone, on-line or face-to-face counselling and 112 people receiving legal advice.

We mobilised a dedicated team of HR staff which offered confidential support to anxious, sick and shielding staff during this challenging time. Over the year we issued eight versions of our comprehensive Staff Coronavirus Policy and Guidance, which brought together all of our Covid related staff policies and provision. Our Covid staff surveys demonstrated that staff felt very well supported by Creative Support during the pandemic and confirmed that they had access to essential PPE.

Support for staff wellbeing remains a high priority. During 2020-21, we were recognised as a Mindful Employer and we have worked hard to increase the number of staff who are trained as Mental Health First Aiders. By September 2021, we had trained 10 HR officers and 145 employees across the country to carry out this important role, supporting colleagues experiencing mental distress.

We have recently developed and issued a Staff Menopause Policy which recognises the impact of the menopause on our female employees. Our new Domestic Violence Policy outlines a set of measures to support employees experiencing domestic violence, including discretionary paid leave as well as access to confidential HR support and signposting to supportive external agencies. A new, holistic staff wellbeing policy is in development to bring together all policies and measures which support staff welfare, resilience and wellbeing.

We continue to invest in our skilled and well-respected HR Team, which moved to attractive, spacious new office accommodation in August 2021. A number of HR staff are taking part in professional development programmes, including Level 5 qualifications. The commitment and expertise of our HR Team and their passion for driving forward excellence in the management and support of our people was recognised by the award of Investors in People 'Gold' status to our HR Team during 2020-21.



Black Lives Matter

Last year we outlined our commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation in the wake of the outpouring of fury and grief following the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor in the US. We are proud to have such a diverse workforce, and want to do everything we can to empower our Black, Asian, and minority ethnic staff to ensure that they feel truly valued, able to be themselves at work, and to recognise and develop their talent.

In light of this, we published our Manifesto for Action which committed us to a series of actions moving forwards. Over the past year, we have shifted the tone and focus in our communications, both internally and externally. We are having more conversations about race and equality and consider racial impact in everything we do, including policies, representation in media output, and more. We also committed to challenging ourselves and having conversations no matter how uncomfortable people may feel. This has been apparent in the EDI meetings, which have been held every six weeks for the past year.

We launched our first Black Lives Matter edition of Creative Life in October 2020, which generated much positive feedback on. In March 2021, Creative Support celebrated Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Month to celebrate the diversity at the organisation and to educate and inform on issues not discussed in the BLM Creative Life.

We are also dedicated to enabling and supporting all of our Black staff, and those from under-represented groups to progress into more senior roles and to complete accredited professional and management qualifications. We are currently encouraging our Black, Asian, and minority ethnic staff to take part in the Skills for Care 'Moving Up' programme which aids their training and will help them to progress their careers at Creative Support.

This year we have also signed up to the Halo Code, pledging that Black members staff and service users will have the freedom to wear all afro-hairstyles without restriction or judgement.

We have signed up to post all of our job adverts on specialist website BMEjobs.co.uk which specifically promotes our vacancies to Black and minority ethnic people. We are soon to sign off the job role for a Diversity Champion to accompany our HR team who will help to make changes on an individual and company-wide scale. We are also developing three anti-racism training courses which have been developed by our Training and Development team and will be rolled out as soon as possible.

This has been an unparalleled year for the health and social care sector and everyone has been tested by it. Although the implementation of our manifesto has not moved as quickly as we would have liked, we are approaching the year ahead with a renewed commitment to make real and sustainable change.

Valuing our LGBTQ+ Staff

We continue to work to achieve a positive and inclusive environment for our valued LGBTQ+ staff and service users. We have maintained our status as a Stonewall Diversity Champion, showing our dedication to championing equality for the LGBTQ+ community, and our LGBTQ+ Network has continued to regularly meet and enact positive and inclusive change throughout the pandemic.

The LGBTQ+ Network has worked to create more inclusive policies with gender-neutral language and better representation of LGBTQ+ issues, both internally and externally. The Network has also taken part in national and worldwide campaigns to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues, including the recent 'International Non Binary People's Day' back in July. These are just some of the steps the Network, and Creative Support as a whole, is doing to champion our LGBTQ+ staff and show that their experiences are being considered going forwards which is key to us remaining as a Stonewall Diversity Champion.



Supporting and Developing our People

Investors in People: Gold for HR and L&D and Silver for the Organisation

Investors in People (IIP) is a nationally recognised quality framework for benchmarking the effectiveness of leadership and people management and development practices. We were successful in November 2020 with our organisational Investors in People reassessment. The assessment was carried out over a three month period. Two IIP consultants carried out 124 individual interviews and 26 focus groups involving 144 of our colleagues across the country and 1,283 staff responded to a national survey. We are very proud that the outcome of our assessment was the retention of IIP ‘Silver’ status for the whole organisation. A separate IIP assessment for HR and L&D was carried out over a four week period and involved 40 departmental staff. We were delighted to achieve IIP ‘Gold’ standard for these teams.

We were delighted to be shortlisted in September 2021 for the Investors in People UK Employer of the Year: Silver (250+ employees).



Creative Academy Training

The Covid-19 Pandemic obliged us to introduce and establish innovative ways of recruiting, inducting and training our staff through 2020 and into 2021. To ensure that all new staff met safety requirements (as required by CQC and Skills for Care), we initiated a new role in the department which focused on monitoring staff mandatory training completions from the first day they start to work in the service. We generated a weekly report which was discussed with all senior managers and the executive team and was followed up by each Service Director. This has ensured a very high completion rate of 97% for all mandatory training. The table below is a summary of the total national, learning and training events in the financial year 2020 - 2021



Training Type	Number
Webinars (with live trainer)	810
e-learning completions	62,170
Classroom (face to face) sessions	244
Accredited qualifications (Diplomas)	68
Apprenticeships live (external)	124
Apprenticeships completions (external)	12

Virtual and Digital Learning

We have balanced keeping people safe from Covid to ensuring that all staff have the necessary training and development opportunities. All classroom training was adapted overnight to become webinar training delivered in a virtual classroom by a qualified trainer, with all teaching staff completing CPD activities in the development, management and quality of virtual learning. In the financial year, we have delivered 810 virtual classroom sessions. This has been supported by investment in our e-learning platform enabling us to increase the number of ‘seats’ per month to an average of 2000. In the financial year, we have supported 62,170 e-learning course completions in our Bridge platform. An average of 245 e-learning completions take place every working day.

Incentives for Staff to Complete Training

We have gifted £48,000 to our staff as a reward for completing a total of 10 e-learning modules. This engages staff and encourages their continuing professional development. Feedback from staff regarding our e-learning is very positive as this reduces travel and time spent away from service.

Classroom Training

We have continued to deliver classroom training where this has been fully Covid-19 risk assessed and where we were able to ensure that the environment and the staff could be kept safe by social distancing and good hygiene procedures. We have delivered and supported a total of 244 classroom sessions across the country (or sessions delivered in services with staff) within the 2020-21 financial year.

Locations	Number of classroom sessions
Barrow	25
Bedford	14
Berkshire	5
Carlisle	3
Doncaster/North Lincs	9
East Midlands	1
Essex	17
London	2
North East	73
North West	1
West Midlands	94
Total	244



Health and Social Care Diplomas

Our internal assessment team have continued to deliver our Health and Social Care Diploma programme virtually and we attained a total of 68 completions at Levels 2, 3, 4 and 5 in the year 2020-2021, with approximately 144 staff on the programme at any one time. The highest demand remains for Level 3 and Level 5 qualifications (mainly for our Senior Support Workers, Team Leaders and Registered Managers). We continue to move towards more complex roles and responsibilities for our support workers and managers. The Level 5 Leadership and Management of Health and Care Services is a requirement with the Care Quality Commission for staff seeking to become Registered Managers. By delivering these qualifications internally we are able to ‘home grow’ our talent and influence the future leadership of the organisation. We have maintained our centre approval to deliver accredited diplomas with Highfield Qualifications and Training Qualifications UK through compliance with standards evidenced by our annual inspections.



Diplomas in Health and Social Care	Completions
Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care	12
Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care	35
Level 4 Certificate in Leadership and Management of Health and Social Care Services	04
Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management of Health and Social Care Services	17
Total	68

Ten of our senior managers at Head Office are starting the ILM Level 5 in operational departmental leadership and management in October 2021. This investment will not only enhance the professionalism of our Head Office staff but will be an integral influence in creating business efficiencies through all departments and the organisation as a whole.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

We are very proud to be able to offer Mental Health First Aid to our workforce and other providers. We have invested in supporting a second staff member based in the midlands to be a qualified MHFA Instructor and we are able to offer MHFA on line webinars. A Mental Health First Aider in the workplace is the go-to person for anyone who is experiencing a mental health issue. They provide immediate support and guidance in order to prevent the mental health issue from escalating. We have a national directory of our Mental Health First Aiders and make this available to all staff so that they can access support if needed.



Mental Health First Aid trained staff	
Creative Support staff	133
External participants	33
Total	166

High Quality Training Provider Endorsed by Skills for Care

We have maintained our ‘Endorsed Provider’ status with Skills for Care, demonstrating that our training is learner-focused, high quality, contemporary and effective. This enables us to be recommended by Skills for Care as one of their endorsed, partner providers of high quality Health and Social Care training and we are featured on their website as an endorsed provider. In order to be an endorsed provider we have to provide evidence that our training is developed using national frameworks for quality, research and delivery. We must show an effective quality improvement cycle, internal and external moderation and continuing skill and knowledge development for our trainers.

Accredited Provider for the Royal Society for Public Health

During the year, we were successful with our application to become an Approved Centre with the Royal Society for Public Health. This enables us to work as a partner provider with them and deliver their nationally accredited and recognised qualifications. Initially, we plan to run some Level 1 and 2 qualifications in Health Awareness and Employability skills at our Swan Street Creative Together Centre for service users.



Apprenticeships

We supported 142 of our contracted staff to enrol on Health and Social Care Apprenticeships with external providers across the country during the financial year. These are financially supported primarily through our Apprenticeship Levy. We have a competitive internal application process for senior staff to enrol on higher-level apprenticeships. These BA/BSc and MA/MSc apprenticeships are being delivered through the Universities of Manchester, Salford, Birmingham, Warwickshire and Cumbria, helping to ensure that we are developing future leadership talent for the Society. We have 16 staff currently working towards these higher qualifications.

The government has offered financial incentives for businesses which employ apprentices through the Covid Pandemic. We have driven this through our recruitment processes and we are actively advertising for and recruiting apprentices across the country. We have claimed for 10 new apprentices (£14,500) so far through the incentive and we have until the end of October to claim for any further staff who have started working with us since April 2021.

Workforce Development Fund

We access Workforce Development Funding (WDF) through Skills for Care to support our Diploma provision. This funding is allocated through the Department for Health and Social Care and is intended to support the costs of qualification delivery. We claimed a total of £73,900 WDF funding for completed and certificated qualifications in 2020-21.

Student Placements

As an organisation, we have always seen great value in offering placements to social work students and other trainees in our diverse services. Students and trainees on placement enhance the quality of our provision, boost our reputation and awareness of our work, create new opportunities for the people we support and often lead to students returning to work for Creative Support when they have completed their qualification. Student placements in our services were suspended through the 2020-2021 academic year due to the pandemic. Teaching continued virtually and we transitioning back to the classroom and service placements in the coming academic year. We have seen Apprenticeship Degrees taking over some of the historic, academic BA/BSc programmes at some Universities. In early 2021, we employed a dedicated post in our Business Development Team to re-launch our student placement programme and to recruit and support student placements and apprentices.

External Sales

We have a team member who is now focusing on external training sales and managing our networking with other providers which is proving to be financially beneficial for the business. Sales were very low (£3,477) through the financial year of 2020 – 2021 due to Covid. Since then demand has picked up and already we are projecting sales until the end of September 2021 of £9,500. Sales will be a focus in the coming year and we plan to increase our presence in the commercial sector.

Leadership Qualities Framework

Our Leadership Qualities Framework has been developed through consultation with over 100 staff at all professional levels and sets the leadership values and behaviours required by our employees. The framework is flexible and the intention is that this will be used by senior staff at all levels as a professional and personal development tool to promote effective practice and positive open cultures within our services. Over the coming year, we plan to work with an awarding body such as CIPD or ILM to have this framework accredited and recognised as a national qualification for our staff.

<p>1 DEMONSTRATING PERSONAL QUALITIES</p>	<p>2 WORKING WITH OTHERS</p>	<p>3 MANAGING AND IMPROVING SERVICES</p>	<p>4 VISION AND DELIVERING STRATEGY</p>
<p>Developing self-awareness involves reflection and learning from your experiences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing self- awareness 2. Managing yourself - building and sustaining resilience 3. Acting with integrity and transparency - duty of candour 4. Continuing personal & professional development 5. Commitment to being effective and efficient 	<p>Partnership working is essential in order to provide quality, person centred services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing networks 2. Building and maintaining relationships 3. Encouraging contribution 4. Working with teams 5. Contract management 6. Working with commissioners 	<p>Managing effectively and planning for continual improvement creates quality in our services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning and managing resources 2. Managing people and performance 3. Ensuring safety of the people who use services 4. Critical evaluation 5. Encouraging improvement through innovation 6. Facilitating transformation 	<p>Having a vision and everyone working towards it enables true service development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying the context for change 2. Applying knowledge and research 3. Making decisions 4. Framing, developing, implementing and embedding strategy 5. Evaluating impact

Investors in Volunteering

We paused the recruitment and deployment of volunteers due to the coronavirus pandemic in order to minimise the number of individuals in services and prevent transmission. However, with the reduction of Covid restrictions we have been busy re-building our team of volunteers and engaging with the public to recruit new volunteers. Sarah Coull (Placement Manager) joined us this year with a remit which includes coordinating our volunteering activities. Since July 2021, we have begun a gradual reintroduction of volunteering in services where this is appropriate and where risks can be managed. A full audit of all volunteers across the country is being carried out, identifying when volunteers are safe to return and to which services.

Volunteering is currently undergoing an exciting new re-brand which will help to recruit new volunteers at recruitment events and fairs. New opportunities for volunteers are in the process of being created. We are also looking to restart our V-Bulletin newsletter to our valued volunteers which will celebrate the vital contribution of volunteers across the country.

To complement the skills volunteers will develop with us, we are looking into offering volunteers an accredited online course and have undertaken research into different providers. We have identified a Level 1 Health and Social Care qualification with a provider which may be suitable and this is under review. Similarly, new guidance and support will be planned for Volunteer Supervisors as they are starting or restarting their role, including bespoke training, to help ensure that volunteers are supported and utilised with care and due diligence. We have started the renewal process of our Investors in Volunteers accreditation for which we were granted an extension in response to the pandemic. We are currently preparing evidence for each of the six standards and identifying any areas for development.



Service User Achievement Awards

Creative Support's Service User Achievement Awards are held every month to celebrate the achievements of service users and tenants. Staff and service users can nominate someone and select which of four categories their achievement falls under either Personal Development, Health, Helping Others or Coronavirus. The judging panel is made up of service users and is held at a different service each month.

We took a break from the awards from April 2020, when the pandemic interrupted business as usual, restarting again in October 2020 with a new award for the individual who took a positive approach to pandemic life the 'Coronavirus Positive Action' Award. Since the re-launch in October 2020, we received over 130 nominations and have awarded 10 Top Prizes, 10 Coronavirus Positive Action Awards and recognised 60 Runners up.

In March 2021, Charlie* (not his real name) received the award for his resilience and personal achievements which were not halted by the pandemic. Charlie had been out of employment since the end of 2019 and, despite the many challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic, he remained optimistic and motivated to continue applying for jobs. When he has not been busy completing job applications, Charlie has filled his spare time by volunteering with different organisations. He is now a Champion for the local partnership board, a volunteer at a local charity who provide activities for blind or partially sighted people and he has also helped out at the nearby Creative Support office, where Coronavirus restrictions have allowed.

We are currently in the process of reviewing the awards structure and are working on new branding which will align the categories with the award given, encourage engagement and provide inspiration to other people we support to achieve their personal goals.

Achieve Q Staff Awards

Since the launch of our internal Achieve Q Awards in 2017, we have presented over 800 Achieve Q Awards, acknowledging the excellent care and support that our staff provide. Since April 2020, we have received over 400 nominations and have been delighted to issue 7 Gold Awards, 68 Silver Awards and over 200 Quality Marks. We also introduced a Dignity in Care award to recognise staff who have provided the most compassionate and dignified care, including end of life care, which has been awarded to seven people so far.

Achieve Q Gold Winners, October 2020: Joy Heyes and Paula Williams, Doncaster Mental Health Floating Support Service

Joy and Paula supported Pete* and Roz* (not their real names), a married couple who lived apart, to help them find funding and resources so that they could live together again. Joy and Paula helped Pete and Roz to navigate the benefits system when both their homes became unaffordable. The couple used to love having their grandchildren over to visit them, but due to financial difficulties it did not seem possible. Joy and Paula helped the couple to get food vouchers and parcels so that they could invite their grandchildren to come and visit again which *“really lifted our spirits”*. They helped Pete to get a mobility car which he said is *“fantastic!”* They also supported the couple to register with a housing association and helped them with their application so that they were successful in securing a new property, meaning they can once again live together. They put in applications for the couple so they could get additional Personal Independence Payments, Attendance Allowance, and more, so they could be even better supported. They also applied for funds from Doncaster Macmillan Cancer Information services and an award has now been granted for Roz to get new clothes. Pete and Roz said *“The future is looking bright and we are looking forward to making a new home together. This is down to the great support we have both received, thank you Joy and Paula”*



Staff Initiatives

Over the past 12 months, we have run a number of staff engagement initiatives to thank our staff for their tremendous efforts and resilience.

- Our Weekly Staff Prize Draw to bank and contracted staff has given away over £9,000 in supermarket vouchers
- On National Employee Appreciation Day on 5 March 2021, we asked staff to nominate a colleague who deserved some extra appreciation for their work over the past 12 months. We had over 150 nominations and 60 people were selected to receive a box of luxury chocolates.
- To coincide with Mental Health Week in May 2021, we had a focus on Staff Wellbeing. A newsletter was distributed full of information, resources and guidance to help support staff. We also ran a Staff Wellbeing Daily Giveaway, with daily prizes to be won including a gratitude journal, Fitbit and a pamper kit. Over 140 staff members entered the competition by downloading the new Health Assured ‘My Healthy Advantage’ app.
- As part of our 30-year celebrations, and due to the success of our Employee Appreciation day, from August 2021 we will be running a monthly incentive for staff. For one week of the month, we will be asking staff to nominate a colleague who deserves some extra appreciation and recognition and they will be in with the chance of winning one of 10 boxes of luxury chocolates. In August, we received over 140 nominations.
- A staff magazine ‘Creative People’ is currently in the planning stages, due to launch towards the end of 2021 on a quarterly basis.

Ensuring Quality and Effective Social Care Governance

Our Quality Team has worked hard to support our services to provide the highest quality of care and support and to achieve the best possible outcomes in CQC and local authority inspections. During the year, the team carried out 16 announced and unannounced internal quality audits and business compliance visits across the country. Support with quality improvement work has also continued nationally. The Quality Team have been completing a smaller number of on-site visits than usual during this period due to Covid 19 management. The necessary key focus has been on support and policy development to ensure safe Coronavirus management.

During the period of Covid-19, restrictions the Quality Team carried out Quality Scoping exercises with all services rated as “Requires Improvement” at their last CQC inspection and those awaiting their first inspection. The team have also been involved in Coronavirus management by acting as Covid Coordinators supporting managers, staff and families seven days a week.

The Quality Team takes an overview of social care governance, CQC compliance, Internal Quality Auditing, safeguarding, customer care, complaints & suggestions and person centred review processes. The Quality Team also contributes to policy development and provides practical support to managers to improve services, raise standards and promote good practice. The Quality Team have been reviewing and updating operational templates and procedures over the past year. The work is welcomed by operational managers and leads to much improved quality of records and practice.

Social care governance (SCG) meetings are taking place monthly to review concerns, data and any trends arising from quality indicators, such as safeguarding alerts, complaints, incidents, accidents and the outcome of internal inspections. During the social care governance meetings, we proactively identify services which may benefit from a quality audit, intensive monitoring or additional Quality Team input or management input. The SCG meetings feed back into our Board Sub-Committee for Quality and Practice Development.

Care Quality Commission Inspections

At the end of March 2021, Creative Support had 96 registered locations. Of these, 85 had been inspected, with 74 (87%) locations being rated as “Good” or above. Although our CQC ratings are just above the national average of 85% (CQC State of Care Report 2019 /2020), we were disappointed to have fallen below our target of 90%.

The Quality Team is working very hard to support our Registered Managers to ensure that all services currently rated as “Requires Improvement” will achieve “Good” at their next inspection. During the year, we held three well attended virtual Registered Managers conferences. We have been having regular meetings with our national CQC officer as part of the CQC Market Oversight Scheme for large providers of social care, ensuring that we have access to emerging CQC inspection themes.

	Good or Outstanding		Requires Improvement		Total Overall	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Residential Care	7	8%	5	6%	12	14%
Domiciliary/Extra Care and Supported Living	67	79%	6	6%	73	86%
Total	74	87%	11	13%	85	100%

Our Pelham House service in West Berkshire received a rating of 'Good' across the board in all five domains at its first inspection in March 2021. The CQC report is very positive, commenting that:

- *People were protected from discrimination, neglect and avoidable harm by staff who understood their responsibilities to safeguard people from abuse. The registered manager supported people to understand what keeping safe means, and how to raise any concerns they may have. Risks to people's safety had been identified, assessed thoroughly and were managed safely by staff.*
- *Robust recruitment procedures ensured only staff assessed to be suitable to work with people living with autism or a learning disability were appointed. There were enough staff to provide care to meet people's needs. Senior staff completed regular competency assessments and observations, to ensure staff administered medicines and delivered support safely in accordance with their training, current guidance and regulations. Safe infection, prevention and control practices were being followed by people and staff, including the appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE).*
- *The registered manager and senior staff effectively operated a system of supervision, appraisal, training and competency assessments, which enabled staff to deliver high quality care. Where required, staff completed additional training to meet individual complex needs. People experienced a healthy, balanced diet of their choice, which protected them from the risks of malnutrition and dehydration. The registered manager ensured people were referred promptly to appropriate healthcare professionals whenever their needs changed.*
- *People experienced good continuity and consistency of care from staff who were kind and compassionate. The registered manager had created an inclusive, family atmosphere within the service. People were relaxed and comfortable in the presence of staff who invested time to develop meaningful relationships with them.*
- *The service applied the principles and values of Registering the Right Support and other best practice guidance. These ensure that people who use the service can live as full a life as possible and achieve the best possible outcomes that include control, choice and independence. The outcomes for people using the service reflected these principles and values.*
- *People were fully involved in decisions about their care and were supported to make choices. Staff understood how people communicated their needs and wishes and delivered care which respected people's likes and dislikes. People's care was centred around their needs by staff who supported them to engage in activities which enriched the quality of their life and had a positive impact on their well-being. Staff consistently treated people with dignity and respect and were sensitive to their needs regarding equality, diversity and their human rights.*
- *People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible and in their best interests; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice.*
- *People were protected from the risks associated with social isolation and were supported by staff to maintain special relationships with friends and relatives. The provider investigated complaints to drive improvement of the service. Compliments and complaints illustrated honesty and transparency in the management of the service.*
- *The service was well managed and well-led by the registered manager who provided clear and direct leadership, which inspired staff to provide good quality care. The safety and quality of support people received was effectively monitored and assessed. This ensured identified shortfalls were acted upon.*

Complex Care Team & Positive Behaviour Support

We have continued our commitment to support services to improve the quality of lives of the individuals we support through our commitment to the Restraint Reduction Network (RRN) and our Strategic Plan. Our Strategic Plan focusses upon supporting services to focus more heavily upon preventative work and strategies through enhanced staff training, use of Positive Behaviour Support and improving approaches to Person Centred Planning to support individuals to improve their quality of life and to achieve their aspirations.

Reducing Restrictive Interventions

The table below shows the positive impact of the significant efforts and work of the Complex Care Team and staff that we train and support. It is important to note the context in which the reduction in restrictions have taken place, including the Covid Pandemic.



	May 2019	May 2020	May 2021
Breakaway	79	62	18
Physical Intervention	27	17	15
Total Restrictions	107	79	33

Positive Response Model Training and Good Governance

During April 20-March 21, we made a commitment with Positive Response Organisation to use their Model of Restrictive Intervention Training as a result of their credentials. They are led by well-respected Dr David Allen. Positive Response is committed to providing a high level of governance over how we deliver the training to our staff and use the agreed restrictive interventions. As of September 2021 we have made significant progress towards achieving 100% attendance in all aspects of the training required for our staff.

Person Centred Planning Campaign

We have seized the opportunity as Covid restrictions have reduced to promote a campaign to improve approaches to Person Centred Planning using support from our Person Centred Planning Lead. We have launched a coaching programme for our staff so we can take this opportunity to support individuals to realise their goals and dreams.

Achieving Positive Outcomes

We have lots of great examples of individuals with complex needs requiring reduced restrictions around their lives and achieving positive outcomes. For example:

LD moved into a complex care service at the start of the Covid pandemic. He had been hospitalised most of his adult life. His discharge agreement with the Ministry of Justice was at risk if his transition into the new service was not complete by a certain date. The service and hospital effectively supported this transition urgently to remove this risk. LD’s Social Worker complimented the support of the staff team in supporting LD to meet the goals of “improving oral health, reducing the risk of invasive dental treatment and making progress towards his goal to go camping through supporting camping in his back garden.” LD has made excellent progress in his new home, developing an allotment with a greenhouse and growing his own vegetables which he uses in cooking his meals.

Complex Care Governance

The Complex Care Team continues to work with our designated trustees, Joolz Casey and Fiona King during regular quarterly meetings and we have found their support and governance invaluable in developing our ongoing work and Strategic Plan. Our future work is focusing upon the development of a Person Centred Planning Strategy across all services and client groups.

Valued Views - Service User Satisfaction Survey 2020

A total of 800 service users responded to our Valued Views service user satisfaction survey, a 26% increase on the responses from 2019. As well as a hard copy, we also produced an online survey and an Easy Read versions.

	Question	Yes	Yes 2020
1	Are you happy with your service from Creative Support?	98%	97%
2	Are staff caring and supportive?	99%	98%
3	Are you treated with dignity and respect?	99%	98%
4	Do you know how to raise an issue if you need to?	94%	94%
5	Is your service helping you to achieve your goals?	95%	95%
6	Have you felt well supported during the Coronavirus pandemic?	97%	n/a

An additional question was added into the 2020 survey to see how service users felt they were supported throughout the pandemic.

Overall, the results were very encouraging and we were delighted that 98% of service users were happy with the service they received. We were also pleased to see an increase in response rates from 2019 (13% increase) and a slight increase in satisfaction from our 2019 results.

The main areas for improvement followed a similar theme to 2019 response:

- Promote better communication in services
- Ensure service users are aware of how to raise a complaint/issue

In 2021, we will be exploring survey strategies for conducting surveys with service users who have communication support needs.

Ensuring Safety and Business Continuity

Our Health and Safety Team continues to support the safe provision of our supported housing and social care services through undertaking planned and unannounced health and safety audits, providing up-to-date health and safety advice and liaising with statutory bodies including the fire service and environmental health. We have retained our CHAS accreditation (Contractors Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme), demonstrating compliance with nationally recognised standards in respect of health and safety.

We have recently employed a Health and Safety Helpdesk Co-ordinator to ensure that our staff have access to responsive advice and to support the Team in reviewing and following up accident and incident reports and compiling safety data.

A major focus over the past 12 months has been fire safety. We continue to invest in fire safety improvement work in our own properties and to work assertively with partner landlords to improve fire safety. We are pleased to report that in 2020-21 gas safety inspections were carried out by the required date in 100% of our homes, despite the challenges of Covid-19 infection control measures.

Business Continuity Plans and robust 24-hour management systems are in place and are regularly evaluated to ensure that we can maintain continuous service delivery in the event of unexpected events and emergencies. Latterly this has included planning for the risks associated with Covid-19 outbreaks.

The 2020-21 Annual Staff Health and Safety Survey was carried out in October 2020. This generated 188 responses of which 178 were from permanent staff and 10 from bank staff. Overall, the feedback from the survey demonstrated high levels of health and safety awareness and understanding, and a pleasing level of confidence in the measures put in place to maintain health and safety within Creative Support. All questions on H&S processes and policies received responses that were over 90% positive. The areas of infection control, PPE provision and staff communications were highlighted as being particularly well managed by Creative Support. Maintenance issues which are the responsibility of external providers such as landlords were noted the single biggest area of safety concern.

Membership and Links with Other Organisations

We are members of many national organisations and networks, including ACEVO, BILD, Homeless Link, Housing and Support Alliance, Mind, Mencap, NCVO, NAPA, Nacro, National Autistic Society, Sitra, Values into Actions, VODG and many others. We greatly value our membership of the National Housing Federation which represents our sector so well at all levels of local and central government.

We have maintained formal partnerships with a number of voluntary organisations with which we deliver services on an innovative consortia basis. These included Better Pathways, Birmingham MIND, Catch 22 and Imagine Independence. During the year, we provided prevention services on behalf of the voluntary sector coalition group named Commsortia in Northamptonshire. This contract has now ended due to council funding reductions.

A National Provider of Quality Support Services and Supported Housing

We are pleased to be working with a very wide range of local authorities including Borough Councils, City Councils and County Councils and we are now experienced in operating in a wide range of environments, ranging from inner cities to rural areas. During 2020-21, Creative Support provided or was developing new services in 66 local authorities across England:

Bedford Council	Middlesbrough City Council
Birmingham Council	Newcastle City Council
Blackburn with Darwen	North East Lincolnshire County Council
Blackpool Council	Northamptonshire County Council
Bolton MBC	North Lincolnshire County Council
Bradford City Council	North Tyneside MBC
Bury MBC	North Yorkshire Council
Calderdale MBC	Reading Borough Council
Central Bedfordshire Council	Redcar with Cleveland MBC
Cheshire West Council	Rochdale MBC
Cumbria County Council	St Helens MBC
Derby City Council	Salford City Council
Derbyshire County Council	Sandwell Metropolitan BC
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	Sheffield City Council
Dudley MBC	Shropshire County Council
Durham County Council	Slough Borough Council
Essex County Council	South Tyneside MBC
Gateshead MBC	Staffordshire County Council
Halton Borough Council	Stockport MBC
Hartlepool Council	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Kirklees Council	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Knowsley Council	Sunderland City Council
Lancashire County Council	Tameside MBC
Leeds City Council	Telford & Wrekin Council
Leicester City Council	Trafford Council
Leicestershire County Council	Wakefield Council
Liverpool City Council	Warrington Borough Council
London Borough of Barnet	Warwickshire County Council
London Borough of Bromley	Wigan Borough Council
London Borough of Camden	Wokingham Borough Council
London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Wolverhampton City Council
London Borough of Wandsworth	Worcestershire County Council
Manchester City Council	

In addition to services in the above authorities, Creative Support is a member of commissioning frameworks to provide services commissioned by Cheshire West, Cambridgeshire County Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Hertfordshire and the London Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Enfield, Lewisham and Waltham Forest.

Over the last 12 months, Creative Support has continued to enjoy a growing national profile and geographical reach as well as an ambition for providing high quality person-centred services. We are recognised as being one of the largest national not-for-profit providers of prevention and social care services operating in England.

Our current strategy is to build on our existing portfolio of supported housing, social care services and community partnerships. We are committed to the co-production model of service delivery in which service users are actively empowered as citizens in their community and as co-producers of their support. We will continue to develop new services and housing options where we believe we can offer value for money and work in partnership to enable service users to make positive changes in their lives.

A Message from the Chair

The financial year 2020-21 was very successful for Creative Support. During this time, we supported over 6,000 people to enjoy a good quality of life and to stay as safe and healthy as possible, despite the challenges and constraints of working within a pandemic. It was pleasing to see an increase in turnover, good control of costs and a resulting surplus which out-performed our budget. This demonstrated good use of resources and effective financial management, in a very demanding operating environment.

I am stepping down from Creative Support's board of Trustees at this year's AGM, after serving on the Board of Trustees for nine years, firstly as a trustee and latterly as Chair. During this time, I have seen Creative Support grow significantly, with activity and turnover increasing by a remarkable 70%. As a not-for-profit organisation we are absolutely focused on the needs of the people we support, enabling so many people to maintain their independence and to live a better life. As I look back over these eventful years, I am so proud of the great outcomes we have achieved for the people we support. It has been a great privilege to contribute personally to these achievements and it has been wonderful to work with so many highly motivated and committed people.

We have always worked hard to continuously improve the quality of our services and to enhance the lives of our service users. I was delighted when Creative Support was awarded Investors in People 'Gold' in 2020 for our HR and training teams. This recognition was especially pleasing, as both teams have worked so hard during the pandemic to support our amazing staff to be resilient and to do their best.

One of our biggest achievements in 2020-21 was re-financing our loans. We successfully secured new loan facilities on favourable terms whilst reducing our borrowings and increasing our cash reserves. This has created a healthy foundation for future investment in new supported housing and other new initiatives. I am pleased that we have re-started our housing development programme having recently purchased a property in Fleetwood to convert into accommodation for homeless people with complex needs.

Last year I noted that the coronavirus pandemic has been one of the greatest challenges our organisation has had to face in its 30-year history. However, I did not anticipate that the pandemic would dominate our lives and the provision of services to such an extent, well into 2021. I am so proud of the way we mobilised our resources to protect our staff and service users as fully as possible, ensuring that our staff had access to essential PPE at all times and implementing robust and comprehensive infection control measures. As a Board of Trustees, we quickly adapted our working methods during the pandemic by conducting all our meetings on-line and we prioritised support for the work of our Executive Team in managing services safely. I believe we have emerged from this difficult, and at times, very stressful period, as a stronger and more focused organisation with better oversight and governance from the Board.

The trustees are very grateful to our hard-working and compassionate staff and managers for their commitment to keeping people safe and operating essential services throughout the pandemic. There have been times of sadness and loss for our staff and service users, as well as the stress of living with Covid risks and uncertainty. However, we have worked hard to enable people to enjoy their lives despite restrictions. I am proud that we promoted the vaccination programme so vigorously amongst our workforce and service users. The use of vaccine 'thank-you' payments to staff boosted enthusiasm and take-up of vaccinations and we are moving closer to having a fully vaccinated workforce.

We know that we will have to stay vigilant and committed to operating services as safely as possible as we live with the on-going risks of Covid. This will require leadership and oversight from the Board as well as support for our managers and staff.

I thank my fellow trustees for their commitment, time and expertise over the last year and for their support for me as Chair. I am sure that the incoming Chair and the Board will experience great satisfaction and continued success from their important work. I would also like to express my gratitude to our senior management team and all our caring staff. We will be celebrating 30 years of providing services in the year ahead and I have every confidence that Creative Support will continue its great work and flourish in the future.

Darrell Johnson
Chair of the Board of Trustees, September 2021

Statement of the Board's Responsibilities in Respect of the Accounts

The Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and registered social housing legislation require the Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Society and of the Income and Expenditure for the period of account.

In preparing these financial statements, the Board is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently,
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Society will continue in business.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Society and enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Co-operative and Community Benefit Society Act 2014, the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies (Group Accounts) Regulations 1969, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019. It has general responsibility for taking reasonable steps to safeguard the assets of the Society and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Members of the Board of Trustees

The following served as members of the Board of Trustees during the year and up to the date of this report:

Kashif Ali
Sharon Burns
Paul Calland
Joolz Casey
Peter Gibbs
Darrell Johnson
John Rodgers
David McKnight Resigned 17 August 2021
Darren Cormack
Mark Pearson
Fiona King

Our opinion is unmodified

We have audited the financial statements of Creative Support Limited ('the society') the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Changes in Reserves, Consolidated Statement of Cash flows, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the society's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the society's 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 Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019.

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 believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is a sufficient and appropriate basis for our opinion. Our audit opinion is consistent with our report to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Board is responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 or the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- a satisfactory system of control over transactions has not been maintained; or
- the society has not kept proper accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the books of account; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the Board

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Responsibilities of the Board set out on page 43, the Board is 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 Board determines 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 Board is responsible for assessing the society'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 Board either intends to liquidate the society 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.

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

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

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

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and addressing risk of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We obtained an understanding of laws and regulations that affect the company, focusing on those that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on its operations. Key laws and regulations that we identified included the UK Companies Act, the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019, employment, tax and health and safety legislation.
- We enquired of the Trustees and reviewed correspondence and Trustees meeting minutes for evidence of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

- We enquired of the Trustees and reviewed correspondence and Trustees meeting minutes for evidence of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
- We gained an understanding of the controls that the Trustees have in place to prevent and detect fraud. We enquired of the Trustees about any incidences of fraud that had taken place during the accounting period.
- The risk of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud was discussed within the audit team and tests were planned and performed to address these risks. We identified the potential for fraud in the following areas: the recognition of income in the correct period including the correct treatment of the accrual and deferral of income and laws related to the provision of social housing recognising the regulated nature of the society's activities.
- We reviewed financial statements disclosures and tested to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above.
- We enquired of the Trustees about actual and potential litigation and claims.

Due 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, 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 fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations and cannot be expected to detect all fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

Use of our Report

This report is made solely to the society's members, as a body, in accordance with section 87 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the society'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 society and the society's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Beever and Struthers

Beever and Struthers, Statutory Auditor

St George's House

215/219 Chester Road

Manchester

M15 4JE

Date:

23/9/21

CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED
Statement of Comprehensive Income



	Note	Year ended 31 Mar 21	Year ended 31 Mar 20
		£'000	£'000
Turnover	2	135,372	127,870
Operating expenditure		(122,848)	(121,922)
Operating surplus		12,524	5,948
Interest receivable		4	13
Interest payable and financing costs	5	(659)	(903)
Surplus for the year	6	11,869	5,058
Actuarial (losses)/gains on defined benefit pension schemes	16	(1,190)	1,554
Total comprehensive income for the year		10,679	6,612

The results relate wholly to continuing activities and the notes on pages 51 to 69 form an integral part of these accounts.

CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED
Statement of Financial Position



		Year ended 31 Mar 21	Year ended 31 Mar 20		
	Note	Society £'000	Society £'000		
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets and goodwill	9	328	432		
Tangible fixed assets	10	75,829	77,722		
		<u>76,157</u>	<u>78,154</u>		
Current assets					
Trade and other debtors	11	18,743	18,127		
Cash and cash equivalents	12	16,187	7,515		
		<u>34,930</u>	<u>25,642</u>		
Less: Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(15,644)	(36,701)		
Net current assets		<u>19,286</u>	<u>(11,059)</u>		
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>95,443</u>	<u>67,095</u>		
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	14	(18,868)	(2,605)		
Provisions for liabilities and charges					
		Pensions -DB liability	16	(2,457)	(1,069)
		Other provisions	17	(140)	(122)
Total net assets		<u>73,978</u>	<u>63,299</u>		
Reserves					
Non-equity share capital	19	-	-		
Revenue reserve		73,937	62,068		
Pension reserve		(699)	491		
		<u>73,238</u>	<u>62,559</u>		
Restricted reserve		7	7		
Revaluation reserve		733	733		
Total reserves		<u>73,978</u>	<u>63,299</u>		

The financial statements on pages 47 to 69 were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on 16 September 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:

Board Member:
Kashif Ali

Board Member:
Fiona King

Company Secretary:
Anna Lunts

The notes on pages 51 to 69 form an integral part of these accounts

CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED
Statement of Changes in Reserves



	Revenue reserve	Restricted reserve	Revaluation Reserve	Pensions reserve	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 31 March 2019	57,010	7	733	(1,063)	56,687
Surplus from Statement of Comprehensive Income	5,058	-	-	-	5,058
Other Comprehensive Income for the year:					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	-	-	-	1,554	1,554
Balance at 31 March 2020	62,068	7	733	491	63,299
Surplus from Statement of Comprehensive Income	11,869	-	-	-	11,869
Other Comprehensive Income for the year:					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	-	-	-	(1,190)	(1,190)
Balance at 31 March 2021	<u>73,937</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>733</u>	<u>(699)</u>	<u>73,978</u>

The notes on pages 51 to 69 form an integral part of these accounts.

	Note	Year ended 31 Mar 21 £'000	Year ended 31 Mar 20 £'000
Net cash generated from operating activities	Note (a)	17,725	6,566
Cash flow from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,139)	(1,285)
Proceeds from sale of tangible fixed assets		1,153	1,226
Grants (repaid)		(56)	-
		<u>(42)</u>	<u>(59)</u>
Cash flow from financing activities			
New bank loans (net)		22,595	-
Repayment of borrowings		(31,606)	(4,262)
		<u>(9,011)</u>	<u>(4,262)</u>
Net change in cash and cash equivalents		8,672	2,245
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year		7,515	5,270
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year		<u>16,187</u>	<u>7,515</u>
Note (a)		Year ended 31 Mar 21 £'000	Year ended 31 Mar 20 £'000
Cash flow from operating activities			
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		11,869	5,058
Adjustments for non-cash items:			
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets		1,870	1,827
Amortisation of intangible assets		104	104
Actuarial movement on defined benefit pension scheme		(1,190)	1,554
Decrease/(increase) in trade and other debtors		(616)	(1,854)
(Decrease)/increase in trade and other creditors		4,309	1,096
Increase/(decrease) in provisions		1,406	(1,191)
Adjustments for investing or financing activities:			
Government grants utilised in the year		(27)	(28)
Net cash generated from operating activities		<u>17,725</u>	<u>6,566</u>

The notes on pages 51 to 69 form an integral part of these accounts.

Legal Status

Creative Support Limited is incorporated in England under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and is registered with the Regulator of Social Housing as a Private Registered Provider of Social Housing. The registered office is Wellington House, 131 Wellington Road, Stockport, SK1 3TS.

1. Principal Accounting Policies

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom Accounting Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (UK GAAP) and the Statement of Recommended Practice for registered housing providers: Housing SORP 2018. Delos Community Limited, formerly a subsidiary of Creative Support Limited, was dissolved on 6th July 2021, and consequently as a group no longer exists, group accounts are not required.

The financial statements comply with the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Regulations 1969, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019. The accounts are prepared on the historical cost basis of accounting and are presented in sterling £'000 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The Society elected to measure certain housing properties held for letting at fair value at the date of transition to FRS 102 and use the fair value as deemed cost.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes an ability to continue operating for the foreseeable future. The Society's activities, its current financial position and factors likely to impact on its future development and prospects are set out within the Trustees Report. The Society has in place well-structured debt facilities, cash reserves, and generates positive cash from operations. These elements combine to provide sufficient resources to continue delivering high quality accommodation and care services whilst maintaining and investing in the Society's assets.

The current ongoing Coronavirus pandemic will continue to present challenges to social care and supported housing providers and has a significant wider social and economic impact. However the demand for adult social care and supported housing remains strong and the level of activity is expected to remain at current levels.

The Society had loans repayable as at 31 March 2020 with one high street lender of £26.605 million. These loans were fully repaid on 8 July 2020. A new finance agreement was entered into on the same date with another high street lender, with fixed term debt of £20 million and working capital financed through a Revolving Credit Facility up to £5 million with an initial £3m of the RCF drawn, which was subsequently repaid resulting on a nil balance at 31 March 2021. This repayment combined with subsequent capital repayments have resulted in an overall reduction in debt of £8.605 million over the financial year 2020-2021. The term of the loan is 5 years and the Society's plans and forecasts demonstrate that it can comply with all contractual and regulatory expectations, whilst servicing its debt facilities and continuing to comply with lender's covenants.

On this basis, the Board has a reasonable expectation that the Society has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of at least twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in the financial statements

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation and uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the balance sheet date and the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. The following judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements:-

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

- a. **Categorisation of housing properties**
The Society has undertaken a detailed review of the intended use of all housing properties. In determining the intended use, the Society has considered if the asset is held for social benefit or to earn commercial rentals.

- b. **Impairment.**
An impairment review was undertaken at the year-end, due to the ongoing impact of Covid 19 being considered a trigger event, and following the assessment of impairment, no significant impairment losses were identified in the reporting period
Reviews for impairment of housing properties are carried out when a trigger has occurred and any impairment loss in a cash generating unit is recognised by a charge to the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Impairment is recognised where the carrying value of a cash generating unit exceeds the higher of its net realisable value or its value in use. A cash generating unit is normally a group of properties at scheme level whose cash income can be separately identified. The Society has identified a cash generating unit for impairment assessment purposes at a property scheme level.

Following a trigger for impairment, the Society perform impairment tests based on fair value less costs to sell or a value in use calculation. The fair value less costs to sell calculation is based on available data from sales transactions in an arm's length transaction on similar cash generating units (properties) or observable market prices less incremental costs for disposing of the properties. The value in use calculation is based on either a depreciated replacement cost or a discounted cash flow model. The depreciated replacement cost is based on available data of the cost of constructing or acquiring replacement properties to provide the same level of service potential to the Society as the existing property. The cash flows are derived from the business plan for the next 30 years and do not include restructuring activities that the Society is not yet permitted to or significant future investments that will enhance the asset's performance of the cash generating unit being tested. The recoverable amount is most sensitive to the discount rate used for the discounted cash flow model as well as the expected future cash flows and the growth rate used for extrapolation purposes.

- c. **Provisions for doubtful debts**
Tenancy arrears
The provision is assessed on a per tenancy basis, based on the age of the debt, with prudent provision rates between 10% and 100% which take into account historic factors plus specific factors prevailing at the Balance Sheet date.
Other debtors
Other debtors are assessed by reference to post year end receipts and other known issues relating to specific debtors, from which a review of individual accounts is undertaken to consider whether a specific provision is required.

Other key sources of estimation and assumptions:

- a. **Tangible fixed assets.** Tangible fixed assets are depreciated over their useful lives taking into account residual values, where appropriate. The actual lives of the assets and residual values are assessed annually and may vary depending on a number of factors. In re-assessing asset lives, factors such as technological innovation, product life cycles and maintenance programmes are taken into account. Residual value assessments consider issues such as future market conditions, the remaining life of the asset and projected disposal values.
- b. **Goodwill and intangible assets.** The Society establishes a reliable estimate of the useful life of goodwill and intangible assets arising on business combinations. This estimate is based on a variety of factors such as the expected use of the acquired business, the expected usual life of the cash generating units to which the goodwill is attributed, any legal, regulatory or contractual provisions that can limit useful life and assumptions that market participants would consider in respect of similar businesses.

Goodwill

Goodwill arising on an acquisition of a subsidiary undertaking is the difference between the fair value of the consideration paid and the fair value of the assets and liabilities acquired. Subsequently goodwill is carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and impairment losses.

1. **Principal Accounting Policies (continued)**

Amortisation is calculated on the straight line basis over the estimated useful life. The Society establishes a reliable estimate of the useful life of goodwill arising on business combinations based on a variety of factors such as the expected use of the acquired business, the expected useful life of the cash generating units to which the goodwill is attributed, any legal, regulatory or contractual provisions that can limit useful life and assumptions that market participants would consider in respect of similar businesses. Goodwill is written off over a period of 10 years.

Turnover and revenue recognition

Turnover represents amounts due for the provision of care and support, rental income receivable, amortised capital grant, revenue grants, and other income and are recognised in relation to the period when the goods or services have been supplied.

Rental income is recognised when the property is available for let, net of voids. Contract income for support services and Supporting People Income is recognised under the contractual arrangements.

Service charges

Service charge income and costs are recognised on an accruals basis. The Society operates fixed service charges on a scheme by scheme basis in full consultation with residents.

Where periodic expenditure is required a provision may be built up over the years, in consultation with the residents; until these costs are incurred this liability is held in the Statement of Financial Position within long term creditors

Loan interest costs

Loan interest costs are calculated using the effective interest method of the difference between the loan amount at initial recognition and amount of maturity of the related loan.

Loan finance issue costs

These are amortised over the life of the related loan. Loans are stated in the Statement of Financial Position at the amount of the net proceeds after issue, plus increases to account for any subsequent amounts amortised.

Taxation

The society is incorporated with charitable status under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Regulations 1969. No charge to Corporation Tax arises as a result of the society's activities.

Operating leases

Costs in respect of operating leases are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

Valuation of investments

Investments in subsidiaries are measured at cost less accumulated impairment

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Housing properties

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost, less accumulated depreciation.

Certain housing properties held for letting are included at deemed cost following election to use fair value on transition for those assets.

Housing properties under construction are stated at cost and are not depreciated. These are reclassified as housing properties on practical completion of construction.

Freehold land is not depreciated.

Where a housing property comprises two or more major components with substantially different useful economic lives (UELs), each component is accounted for separately and depreciated over its individual UEL. Expenditure relating to subsequent replacement or renewal of components is capitalised as incurred.

The Society depreciates freehold housing properties by component on a straight-line basis over the estimated UELs of the component categories.



1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

UEs for identified components are as follows:

	Years
Kitchens	10
Bathroom	15
Roofs	50
Heating	20
Windows	30
Structure	100

The Society depreciates housing properties held on long term leases in the same manner as freehold properties, except where the unexpired lease term is shorter than the longest component life envisaged, in which case the unexpired term of the lease is adopted as the useful economic life of the relevant component category.

Depreciation is charged on other tangible fixed assets on a straight-line basis over the expected economic useful lives which are as follows:

	Years
Motor vehicles	5
Furniture and equipment	5
Short leasehold improvements	5

Short-term debtors and creditors

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the income statement in other operating expenses.

Non-government grants

Grants received from non-government sources are recognised under the performance model. If there are no specific performance requirements the grants are recognised when received or receivable. Where grant is received with specific performance requirements it is recognised as a liability until the conditions are met and then it is recognised as Turnover.

Social Housing and other government grants (SHG)

Where developments have been financed wholly or partly by social housing and other grants, the amount of the grant received has been included as deferred income and recognised in Turnover over the estimated useful life of the associated asset structure (not land), under the accruals model. SHG received for items of cost written off in the Statement of Comprehensive Income Account is included as part of Turnover.

SHG must be recycled by the Society under certain conditions, if a property is sold, or if another relevant event takes place. In these cases, the SHG can be used for projects approved by the Homes England. However, SHG may have to be repaid if certain conditions are not met. If grant is not required to be recycled or repaid, any unamortised grant is recognised as Turnover. In certain circumstances, SHG may be repayable, and, in that event, is a subordinated unsecured repayable debt.

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

Holiday pay accrual

A liability is recognised to the extent of any unused holiday pay entitlement which has accrued at the balance sheet date and carried forward to future periods. This is measured at the undiscounted salary cost of the future holiday entitlement so accrued at the balance sheet date.

Impairment of Financial Assets

Financial assets are assessed at each reporting date to determine whether there is any objective evidence that a financial asset or group of financial assets is impaired. If there is objective evidence of impairment, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss immediately.

The following financial instruments are assessed individually for impairment:

- (a) All equity instruments regardless of significance; and
- (b) Other financial assets that are individually significant.

Other financial instruments are assessed for impairment either individually or grouped on the basis of similar credit risk characteristics.

An impairment loss is measured as follows on the following instruments measured at cost or amortised cost:

- (a) For an instrument measured at amortised cost, the impairment loss is the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the present value of the estimated future cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate.
- (b) For an instrument measured at cost less impairment, the impairment loss is the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the best estimate of the amount that the entity would receive for the asset if it were to be sold at the reporting date.

If, in a subsequent period, the amount of an impairment loss decreases and the decrease can be related objectively to an event occurring after the impairment was recognised, the previously recognised impairment loss is reversed either directly or by adjusting an allowance account. The reversal cannot result in a carrying amount (net of any allowance account) which exceeds what the carrying amount would have been had the impairment not previously been recognised. The amount of the reversal is recognised in profit or loss immediately.

Retirement benefits

There are eleven pension schemes, seven of which are Local Government defined benefit pension schemes based on final pensionable salary, one is the NHS pension scheme also based on final pensionable pay, and one of which is a Society-wide auto enrolment scheme. Details of the schemes are set out in Note 16. Contributions from the Society and participating employees are paid into independently administered funds.

Employees joining the Society from 1 October 2013, who are eligible, are auto enrolled in the Company defined contribution scheme to which the Society contributes in line with statutory requirements for auto enrolment. The Society also operates 2 additional defined contribution schemes which are closed to new members.

The costs of the defined contribution pension schemes is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the year in which paid.

Payments into the NHS pension scheme are determined by the Department of Health and charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the year in which paid.

Payments in relation to the seven Local Government defined benefit pension schemes are made in accordance with triennial calculations by professionally qualified independent actuaries. All of the Society's defined benefit schemes arose following transfers in of staff under TUPE regulations and no members have eligibility to enter the schemes after the date of the TUPE transfer.

As at 31 March 2021, the Directors have obtained FRS 102 valuations of assets and liabilities. Scheme assets are measured using market values. Scheme liabilities are measured using a projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liability. The total pension scheme deficit on these Local Government Pension Schemes at 31 March 2021 is recognised in full in the financial statements. The movement in scheme deficit is split between operating charges, finance items and, in other comprehensive income, actuarial gains and losses.

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

The accounting liability for each scheme has been calculated by the Scheme Actuary based on a number of critical assumptions which are set out in detail in Note 16. These key assumptions include future salary increases, inflation rates, discount rates and mortality rates. Variations in any of the assumptions can have a significant impact on the value of the stated net accounting liability. The liability would increase if the discount rate decreases or if the inflation rate /life expectancy rates were higher. A corresponding reduction in the liability would result from a decrease in the discount rate or if there was a reduction in the inflation rate/ life expectancy rates.

The net accounting pension liability at 31 March 2021, included on the Balance Sheet within Provisions for Liabilities and Charges, is £2.457 million. The amount expensed to operating expenditure in the financial year was £198,000 inclusive of interest costs.

Financial Instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities are measured at transaction price initially, plus, in the case of a financial asset or financial liability not at fair value through profit or loss, transaction costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition or issue of the financial asset or financial liability.

At the end of each reporting period, financial instruments are measured as follows, without any deduction for transaction costs the entity may incur on sale or other disposal:

Debt instruments that meet the conditions in paragraph 11.8(b) of FRS 102 are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, except where the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction. In this case the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt.

Financial instruments held by the Society are classified as follows:

- Financial assets such as cash, current asset investments and receivables are classified as loans and receivables and held at amortised cost using the effective interest method,
- Financial liabilities such as bonds and loans are held at amortised cost using the effective interest method,
- Loans to or from subsidiaries including those that are due on demand are held at amortised cost using the effective interest method,
- Commitments to receive or make a loan to another entity which meet the conditions above are held at cost less impairment.

Financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value are classified using the following fair value hierarchy:

- (a) The best evidence of fair value is a quoted price in an active market.
- (b) When quoted prices are unavailable, the price of a recent transaction for an identical asset, adjusted to reflect any circumstances specific to the sale, such as a distress sale, if appropriate.
- (c) Where there is no active market or recent transactions then a valuation technique is used to estimate what the transaction price would have been on the measurement date in an arm's length exchange motivated by normal business considerations.

2 Turnover

	Note	2021	2020
		Turnover	Turnover
		£'000	£'000
Social housing lettings	3	12,115	12,550
Other social housing activities			
Community Care		111,388	106,274
Prevention and wellbeing		7,757	8,153
Activities other than social housing			
Revenue grants		74	208
Coronavirus JRS		1,243	-
Donations		46	94
Other income		2,749	591
Total		135,372	127,870

Revenue grants includes grants received from Skills for Care amounting to £73,900 (2020: £42,450).

3 Income and Expenditure from Social Housing Lettings

All income from social housing lettings arises in relation to supported Housing and housing for older people.

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charge	6,549	7,162
Service charge income	5,539	5,360
Amortised government grants	27	28
Turnover from Social Housing Lettings	12,115	12,550
Operating expenditure on Social Housing Lettings	9,275	9,931
Operating Surplus on Social Housing Lettings	2,840	2,619
Void losses (being rental income lost as a result of property not being let, although it is available for letting)	455	406

4. Accommodation in Management

As at 31 March 2021, the Society had 1,239 units of supported housing under management (2020: 1,365) as set out below:-

	Owned		Managed/leased	
	Supported Housing - Other	Supported Housing - Older people	Supported Housing - Other	Supported Housing - Older people
At 1 April 2020	753	-	561	51
Additions	-	-	8	-
Disposals/decommissioned	(18)	-	(116)	-
At 31 March 2021	735	-	453	51

5. Interest and financing costs

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
On loans repayable within five years	636	855
On loans wholly or partly repayable in more than five years	-	6
Defined benefit pension charge	23	42
	659	903

6. Surplus on ordinary activities

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Auditors remuneration (including VAT):		
Audit of the financial statements	48	47
Operating lease rentals:		
Land and buildings	979	975
Plant and machinery	99	65
Depreciation of social housing properties	1,191	945
Depreciation of other fixed assets	707	810
Rent losses from bad debts	54	31

The operating surplus is stated after charging/(crediting):-

7. Employee information

	2021	2020	2021	2020
	Full time equivalents	Full time equivalents	No.	No.
The average number of persons employed during the year expressed in full time equivalents (37.5 hours per week) and headcount was :-				
Chief Executive, Senior Managers	31	33	32	34
Project Managers, Deputy Managers	165	165	175	171
Team Leaders	89	82	96	87
Support Coordinators	136	141	143	151
Outreach and Referral Workers	4	7	4	8
Training Officers	18	22	20	25
Administration and Finance Staff	193	192	228	226
Senior Support Workers, Support Workers	2,960	2,780	4,697	4,675
Household Assistants, Cleaners	26	30	41	50
Wardens, Night Caretakers	1	4	1	4
Maintenance Staff	14	14	16	16
	3,637	3,470	5,453	5,447

	£'000	£'000
Staff costs (including directors' emoluments detailed in note 8)		
Wages and salaries	96,429	96,408
Social Security costs	6,828	6,235
Other pension costs	2,125	1,963
	105,382	104,606

Aggregate number of full time equivalent staff whose remuneration exceeded £60,000 in the period (including directors detailed in note 8):	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	6	6
£70,001 - £80,000	3	1
£80,001 - £90,000	1	1
£100,001 - £110,000	1	1

Remuneration includes salary, taxable benefits for the provision of lease cars, and pension contributions.

8. Key management personnel and directors' remuneration

The aggregate remuneration for key management personnel charged in the year is:

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Salary	824	856
Benefits in kind	74	48
Pension contributions	20	21
Aggregate consideration payable to Directors for loss of office	-	15

The emoluments of the highest paid director, excluding pension contributions, were £101,745 (2020: £93,982) and are included in the above analysis.

The Chief Executive received remuneration for the year ending 31 March 2021 totalling £87,675 (2020: £87,675). Employer contributions of £0 (2020: £0) were made during the year to a personal pension plan on behalf of the Chief Executive. The pension scheme is a defined contribution scheme funded by annual contributions by the employer and employee. No enhanced or special terms apply. There are no additional pension arrangements.

Directors and key management personnel are defined as members of the Board, the Chief Executive and any other person who is a member of the Senior Management Team or its equivalent.

None of the Trustees received emoluments. Two trustees received reimbursed expenses totalling £797 (2020: £5,905, 7 trustees).

9. Intangible assets and goodwill

	£'000
Cost or valuation	
At 31 March 2020	1,040
Additions	-
At 31 March 2021	1,040
Amortisation	
At 31 March 2020	608
Amortisation in year	104
At 31 March 2021	712
Net book value	
At 31 March 2021	328
At 31 March 2020	432

CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED
Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021



10. Tangible fixed assets

	Total Housing Properties	Project Furniture and Equipment	Office Equipment	Motor Vehicles £'000	Total fixed assets
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost					
At start of the year	86,943	3,028	1,776	920	92,667
Additions	477	214	302	146	1,139
Schemes completed	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	(1,329)	(631)	(244)	(74)	(2,278)
At end of the year	<u>86,091</u>	<u>2,611</u>	<u>1,834</u>	<u>992</u>	<u>91,528</u>
Depreciation and impairment					
At start of the year	10,524	2,711	1,037	673	14,945
Charge for the year	1,467	123	225	83	1,898
Disposals	(212)	(619)	(240)	(73)	(1,144)
At end of the year	<u>11,779</u>	<u>2,215</u>	<u>1,022</u>	<u>683</u>	<u>15,699</u>
Net book value at the end of the year	<u>74,312</u>	<u>396</u>	<u>812</u>	<u>309</u>	<u>75,829</u>
Net book value at the start of the year	<u>76,419</u>	<u>317</u>	<u>739</u>	<u>247</u>	<u>77,722</u>
Housing Properties comprise:				2021	2020
Freeholds				55,819	57,593
Long leaseholds				17,943	18,260
Short leaseholds				550	566
				<u>74,312</u>	<u>76,419</u>

11. Trade and other debtors

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Rent arrears	821	927
Less: provision for bad debts	(168)	(121)
	653	806
Grants, supported tenancy and other contract fees receivable	12,205	10,370
Less: provision for bad debts and credit notes	(1,122)	(568)
Other debtors	442	268
Prepayment and accrued income	6,565	7,251
	18,743	18,127
Debtors are all due within one year.		

12. Cash and cash equivalents

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Cash at bank short term deposits	16,187	7,515
	16,187	7,515

13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Note	2021	2020
		£'000	£'000
Loans and overdrafts	15	1,333	26,605
Refinance costs		(95)	-
		1,238	26,605
Trade creditors		3,606	2,553
Other taxation and social security payable		2,341	2,082
Accruals and deferred income		7,125	4,400
Deferred Capital Grant	18	27	26
Other creditors		1,307	1,035
		15,644	36,701

13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (continued)

The loans are secured by specific charges on the Society's property portfolio. As at 31 March 2021, loans totalling £18,000,000 were outstanding (2020 - £26,605,000) with high street lenders at normal commercial rates. The loans are repayable on a quarterly basis, plus interest calculated by reference to LIBOR (transitioning to SONIA as at 31st December 2021). In July 2020, the loans owing at 31 March 2020 were repaid in full. New finance facilities were entered into at the same date, consisting of a 5 year term loan of £20 million, and an initial £3m drawn on a Revolving Credit Facility. The structure of the new finance facilities means that the current liability within the new loan (i.e. due within 12 months of the year-end) is £1.333 million.

14. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

		£'000	£'000
Loans	15	16,666	-
Refinance costs		(310)	-
		<u>16,356</u>	<u>-</u>
Deferred Capital Grant	18	2,512	2,605
		<u>18,868</u>	<u>2,605</u>
		<u><u>18,868</u></u>	<u><u>2,605</u></u>

15. Analysis of Changes in Net debt

	At 1 April 2020 £'000	Cash Flows £'000	Non cash movements £'000	At 31 March 2021 £'000
Cash and cash Equivalents	7,515	8,672	-	16,187
Housing Loans Due in one year	(26,605)	25,272	-	(1,333)
Housing Loans Due after one year	-	(16,666)	-	(16,666)
	<u>(19,090)</u>	<u>17,278</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,812)</u>
	<u><u>(19,090)</u></u>	<u><u>17,278</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>(1,812)</u></u>

16. Pension obligations

The cost of providing retirement pensions and related benefits is charged to the accounts over the periods benefitting from the employees' services. The Society makes contributions to eleven pension schemes.

(i) Membership details

Scheme	Active members at 31 March 2021	Type of scheme
Legal & General Group Personal Pension Scheme	69	Defined contribution
Royal London Group Personal Pension Scheme	13	Defined contribution
NHS Pension Scheme	105	Defined benefit
Local Government schemes	31	Defined benefit
Peoples Pension (auto-enrolment)	4,027	Defined contribution

(ii) Defined Contribution pension schemes

The Society makes contributions of up to 6% gross salary to employees' money purchase pension schemes. The actual percentage contribution is dependent upon length of service.

(iii) Money Purchase Occupational Pension Scheme

All eligible staff who are not in one of the other schemes are auto enrolled into a money purchase occupational pension scheme operated by the Peoples' Pension. Membership of this scheme fluctuates as staff members have the right to opt out.

(iv) Defined Benefit pension schemes

The Society has employees in seven defined benefit schemes, arising as a result of TUPE transfers of staff. Details of the defined benefit schemes are set out below.

(v) NHS Pension Scheme

Pension Costs

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the two NHS Pension Schemes. Details of the benefits payable and rules of the Schemes can be found on the NHS Pensions website at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pensions. Both are unfunded defined benefit schemes that cover NHS employers, GP practices and other bodies, allowed under the direction of the Secretary of State in England and Wales. They are not designed to be run in a way that would enable NHS bodies to identify their share of the underlying scheme assets and liabilities.

Therefore, each scheme is accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme: the cost to the NHS body of participating in each scheme is taken as equal to the contributions payable to that scheme for the accounting period.

In order that the defined benefit obligations recognised in the financial statements do not differ materially from those that would be determined at the reporting date by a formal actuarial valuation, the FReM requires that "the period between formal valuations shall be four years, with approximate assessments in intervening years". An outline of these follows:

a) Accounting valuation

A valuation of scheme liability is carried out annually by the scheme actuary (currently the Government Actuary's Department) as at the end of the reporting period. This utilises an actuarial assessment for the previous accounting period in conjunction with updated membership and financial data for the current reporting period, and are accepted as providing suitably robust figures for financial reporting purposes.

The valuation of scheme liability as at 31 March 2016, is based on valuation data as 31 March 2015, updated to 31 March 2016 with summary global member and accounting data. In undertaking this actuarial assessment, the methodology prescribed in IAS 19, relevant FReM interpretations, and the discount rate prescribed by HM Treasury have also been used.

The latest assessment of the liabilities of the scheme is contained in the scheme actuary report, which forms part of the annual NHS Pension Scheme (England and Wales) Pension Accounts. These accounts can be viewed on the NHS Pensions website and are published annually. Copies can also be obtained from The Stationery Office.

16. Pension obligations (continued)

b) Full actuarial (funding) valuation

The last published actuarial valuation undertaken for the NHS Pension Scheme was completed for the year ending 31 March 2012. The Scheme Regulations allow for the level of contribution rates to be changed by the Secretary of State for Health, with the consent of HM Treasury, and consideration of the advice of the Scheme Actuary and appropriate employee and employer representatives as deemed appropriate.

(vi) Local Government Pension Schemes

LGPS Scheme	Administering body
Lancashire County Pension Fund	Lancashire County Council
West Midlands Pension Fund	The City of Wolverhampton Council
West Yorkshire Pension Fund	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
London Borough of Camden Pension Fund	Pension Shared Service
The Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Bedfordshire Pension Fund	Bedford Borough Council
London Borough of Bromley Pension Fund	London Borough of Bromley

Each LGPS is a multi-employer scheme, administered under the regulations governing the Local Government Pension Scheme, and a defined benefit scheme. The most recent formal actuarial valuation was completed as at 31 March 2019 and rolled forward allowing for the different financial assumptions required under FRS102, to 31 March 2021 by a qualified independent actuary.

The employer's contributions to the LGPS by the Society for the year ended 31 March 2021 were £85,000 (2020:£113,000) at a contribution rate between 0.0% and 27.5% of pensionable salaries. The employers' contribution rate for the year ended 31 March 2021 has been set at between 0% and 27.5%. Estimated contributions to the LGPSs during the accounting period commencing 1 April 2021 are £90,000.

Principal actuarial assumptions
Financial assumptions

	31 March 2021	31 March 2020
	% per annum	% per annum
Discount rate	2% - 2.7%	2.3%-2.4%
Future salary increases	3.8% - 4.2%	2.3% - 3.6%
Future pension increases	2.7% - 2.85%	1.75% - 2.2%
Inflation assumptions	2.7% - 2.7%	2.0% - 2.1%

The post-retirement mortality assumptions adopted to value the benefit obligation at 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2020 are based on different assumptions within each scheme including S3PA, CIM2020, and actual recent mortality of members within the Fund.

16. Pension obligations (continued)

The assumed life expectations on retirement at age 65 are:

	2021	2020
	No. of years	No. of years
Retiring today:		
Males	21.2 - 22.9	21.5 - 22.8
Females	23.9 - 25.3	23.9 - 25.2
Retiring in 20 years:		
Males	22.5 - 24.8	22.5 - 24.7
Females	25.4 - 27.3	25.5 - 27.2

Amounts recognised in surplus or deficit

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Current service costs	175	397
Settlement costs	-	(55)
Amounts charged to operating costs	175	342
Net interest	23	43
Amounts charged to other finance costs	23	43

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the present value of scheme liabilities

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Opening scheme liabilities	14,003	17,119
Recognition of present value of scheme liabilities	-	(289)
Current service cost	256	369
Past service cost	-	136
Interest cost	302	374
Remeasurements	2,419	(3,202)
Members contributions	45	63
Settlements	-	(188)
Benefits paid (net)	(221)	(379)
Closing scheme liabilities	16,804	14,003

16. Pension obligations (continued)

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the fair value of plan assets

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Opening fair value of plan assets	12,934	14,881
Recognition of fair value of plan assets	-	(260)
Administration expenses	(4)	(5)
Interest income	279	331
Return on plan assets (in excess of interest income)	1,229	(1,677)
Contributions by employer	85	113
Members contributions	45	63
Settlements	-	(133)
Benefits paid (net)	(221)	(379)
	<hr/> 14,347 <hr/>	<hr/> 12,934 <hr/>
	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Actual return on scheme assets	<hr/> 1,508 <hr/>	<hr/> (119) <hr/>

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Position

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Fair value of plan assets	14,347	12,934
Present value of scheme liabilities	(16,804)	(14,003)
	<hr/> (2,457) <hr/>	<hr/> (1,069) <hr/>

Major categories of plan assets as a percentage of total plan assets

	2021	2020
	%	%
Equities	46.9% - 79.7%	53.0% - 77.5%
Gilts	0.0% - 3.0%	0.0% - 12.0%
Bonds	0.0% - 18.0%	2.5% - 17.0%
Properties	3.4% - 14.2%	4.3% - 14.0%
Cash	1.0% - 5.0%	1.3% - 12.0%
Other	1.6% - 36.7%	1.4% - 33.2%

17. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	At 1 April 2020 £'000	Additional provision £'000	Released/ utilised £'000	At 31 March 2021 £'000
Dilapidations provisions	122	27	(9)	140

The dilapidations provision relates to amounts payable to return leased properties to their former state upon surrender of the lease.

18. Deferred capital grant

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
At start of the year	2,631	2,659
Grant (disposed of) in the year	(65)	-
Released to income in the year	(27)	(28)
At the end of the year	<u>2,539</u>	<u>2,631</u>
Amount due to be released in less than 1 year	27	26
Amount due to be released after more than 1 year	2,512	2,605
	<u>2,539</u>	<u>2,631</u>

19. Non-equity share capital

	2021 £	2020 £
Association		
Allotted Issued and Fully Paid		
At the start of the year	70	68
Issued during the year	-	2
At the end of the year	<u>70</u>	<u>70</u>

The par value of each share is 1. The shares do not have a right to any dividend or distribution in a winding-up, and are not redeemable. Each share has full voting rights. All shares are fully paid.

20. Capital commitments

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Capital expenditure that has been contracted for but has not been provided for in the financial statements	70	-
Capital expenditure that has been authorised by the Board but has not yet been contracted for	275	306
	<u>345</u>	<u>306</u>
	<u><u>345</u></u>	<u><u>306</u></u>

21. Operating leases

The future minimum lease payments of non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Within one year	718	941
Between one and five years	820	1,085
Later than five years	164	174
	<u>1,702</u>	<u>2,200</u>
	<u><u>1,702</u></u>	<u><u>2,200</u></u>

22. Grant and financial assistance

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
The total accumulated government grant and financial assistance received or receivable at 31 March:		
Held as deferred capital grant	2,539	2,631
Recognised as income in statement of Comprehensive Income	27	28
	<u>2,566</u>	<u>2,659</u>
	<u><u>2,566</u></u>	<u><u>2,659</u></u>

23. Related parties

There are no related party transactions.



Creative Support
Head Office
Wellington House
131 Wellington Road South
Stockport SK1 3TS

 0161 236 0829

 @crtvspprt

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 www.creativesupport.co.uk

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