Report of the Board of Trustees and the Financial Statements

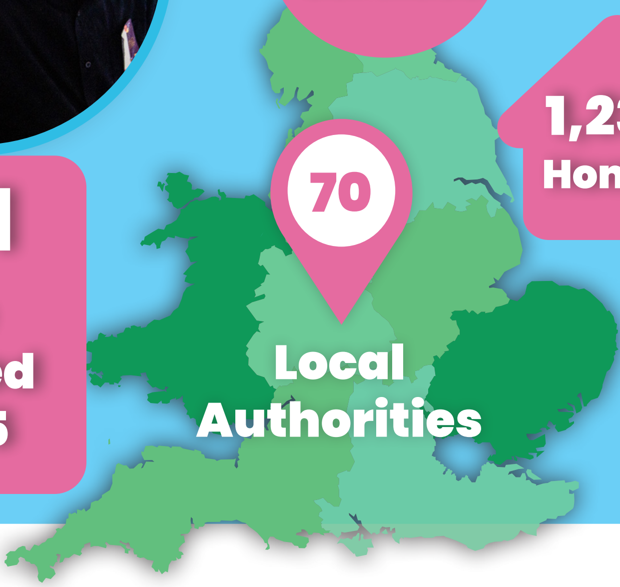
For the year ending March 2025

Welcoming Empowering Compassionate Aspirational Respectful Effective

Annual Report 2024-25
At a Glance

6,561 People Supported in 24-25

522 Services



70 Local Authorities

1,234 Homes

5,612 Staff

95 Volunteers

106 Student Placements

345 Supported Living Services & Care Homes

96 Supported Accommodation Services

28 Extra Care Services

53 Other Community Services

2,415 Support for people with mental health needs

2,036 Support for people with a learning disability or autism

1,322 Support for older people

788 Support for people with other needs

92% good or above

CareQuality Commission

We achieved a quality rating of 'Good' or above in 92% of our **CQC inspected services**

Overall rating for this service	Good	●
Is this service safe?	Good	●
Is the service effective?	Good	●
Is the service caring?	Good	●
Is the service responsive?	Good	●
Is the service well-led?	Good	●

creative ACADEMY WE CARE

7,686 Classroom Training Attendees

11,134 Virtual Classroom Attendees

75,293 E-learning Completions

CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED

31 MARCH 2025

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CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED
Legal and Administrative Details
as at 31 March 2025

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:	Joolz Casey (Chair)
Principal Staff:	Anna Lunts (Chief Executive) Hazel Beddows (Company Secretary)
Bankers:	Barclays Bank PLC UK Banking 1 Churchill Place London E14 5HP
Solicitors:	Trowers & Hamlins Heron House Albert Square Manchester M2 5HD
Auditors:	Beever & Struthers One Express 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL

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 2025. 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. We also provide 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 emphasise 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 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 and other support needs and older people with care needs. Our service portfolio includes supported living services, community support, specialist outreach services, residential care, respite services and care at home. 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 recognised as being innovative and person-centred. We provide a number of creative day opportunities 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 wellbeing and quality of life. We offer personalised support for people with memory loss, including the highly regarded Wilshaw House Day Service in Tameside. 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 around 6,000 people with care and support needs to enjoy independence, choice and wellbeing. A further 1,234 tenants have benefitted from the provision of high-quality supported housing.

Our Mission

Creative Support promotes independence, inclusion, and wellbeing. We do this by working with the people we support, their families and others to meet individual needs and aspirations in a person-centred way. We provide high quality homes and support, enabling people to say:

- I live my best life in a place I call home
- I feel listened to, respected and valued
- I enjoy choices and rights and have control over my life
- I am supported to feel safe
- I am doing the things that matter to me
- I enjoy relationships with others
- I am connected to my community
- I am supported with my wellbeing
- I feel able to reach my full potential

Our We Care Values

Our We Care values underpin everything we do at Creative Support. We are:

Welcoming

Empowering

Compassionate

Aspirational

Respectful

Effective

Our Philosophy

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
- Challenge discrimination and disadvantage and practice in ways that are inclusive and anti-oppressive
- 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 the people we support
- 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 Values and Culture

We treat people with courtesy and **kindness.** We listen attentively to others, communicate in personalised ways and seek to understand what is important to individuals. We empower and support people to make choices and to have control over their own lives. We value each person's strengths and unique qualities and offer **unconditional positive regard.**

We strive to be person-centred and responsive to individual needs and preferences. We treat the people we support with **respect** and consideration and promote their **dignity** and privacy at all times. We offer **compassionate**, relationship-based support which is flexible and reliable.

We work holistically to improve people's wellbeing and **quality of life**. We are hopeful and optimistic about the **possibilities for change**. We enable people to enjoy new opportunities, reach their potential, live the life they want to live and be as **independent** as possible.

We are passionate about promoting accessibility, **equality, diversity and fairness**. We challenge injustice and offensive or discriminatory behaviour wherever we find this. We support people to enjoy **human and civil rights** as active citizens, connected to their communities. We encourage people to speak up and advocate for themselves.

We are committed to **co-production** and to enabling the active involvement and participation of the people we support. We work collaboratively, positively and respectfully with people's families and other agencies. We contribute to progressive partnerships and strategic alliances with others. We achieve positive influence by taking part in campaigns and initiatives which **improve people's lives**.

We believe in **supportive, visible leadership** and positive, co-operative working environments which enable our valued staff to flourish and be the best that they can be. We support wellbeing and resilience and recognise effort and **excellence**.

We are **open, honest and trustworthy**. As individuals, and as an organisation, we have **integrity**. We are professional and accountable for what we do. We accept responsibility and we practice in a diligent and **ethical** manner.

We are curious and reflective and have a **culture of learning** and **continuous improvement.** We appreciate and engage positively with feedback. We acknowledge and learn from our mistakes and those of others. We recognise and celebrate our achievements and those of our colleagues and the people we support. We build a positive profile and reputation.

We aim to be **efficient, innovative and productive** in the use of resources and to maximise beneficial outcomes for our tenants and the people we support. We are adaptable, agile and solution-focused. We seek continuity of direction and purpose whilst valuing our history and **embracing change**.

We strive to provide safe, evidence-based, **high quality and effective** care, delivered by capable, competent and well-supported colleagues who are actively engaged in service development and improvement. We add value to communities, aim to reduce our environmental impact and work towards a successful and **sustainable future**.

We aim high and we challenge ourselves to go the extra mile to support people to achieve their goals and to lead **happy, meaningful and fulfilled lives**.

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 local and wider 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**
  People we support 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 and safety.

- **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 level of healthcare as 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 (Gold Award) and the employer of a significant workforce of over 5,500 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, student and work placement schemes to enable people to gain work experience and valuable qualifications.

- **Wider Community**
  Across our wide geographic landscape, we ensure that services are connected and supportive of their local communities through provision of social value delivery based on local needs and objectives. This includes investing spend into the local economy, use of local green spaces and community connection initiatives.

Accountable and Effective Governance

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 mission and strategic objectives. Our Board and Executive Team have a strong commitment to our charitable ethos and values.

The Board is committed to ensuring effective governance and viability and to the further development of the strategic planning, risk management and assurance framework within which we manage our housing assets and social care services. Creative Support has adopted the NHF's Code of Governance 2020 and the NHF 2022 Code of Conduct. The Board recently undertook a compliance review of the housing regulator's Governance and Financial Viability Standards and confirmed that it complies with the standards.

Creative Support is constituted as a community benefit society with charitable status. An external Governance Review was commissioned by the Board in 2024 to assess the suitability of Creative Support's legal structure and to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the governance of the organisation. The Governance Review advised that this legal structure is the most appropriate for our principal activities of providing care and supported housing. The Review further concluded that "*Creative Support is a highly performing and effective organisation which we judge to be well led by the board and the executive*." A number of recommendations for strengthening our governance were made. Throughout the year, the Board has continued to implement and build upon these recommendations.One of the recommendations was to consider introducing payments for trustees, with the aim of further professionalising our governance and increasing commitment. After a lot of debate, we agreed to introduce modest payments from January 2025. We hope that this will enable deeper engagement, more rigorous oversight and a stronger sense of shared responsibility.

The Board and Senior Leadership Team have worked collaboratively to ensure strong risk management across all levels of the organisation. A new strategic risk register was developed, outlining high-level risks which require oversight from the Board of Trustees, with the monitoring of specific risks being assigned to relevant committees. The Board met twice during the year to review and update this register, ensuring a contemporary understanding of emerging risks and ensuring timely and effective responses. Having assessed the future landscape, the Board recognises that there are challenging times ahead for our sector. These include continued workforce recruitment and retention pressures and funding shortfalls. Measures are in place to manage and mitigate these risks.

To further enhance our risk governance, we held a Risk Conference in October 2024, bringing together trustees and the Executive Team to reflect on Creative Support's risk culture, appetite, and enterprise risk management approach. We also committed to establishing a new Risk Committee, which will take responsibility for overseeing risk across the organisation, commissioning reviews and audits in key areas, and ensuring that resulting recommendations are effectively implemented. Over the past year the senior management team have continued to work with Board to further develop our reporting of data as part of a suite of corporate metrics which are being incorporated into a corporate dashboard. This will track risk data, trends and the achievement of targets. We are confident that our current systems of assurance are effective and reflect an open, transparent, and positive governance culture.

During 2024, we reviewed our purpose and refreshed our Mission Statement which is now expressed in the form of I-Statements to reflect what is important to the people we support. We have reinforced our 'We Care' values and defined our inclusive, compassionate culture. We live our mission and values through the positive culture we strive to create and sustain. Having agreed our mission and guiding principles we considered the main challenges and opportunities we face in coming years. In 2024, we developed a new long-term strategy and vision to ensure our future success over the 5 years 2024-29. The Board and Senior Leadership Team held two collaborative strategy development days with an external facilitator and the strategy was further informed by a series of workshops and consultations with the people we support and frontline staff. We agreed to an over-arching commitment to co-production and to the following 6 key goals:

No.	Strategic Goal
1.	Our Values and Positive Culture
2.	Creative People
3.	People Supported Well
4	Homes & Environments for Living Well
5.	Financial Sustainability
6.	Growth & Development

In 2024, we published our Strategic Plan for 2024-26, the first phase of this 5-year strategy, in which we set out these key goals and a coherent set of objectives and the actions to achieve these. In future years we will flex and roll forward the strategy to take account of changes in our fast-moving external environment and emerging challenges and opportunities.

Over the course of 2024-25, the Board held six full Board meetings. Our Annual General Meeting took place on 26 September 2024 at the Creative Together Centre. This was a well-attended event which enabled us to celebrate the achievements of the previous year. Our standing committees, which include Finance & Audit, People & Performance, Quality & Practice Development met bi-monthly to provide oversight and support in their respective areas. We are planning for succession and leadership development within our committees. Trustees are stepping into new roles, including chairing committees and buddying new members to ensure continuity and cultural alignment.

In addition, a number of 'task and finish' meetings were convened to work on key areas, including risk management and Trustee recruitment. Our trustees have also made visits to services across the country. Two of our trustees provide oversight of the governance of our Complex Care Case Register in line with our Restraint Reduction Pledge.

We extend our sincere thanks to all trustees for their ongoing dedication and contribution. Beyond their attendance at formal meetings, Trustees have given their time to visit services, attend events, act as ambassadors, conduct interviews, and provide professional guidance and constructive challenge. The knowledge and experience they bring, spanning health and social care, housing, finance, consultancy, marketing, and commerce, is invaluable to our governance.

We are pleased to have strengthened our governance and enhanced the diversity of our Board by appointing and welcoming four new trustees. In January 2025, Robert McDonald and Steven Farmery-Vigus joined the board, followed by Mofe Binite and Robert Graham who joined in July 2025. Our new trustees bring experience and expertise in areas including social housing, social care and charity governance.

We are especially grateful to Joolz Casey, our Chair and Chrissie Cooke, our Vice Chair, for their commitment and leadership, and to the trustees who chaired our committees during the year, including Rachael Corbelli, Claire Judkins, and Fiona King. We would like to thank Sarah Smith for her excellent support to the Board in her role as PA to the Board, alongside Megan Mitchell, Hazel Anson, Georgia Randall and Becky Hayes, who provided dedicated administrative support and minute-taking for our committees.

Record of Attendance at Board Meetings 2024 – 2025

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

Trustee	May 2024	July 2024	Sep 2024	Sep AGM	Oct 2024*	Nov 2024	Jan 2025	Mar 2025	Total
Joolz Casey	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	8/8
Chrissie Cooke	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	8/8
Fiona King	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	8/8
Rachael Corbelli	√	√	√	√	√	AP	√	AP	6/8
Paul Calland	AP	√	√	√					3/4
Claire Judkins	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	8/8
Helen O'Sullivan	AP	√	AP	√	√	√	√	√	6/8
Steven Blezard	√	√							2/2
Steve Farmery-Vigus							√	√	2/2
Robert McDonald							√	√	2/2

**Strategy Away Day*

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

Approach to Risk Management

This year, we continued to strengthen our approach to corporate risk management by identifying key strategic risks that became the focus of targeted assurance activity. These risks are illustrated in the accompanying heat map, where each has been assessed for likelihood and impact, and combined into an overall risk score. We have maintained our commitment to the Enterprise Risk Management methodology, which provides a structured framework for identifying, assessing, and managing risk while ensuring a consistent and transparent approach across the organisation.

Strategic risks were reviewed twice over the year to maintain a current, relevant, and informed understanding of the risk landscape. Responsibility for these risks was assigned to the appropriate committees for periodic review, enabling enhanced oversight, targeted mitigation, and more effective ownership.

Looking ahead, we have committed to establishing a dedicated Risk Committee. This new committee will play a critical role in strengthening organisational assurance by overseeing the effectiveness of risk management practices across Creative Support. Its responsibilities will include leading the biannual review of strategic risks, ensuring appropriate delegation and accountability across committees, commissioning reviews and audits into priority areas, and monitoring the implementation of audit recommendations to drive continuous improvement.

Corporate Risk Matrix

← Impact →

Likelihood

Risk Score					
5 Certain	5	10	15 6. Political environment and wider economy 10. Technology, data and security	20 3. Safeguarding 4. Workforce and people	25
4 Probable	4	8	12 2. Customer experience 8. Financial performance	16 1. Health and Safety	20
3 Possible	3	6	9 5. Legal and regulatory 9. Business disruption	12 11. Poor culture	15
2 Unlikely	2	4	6	8 7. Strategy and Governance	10
1 Improbable	1	2	3	4	5
	1 Limited	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Critical

No.	Risk Area	Risk Description	Risk Score
1.	**Health and Safety**	Major incident causing significant harm. Impacting on the health, safety or wellbeing of people we support, staff or third parties	16
2.	**Customer Experience**	Major failure to meet customer expectations leading to significant customer dissatisfaction and serious complaints. Adverse media attention, loss of reputation and positive profile, damaging trust.	12
3.	**Safeguarding**	Significant incident leading to loss of trust and reputational damage.	20
4.	**Workforce/People**	Workforce pressures and insufficient staff levels. Failure in recruitment and retention may lead to loss of key roles and knowledge/skills gap.	20
5.	**Legal and Regulatory**	Lack of Compliance with key regulations and legal standards such as poor CQC rating, failed compliance with anti-bribery / modern day slavery etc. Data compliance etc. Leading to loss of contracts / reputation.	9
6.	**Political Environment and Wider Economy**	Changes in Government policy and practice. Economic disruption in UK.	15
7.	**Strategy and Governance**	Ineffective strategy and inability to deliver business plan and social impact objectives.	8
8.	**Financial Performance**	Failure for contract fees to keep up with increase in wages and other costs etc..	12
9.	**Business Disruption**	Major incident (or business restrictions) impacting on continuity of business delivery.	9
10.	**Technology, Data and Security**	Data technology is unable to meet the needs of business or protect cyber security / privacy needs of Creative Support. Data breaches or loss of data leading to regulatory action. Loss of trust and confidence. Data loss leading to Business interruption.	15
11.	**Poor Culture**	Departing from the Creative Support positive culture and expectations leading to poor service delivery	12

Our Five Year Strategic Goals

Our Values & Positive Culture

We will treat our tenants and the people we support with compassion and unconditional positive regard. Their human rights will be respected. Our staff will be valued and well-supported.

Creative People

We will develop and retain our highly motivated, compassionate, ambitious and resilient people.

People Supported Well

We will provide personalised support that enables people to enjoy their lives and achieve their goals.

Homes & Environments for Living Well

We will provide great homes for our tenants and enable people to be part of their community.

Financial Sustainability

We will ensure our financial sustainability so that we can continue to meet our purpose.

Growth & Development

We will invest in homes and develop our services to enable us to help more people.

Key Financial Aims

	Aims	Outcome	Comments
1	To grow our national social care and supported housing portfolio in a sustainable way	Achieved	We continue to deliver a wide range of services and housing options to customers in 70 local authorities across six English regions. Our turnover increased by £22.67 million (14.5%) from £155.83 million in 2023-24 to £178.5 million in 2024-25. We have maintained a diversified portfolio of activity in terms of client group, service type and geographical distribution.
2	To be successful in over 50% of our tender and framework submissions	Achieved	We were successful in 73% of tender and framework submissions in 2024-25 awarded to date, as compared with 62% in 2023-24 and 68% in 2022-23.
3	To continue to invest in new social housing assets	Achieved	We continue to make plans to acquire or build properties for use as supported housing. During 2024-25, we purchased a property in Manchester to refurbish for use as supported accommodation and acquired an established care home in Essex for 18 people with a learning disability. Construction of a £2 million new-build scheme in Reading, approved in in May 2025, commences in Autumn 2025.
4	To maintain over 90% 'Good' and above ratings in our CQC inspections and to achieve at least two 'Outstanding' ratings	Achieved	We achieved a quality rating of 'Good' or above in 92% of our CQC inspected services as at 31 March 2025, somewhat better than the previous year's score of 90%, with 2 ratings going from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good' on re-inspection. We maintained two 'Outstanding' CQC ratings for services in Doncaster and Essex. It is important to maintain high CQC ratings in order to gain access to frameworks and tendering opportunities.
5	To achieve a satisfactory surplus for the year	Achieved	We delivered a surplus for the year of £12.44 million in 2024-25 (7% margin) as compared with £9.08 million in 2023-24 (5.8% margin) and £7.93 million in 2022-23 (5.6% margin).
6	To maintain our cash reserves	Achieved	During 2024-25, we generated cash flow from operations of £15.35 million and as at 31 March 2025 we held cash balances of £38.42 million, compared with £26.05 million as at the end of March 2024-25, an increase of £12.37 million (47%).
7	To reduce our percentage spending on agency staff	Achieved	We spent £7.66 million on agency staff during 2024-25, as compared with £10.92 million in 2023-24, a reduction of £3.26 million (29.9%). The contribution of agency staff costs to total staff costs (including agency costs) fell from 8.6% in 2023-24 to 5.3% in 2024-25.
8	To increase the productivity of our staff	Achieved	The productivity of our staff (measured by income as a percentage of staff costs) was 123% in 2024-25, increasing slightly from 122% in 2023-24.
9	To further build our charitable reserves and balance sheet	Achieved	As at 31 March 2025, our total charitable reserves (net worth) stood at £117.44 million, compared with £104.94 million at 31 March 2024, an increase of £12.5 million (11.9%). Reserves have increased significantly by £21.67 million over the previous 2 years, an increase of 22.6%, despite repaying all remaining loans.
10	To maintain an overall 5A credit rating	Achieved	Our overall D&B credit rating remained at 5A throughout the year, the highest possible rating. It is important to maintain this level of performance as it provides assurance to our stakeholders and enables access to tendering opportunities for larger contracts.

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 services
- Plan and deliver ongoing improvements in value for money

We achieve Value for Money in the following principal ways:

- Using our reserves to develop and fund 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 service users, stakeholders and the communities within which we operate

We are pleased to be able to demonstrate:

- Continued investment in maintaining the quality, safety and sustainability of our housing assets
- The acquisition and development of 27 new units of supported accommodation in 2024-25
- The planned disposal of any housing assets which no longer contribute positively to our strategic plans
- Improvements in fire safety, energy efficiency and disability access for tenants. At the end of March 2025 87% of our properties had achieved EPC 'C' as a minimum, demonstrating that we are well on our way to achieving our target of 100% by March 2027
- Effective policy on managing cash reserves to generate interest payments, whilst protecting working capital. We generated £1.35 million in interest on cash balances
- Evaluation of tenders and housing opportunities to achieve optimum use of available resources
- Geographical consideration of new service developments to ensure efficient and supportive local infrastructure
- Efficient use of back-office costs which have been maintained at 13% of total expenditure.

An example of achieving value for money is demonstrated by our approach to managing our communications infrastructure. By renegotiating our mobile contract last September we have saved on average £4,000 a month, which represents an annual saving of £48,000. Due to the decommissioning of Openreach's older network we have been upgrading our landline and broadband estate to Fibre and VoIP. This has shown both expected bill increases due to upgrading to faster connections but also unexpected increases due to BT's price inflation of the older connections. To manage the bill increases we have accelerated the upgrade process and we have pursued a number of outstanding BT credits and overcharges. Over the past 18 months BT have credited back over £74,000 in overcharges and we expect another £23,000 in credits by the end of the year. In the last 9 months we saved over £120,000 on our BT bill compared to the previous 9 months.

Our Internal Audit Team has recently expanded its scope to include new areas of the business. We have an efficient central and regional 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 somewhat more cost-effective than for many comparable non-profit 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 progression as well as external recruitment. A number of staff at Head Office have benefitted from completing higher apprenticeships and from participating in the 'Moving Up' programme.

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, the Housing Committee's focus on void performance and complaints handling has led to more focused and analytical reporting on voids, specific initiatives to improve occupancy levels and better handling of complaints. We continue to work with the Board to develop the content and presentation of the corporate metrics to enable performance to be reviewed effectively.

We benchmark our financial performance and CQC ratings against a group of 25 comparable voluntary sector and commercial providers of social care and supported housing. The sample includes a number of companies that have a significant property portfolio. Creative Support performs well against all criteria and ratios. This annual benchmarking survey produces good evidence for value for money, financial sustainability and quality outcomes.

Key Metrics - Value for Money Standard

The Regulator of Social Housing requires that we report against a number of standardised metrics in our financial statements. We have documented our results against these metrics for 2024-25, with comments on the performance achieved against our own forecasts and the performance of our peer comparator and the median performance of the wider social housing sector. Projected metrics have been set for 2025-26. We are pleased to have performed well in comparison to the peer comparator in most of the metrics.

Ref.	Metric description	Detail	Creative Support				Peer Comparator	RSH Global Accounts - Median
			Actual 2023/24	Projected 2024/25	Actual 2024/25	Projected 2025/26	2023/24	2023/24
1	Reinvestment %	Reinvestment in 2024-25 increased compared with 2023-24, although lower than the peer comparator. Going forward, we forecast increased spending, to include kitchen and bathroom replacements and energy efficiency improvements to achieve EPC 'C' as a minimum.	2.99%	6.92%	5.14%	9.22%	9.30%	7.70%
2A	New supply delivered (Social housing units) %	New housing supply in 2024-25 compared positively with the peer comparator and the sector median. There are approved plans to develop 20 additional units in 2025-26, plus a fund of £1.95 million for purchases which are identified during the year, with the potential to deliver a further 8 units.	0.54%	4.03%	4.71%	3.51%	2.00%	1.70%
2B	New supply delivered (Non social housing units) %	Creative Support does not deliver non-social housing units.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.20%
3	Gearing %	Strong cash balances with nil loans as at 31 March 2025 have led to negative gearing figures, which compare well with the sector median and peer comparator. We do not require loan finance to continue with our housing development plans.	-34.94%	-32.84%	-50.01%	-45.09%	-1.00%	45.60%
4	Earnings before Interest, Tax, Depreciation, Amortisation, Major Repairs Included (EBITDA MRI) Interest Cover	There was no interest payable with effect from 1 April 2024, therefore no interest cover calculation.	2197.76%	N/A	N/A	N/A	509.00%	122.00%
5	Headline social housing cost per unit	Housing costs per unit compare well with the peer comparator, although above the sector median due to the higher costs of supported housing.	£10,163	£10,302	£10,182	£10,670	£17,336	£5,136.0
6A	Operating margin (social housing lettings only) %	The operating margin compares well with the peer comparator. The cost base in relation to social housing lettings has been well controlled, which is reflected in these results.	16.31%	11.01%	19.61%	16.13%	11.70%	20.40%
6B	Operating margin (overall) %	The overall operating margin compared well with the peer comparator. However, the outlook for 2025-26 assumes a lower surplus due to increased staff costs and other expenditure, including the significant increase in employers NI, which is not fully funded by contract fee uplifts.	5.68%	4.26%	6.22%	3.94%	3.90%	18.50%
7	Return on capital employed (ROCE) %	ROCE compares well with both the peer comparator and the sector median. The projected reduction in operating margin in 2025-26 is expected to exert a downward pressure on the projected ROCE.	8.19%	6.46%	9.19%	6.00%	2.10%	2.80%

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Background

Since 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) requires all providers of social housing to complete a Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey with their tenants. We are obliged to use a set of 12 standardised questions set by the Regulator and have the option of adding additional questions of our own. As we are classified by RSH as a smaller provider owning less than 1,000 units, we are only required to carry out the full survey every 2 years. However, we have opted to carry this out annually in order to benchmark our results and look for ways we can improve our services. We will continue to publish our results online for tenants and stakeholders to access.

Methodology

We opted to repeat the same methodology as the previous year, carrying out a full census. The survey was only applicable to those tenants living in accommodation directly owned by Creative Support, excluding care homes. Last year we asked 3 additional questions and this year we asked 4 additional questions. We also had the surveys printed in colour and branded with our new logo which gave the overall survey a more pleasing and professional look. Surveys were posted direct to each tenant with a covering letter and a prepaid envelope for its return. There was also a QR code on the front of the survey which tenants could scan to complete the survey online if they preferred.

A total of 657 surveys were sent out. We received 228 completed responses – an excellent response rate of 35%. We were happy to see that this was a 5% increase on last year's returns. As in the previous year, the postal return method was the most popular, with 86% of the completed surveys being returned in this way. However, there was a small increase this year in the number of tenants who used the online version (14% against 10% last year).

Survey Results

Standardised TSM Questions	2024-25 results	2023-24 results
TP1 Satisfied with overall service from landlord	89.9%	92.8%
TP2 Satisfied with overall repairs service	93.7%	91.1%
TP3 Satisfied with time taken to complete repairs	89.0%	87.0%
TP4 Satisfied that their home is well maintained	89.0%	91.0%
TP5 Satisfied that their home is safe	91.6%	94.0%
TP6 Satisfied that their landlord listens to views / acts upon them	85.9%	89.6%
TP7 Satisfied their landlord keeps them informed	89.9%	92.0%
TP8 Agree that their landlord treats them fairly / with respect	87.2%	93.1%
TP9 Satisfied with landlord approach to complaints handling	83.6%	79.2%
TP10 Satisfied that their landlord maintains communal space	93.4%	91.5%
TP11 Satisfied landlord contributes to local neighbourhood	65.3%	71.2%
TP12 Satisfied with landlord approach to ASB	71.0%	80.0%

CSL Homes for Living Well

Our own additional questions	2024-25 results	2023-24 results
CS01 Do you rate Creative Support as a good / very good landlord	88.5%	88.8%
CS02 Do you feel like you always / mostly live in a place you can call home	85.0%	-
CS03 Does Creative Support always / mostly listen to and respect you	84.2%	-
CS04 Do you have any suggestions about how we could: Improve your home, improve the services that we provide e.g. gardening, decorating, or improve how we help you to connect to your local community	-	-

90 tenants (14%) responded to the final question with suggestions. Some tenants made suggestions for all three areas and other tenants just had a suggestion for one specific thing. Themes covered by responses included improvements outside spaces (plants, flowers, hanging baskets) and more maintenance of those areas, more decorating and a desire for more social interaction with other tenants. We also received some great feedback and suggestions. Some examples are:

"Garden very good, love the decorating, it is perfect for my mental health."

"Support is good, very positive support while I am recovering from trauma."

"Would like the garden sprucing up and painting. New lighting out there and new plants, new seating areas in the garden. Trees in front garden need cutting back."

"The garden could be more beautiful if decorated for the summer."

"I have a good social life where I have access to the local community."

"I'd like more day trips and outings."

Positive findings

- We are pleased to see an increase in the number of tenants who interacted with the survey and specifically this year, an increase in responses from tenants with learning disabilities and complex needs – although responses from mental health services continue to provide the majority of the feedback.
- It has given us some good figures and insights for future benchmarking/improvements.
- We are really pleased to see that satisfaction with our repairs service not only remains above 90%, but increased against last year's score. This includes both the time it takes to carry out repairs and the overall service.
- Nearly 95% of tenants find our staff helpful and responsive.

Areas to work on

- We should continue to work on promoting our identity as a social landlord.
- We need more tenant involvement and to look at how we communicate with our tenants and involve them in decision making.
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) still appears to be a weaker area for us. However, further analysis suggests that some tenants were perhaps ambivalent about this question because they live in properties where there is not a lot (if any) ASB and they have not experienced our process for managing this. Our ASB policy is due to review so it is a good opportunity to consider our approach to ASB and the perspectives of tenants.

Introduction to our Audited Financial Statements for 2024-25

The financial statements presented in this report are for the Society for the year ended 31 March 2025, with comparatives for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Turnover

During the 2024-25 financial year, the Society's total turnover arising from all activities grew by 14.5%, from £155.83 million in the previous year to £178.5 million. Total turnover included £15.47 million in respect of social housing lettings, £153.83 million generated by community care contracts and £8.16 million for prevention and wellbeing services.

The increase in turnover was mainly attributable to growth in income from community care contracts, which increased by £21.37 million (16.1%). Other income included revenue grants of £88k. In addition to income of £178.5 million we generated a pleasing £1.35 million in interest on cash deposits, compared with £660k in the previous year, taking total revenues to £179.85 million.

Total comprehensive net income for the year including actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes amounted to £12.5 million.

Expenditure

Total operating expenditure in 2024-25 increased by £20.44 million (13.91%) from £146.97 million in 2023-24 to £167.41 million, with the largest increase relating to staff costs. Staff costs including wages & salaries, employers on-costs and agency staff fees amounted to £145.14 million, making up 86.7% of all expenditure.

Expenditure on contracted staff wages and on-costs increased by £21 million (18%) from £116.48 million to £137.48 million in 2024-25. This significant increase was attributable to higher staffing numbers arising from increased activity and cost of living pay increases relating to uplifts to the National Living Wage and the Real Living Wage. Expenditure on agency staff was well controlled throughout the financial year, with a 29.8% reduction from £10.92 million in 2023-24 to £7.66 million in 2024-25. The proportion of agency staff costs to total staff costs over the period reduced from 8.6% to 5.3%. Agency costs are expected to reduce further over 2025-26, falling just under our ambitious target of no more than 4% of total staff costs.

Non-staff costs of £22.27 million in 2024-25 made up 13.3% of total expenditure and included spending on office costs, professional services, maintenance, payments to partner landlords, housing services and utilities. Spending on non-staff costs increased by £2.7 million (13.7%) compared to the previous year's spending of £19.58 million. This increase was driven by underlying increase in activity as well as inflationary cost increases ranging from 5-10%.

We made the decision to fully repay our remaining loans at the end of March 2024, protecting the Society from interest costs at a time of continued high interest rates. We incurred no interest costs at all, in contrast with the previous year in which we made interest payments of £442k. There are no current plans to secure loan finance as we are able to finance our development plans using our own reserves.

Surplus on Activities

The operating surplus for the year amounted to £11.09 million, which was an increase of £2.23 million (25.2%) compared to 2023-24. The operating margin showed a modest improvement from 5.7% to 6.2%. The surplus for the year after interest receivable was £12.44 million, compared with £9.08 million in the previous year, an increase of 37%. Total comprehensive net income for the year, including actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes, amounted to £12.5 million.

As a not-for-profit company, we are required to generate sufficient surpluses to maintain positive cash flow and a sufficient level of working capital to fund our operations and to support future investment in supported housing and our charitable activities. The Board of Trustees regard the overall surplus achieved as a very positive outcome, taking into account ongoing labour market challenges and the imperative to maintain safe and effective services, combined with a challenging external funding environment.

Cash Flow & Cash Balances

Cash flow was satisfactory throughout 2024-25, due to the operating surplus and improved recovery of sales ledger debts. Net cash generated from operating activities was £15.35 million, compared to £12.91 million in 2023-24.

At 31 March 2025, the Society held cash balances of £38.42 million as compared with £26.05 million at 31 March 2024, an increase of 47%. Cash generated from operating activities has been used for capital expenditure on the upkeep and maintenance of our supported accommodation portfolio and to fund the acquisition of additional properties for use by people with support needs.

Reserves and Fixed Assets

Total reserves for the Society have increased by £12.5 million (11.9%) from £104.94 million to £117.44 million. 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 increased slightly from £76.8 million to £79.18 million, due to investment in capital assets of £4.87 million, less depreciation charges and fixed asset disposals.

Capital Spending

During 2024-25, capital expenditure spending on acquiring, developing and maintaining our properties totalled £3.97 million. In addition, there was continued IT investment in hardware, software and digital improvements. Our Board has approved potential capital expenditure of £8.71 million in 2025-26, which includes the acquisition or development of three identified new supported accommodation schemes and for responding to new opportunities identified throughout the year. In addition, capital has been ear-marked for investment in improving and refurbishing existing properties. The remaining capital expenditure relates to leasehold improvements, acquisition of vehicles, IT infrastructure and other equipment.

Grants Received

We have been very grateful for the award of a number of grants and other funding initiatives during 2024-25. We would like to acknowledge and thank the funders for these amounts, including a Skills for Care Workforce Development Grant of £77k for delivering accredited training including diploma qualifications.

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 activities into the purchase and development of properties, and latterly by the construction of new homes, for rental to people with support needs. The number of social housing tenancies directly owned or leased by the Society at the end of March 2025 was 765, a net increase of 27 units over the financial year. Our portfolio of leased and managed housing reduced by 16 units, reflecting changes in demand. We continue to identify properties for disposal where these are no longer sustainable or attractive to potential tenants.

Voids available for letting averaged 4.3% in 2024-25, comfortably falling below our target of 5%. This compared positively with 4.9% voids in the previous year. Occupancy levels are expected to further improve in 2025-26. Our greatest challenge when filling voids is the delay in local authority funding decisions for placements, which significantly contributes to void levels.

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. We continue to identify properties for disposal where these are no longer sustainable and in the event that a decision is made to sell a property that no longer meets our criteria, we seek to re-invest the sale proceeds in alternative social housing. We will continue to use the proceeds of strategic disposals to fund our capital expenditure plans and development strategy.

Going Concern Statement

The trustees and management have determined that there is currently no material uncertainty that casts doubt on the Society's ability to continue as a going concern. 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, no debt following the repayment in full of all loans during the previous financial year, significant cash reserves, and is expected to continue generating positive cash flow from surpluses generated by operational activities. These elements combine to provide sufficient resources to continue delivering high quality accommodation and social care services whilst maintaining and investing in the Society's assets.

Future Financial Prospects

UK GDP is expected to grow very modestly over 2025-26, with the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) predicting growth of 1% in 2025 and 1.9% in 2026. However, growth in the first quarter of the financial year was reported as just 0.3%. Low growth impacting on tax revenues, combined with the rising cost of servicing public debt continues to constrain the government's ability to increase public spending. There is a looming black hole of £51bn in the public finances by 2029-30, according to forecasts from the thinktank National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR) which have taken into account estimates of the UK's long-term growth potential, higher than expected government borrowing and the reversal of planned welfare cuts. The NIESR warned that the Chancellor will be forced to raise taxes in the Autumn Budget if spending pledges are to be maintained whilst sticking to fiscal rules.

Creative Support obtains over 90% of its funding for social care services from local authorities, which receive nearly a quarter of their funding from central government. Successive years of below inflation central government funding continues to place pressure on local government finances.

A recent survey by the County Council Network identified 16 potential council failures by 2026/27. While these levels haven't been seen yet (8 councils have issued section 114 notices since 2021), the financial pressure continues to build. Past failures were often driven by specific issues, like Birmingham's equal pay claims, but now councils face the broader challenge of balancing budgets with declining revenue and rising costs. Central government funding for local authorities was cut by 31% in real terms between 2009 and 2021. Rising costs are projected to increase by up to £22bn per year between 2022 and 2030, with adult social care, children's services, and home-to-school transport accounting for 83% of the total increase in costs.

The National Living Wage (NLW) increased by 6.7% from April 2025 and the Real Living Wage by 5%. The above-inflation and higher than expected increases in NLW and RLW have had an impact on all salaries as well as front-line worker pay. The unexpected hike in employer's national insurance to 15% and the reduction in the threshold for payment from £9,100 to £5,000 has added to these cost pressures, with the combined impact on social care budgets amounting to 9-10%.

UK inflation in the 12 months to July 2025 was reported by the ONS as 3.8%, up from 3.6% in the previous month. The Bank of England predicts that inflation will peak at 4% in September 2025 before starting to fall back down to 3.6% by the end of 2025, then falling further towards the mandated 2% target in 2026. The bank attributes current inflationary increases to various factors including rising food prices and global uncertainty.
Fee uplifts for 2025-26 across the country have been broadly in line with our budget expectations. However, some local authorities have offered derisory increases which will widen the future funding gap and sustainability of some services. Fee uplifts from ICBs have been particularly difficult to negotiate as NHS uplifts do not take account of the impact of increases in NLW/RLW and as the NHS has been shielded from the increase in employers NI there is little understanding of the significant impact of this on social care staffing costs.

Going forward into next financial year we expect further increases in the NLW & RLW of up to 5% as well as continued inflationary pressures on non-pay spending. Ongoing recruitment and retention challenges in the social care sector continue to impact on costs. We are pleased with our record of reducing and controlling agency costs, with agency spending having fallen from 8.6% of total staff costs in 2023-24 to 5.3% in 2024-25. We have seen further improvement in the year to date, with spending on agency staff falling below our target of no more than 4% of total staff costs. This has partly been achieved due to our sponsorship of non-UK citizens, which has enabled more than 500 staff to be sponsored to date. The Health and Care visa route for new overseas recruits was closed as of 22 July 2025 and the ability to offer sponsorship to existing employees will end in July 2028. These unexpected changes will be very impactful and will contribute to a new looming crisis in social care recruitment for our organization and the wider health and social care sector.

Over 2024-25 we were pleased to have been awarded a number of contracts for new and existing services from successfully participating in competitive tendering exercises. These have involved a wide range of service models and customer needs. Our quality offer, efficient and responsive infrastructure and competitive cost base have helped us to remain competitive in tendering exercises. A number of contracts that reached the end of their term in the previous year have been extended into 2024-25 and beyond, usually on the basis of the same or improved terms. In addition to tendering opportunities, we continue to see an increase in organic growth and call-off opportunities from the many procurement frameworks that we have been admitted to. However, our appetite to tender for new services remains constrained by workforce challenges and in some cases by unsustainably low fee levels.

Despite these pressures and challenges the long-term prospects for the wider social care market and for Creative Support are expected to remain positive, with continuing demographic trends driving strong demand for social care services and supported housing.

In summary, we anticipate ongoing cost pressures in the year ahead, although broadly within our budget, with shortfalls in funding for some services rendering them less viable. However, we expect to see continued growth in turnover with positive cash generation further strengthening of our strong balance sheet in 2025-26. The associated cash generated by future surpluses will create options for future investment in social housing assets and expansion of our charitable activities.

The Future for Adult Social Care

The government has set up an independent commission to recommend long-term reform to adult social care, led by Baroness Louise Casey to recommend changes to achieve the government's ambition of creating a 'national care service'. Care minister Stephen Kinnock said the Casey Commission would "tackle both the immediate issues and the fundamental challenges that must be addressed if we are to get our adult social care system back on its feet and fit for the future". The commission has started its work but is not due to issue its final report until 2028.

The Casey Commission is the third independent commission on social care reform in England in the past three decades. The second of these, the Dilnot Commission, was established by the coalition government to consider how to deliver a fair, affordable and sustainable funding system for social care in England. Its proposals, in particular a proposed cap on people's lifetime liabilities for personal care were accepted and the principle of the lifetime cap was enacted in the Care Act 2014, although never implemented. Despite successive governments promising to introduce versions of the commission's proposals, such plans have all been dropped, most recently by the current Labour government.

The all-party House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee (HSCC) report 'Adult social care reform: the cost of inaction', published on 5 May 2025 stated that **'**Adult social care is in desperate need of reform. Done well, social care has the power to positively transform people's lives. Yet too many people aren't getting the care they need, care workers are undervalued and far too much pressure is placed on unpaid carers. The cost of this vital public service continues to increase, with £32 billion spent on adult social care in 2023-24, and an unsustainable pressure is falling on local authorities. Without reform we will all keep paying a high price for a failing system.'

The Casey commission will deliver an initial report in mid-2026, setting out the key issues facing the sector and recommendations for medium-term reform. The second phase, reporting by 2028, will recommend long-term reforms 'looking at the model of care needed to address our ageing population, how services should be organised to deliver this, and how to best create a fair and affordable adult social care system for all'. In the meantime, the adult social care system is under significant pressure and in urgent need of reform, with local authorities unable to meet demand, providers struggling with unfunded rising costs and many people in need of care forced to either pay for their own care, rely on family and friends or go without. Yet the government has cancelled reforms that were due to be introduced in 2025.

The increasing cost of paying staff has ultimately led to a fall in the number of people receiving publicly funded long-term care. The Kings Fund report 'Social Care 360' analyses nearly a decade's worth of data and reveals a 'doom loop' of rising wages, increasing fees, stretched budgets, and less care available to those who need it. It has found that Local authorities, which fund most social care in England, have been forced to pay higher fees for care principally due to the introduction of the National Living Wage in 2016 and successive increases which have pushed up the cost of providing it.

The King's Fund warns that the cycle may be about to repeat itself because local authorities are now seeing increasing financial problems and face a 'double whammy' of staffing costs, with minimum wage increases combined with the rise in National Insurance contributions from April 25. Their analysis shows that although councils spent more on care, the number of people they could afford to support with long-term care actually fell between 2015/16 and 2023/24 from 873,000 in 2015/16 to 859,000 in 2023/24. This was despite the increase in people seeking long-term support from their local authority, up from 1.8 million new requests in 2015/16 to 2.1 million in 2023/24.

The government plans to introduce a Fair Pay Agreement for care workers to help improve domestic recruitment, retention and workforce resilience in the social care sector over the long term. Unless this is fully funded it will heap further pressure on local authorities and stressed care providers. Councils continue to face long-term underfunding and increasing levels and complexity of need. This 'doom loop' must be addressed by fair and sustainable funding for social care.

Social Care Contracts and Services

It has been another successful year for our Tendering and Business Development Team, with both commissioners and providers working towards the change in procurement law which came into force on 24 February 2025. The Procurement Act 2023 was originally due to commence in October 2024 but was delayed due to the change in government.

We have continued a healthy approach to growth and expansion into new areas of the country and the development of new models, whilst building on existing activity. We have taken a robust approach to evaluating the strategic relevance and sustainability of tender opportunities.

We continued to tender for inclusion on frameworks for support and accommodation services. Over the year, we were awarded places on 21 frameworks for health and social care services and accommodation across the country, compared with 11 in the previous year. Frameworks are increasingly the chosen mechanism by local authorities and ICBs for commissioning social care, with 13 of the 21 frameworks ensuring retention of our current services and/or continued referrals for service placements. Admission to frameworks in these areas has also ensured access to the market for new placements and commissioned health and social care services via mini competitions.

Throughout the year also participated in open tenders for new and existing services. We were delighted to retain seven of our existing contracts, including a number of longstanding services and high value contracts, including our six Extra Care Services in Tower Hamlets and both our Learning Disability Supported Living & Intensive Support Services in Tameside.

In addition, we were pleased to be awarded seven new contracts for delivering a variety of supported living and other social care services, including our first contract with Barnsley Council to deliver Extra Care for older adults. We were also delighted to be awarded the contract for an innovative 'High Intensity Use' service in Knowsley, which represents our first contract for this model of delivery.

We submitted proposals and tenders for 50 contracts and frameworks in total across seven English Regions including the North West, North East, Yorkshire, West Midlands, East Midlands, London and the South East. We have been successful in 73% of these submissions (35 contracts of the 48 which have been awarded to date). This will contribute an additional income stream of around £3.8 million in 2025-26, with total income generated from all successful tenders amounting to around £12 million. An equal number of our submissions were via open tender and mini-competition, with an increased number of submissions for existing business via frameworks which means they have not been counted towards our income stream.

Mobilising newly awarded contracts has involved both setting up new services and transferring existing delivery and staff teams to our organisation. Nine of the new contracts commencing in 2024-25 involved the TUPE transfer of 357 staff from 11 outgoing providers to our employment. In addition, we have increased our activity and turnover through non-tendered growth, such as the purchase of Nightingale Close in Essex which involves the delivery of care and support for 18 people and the transfer of 30 staff from a housing association to our employment.

Successful Tender Outcomes

Type	No.	Description	Locations	
Frameworks & Approved Lists successfully applied for	**21**	Supported living/accommodation (11) Extra care (3) Mental health (1) Accommodation & outreach (1) Home care & supported living (1) Supported living & HRS (1) Residential & nursing (2) Housing (1)	Herefordshire South Tyneside Greater Manchester (2) East Riding of Yorkshire Bradford Newham Stoke-on-Trent Essex West Northamptonshire North East Lincolnshire	LB Ealing St Helens Derby Newcastle Bedford Darlington Manchester City Cumberland (2) Westmoreland & Furness
New contracts awarded from competitive tendering	**7**	Learning disability supported living (4) High Intensity Use (1) Extra care (2)	Blackpool (2) Knowsley North East Lincolnshire	Barnsley LB Brent Worcestershire
Existing contracts re-awarded on tendering	**7**	Domiciliary Care (1) Supported living/intensive support (3) Extra care (2) Mental health (1)	Stockton-on-Tees Tameside (3) West Northamptonshire	Stockport Tower Hamlets
Total	**35**			

Services in the North West

We have continued to enjoy growth in the North West and now provide services for people with a learning disability, autism and mental health needs in 19 local authorities across the North West region and in all 10 of the Greater Manchester authorities. During the year we were admitted to new commissioning frameworks in Cumbria and St Helens.

The Laurels care home for older people in Carlisle continued received many compliments and accolades, including winning the North West Great British Care Awards for activities. Registered Manager Shirleyann Tingey said *'I am so proud to have won as it recognises the varied activities we provide at The Laurels'"*. We were also pleased to be re-awarded the contract to provide extra care at Station View in Barrow-on-Furness.
In Blackpool, we were awarded a contract by the local authority and the ICB to provide 7 small supported living services for 15 people with a learning disability, with 27 staff transferring to our employment. We are delighted to have improved the quality of life for one person who previously rarely left his home after involvement from our complex care team.

Liverpool City Council re-awarded us the funding to run the Liverpool Night Café (known as The Liverpool Light), an innovative mental health crisis café that provides a warm, welcoming and supportive environment for people who are experiencing mental distress or crisis. This preventative service provides an alternative to statutory mental health provision running from our existing hub in central Liverpool and has received over 350 referrals in the last year.

The NHS awarded us a contract in Knowsley to deliver a High Intensity Use (HIU) service, with the aim of reducing repeat use of A&E and other NHS services thorough using an evidence-based model of mental health interventions. In St Helens, the first tenants moved into the new-build service known as Heathside in April 2024. The service is now well established and fully occupied, enabling people with a learning disability who have complex needs to enjoy a fulfilling life. We were awarded a contract to provide recovery-focused mental health support in Wigan to 76 tenants living in nine existing supported accommodation schemes across the borough in 2024. This involved the transfer of 96 staff from three different providers, requiring significant support from our HR Team. These services continue to develop and a number of the people we support have become actively involved in Creative Voices.

We were delighted to be awarded a place on the Manchester Framework for supported living for people with mental health needs and learning disabilities. Our hospital discharge service for people with mental health needs in Manchester was further extended, enabling us to continue working closely with in-patient services to enable people to find pathways out of hospital into independent living.

During 2025, we opened Grosvenor House in Tameside, a new mental health supported housing scheme of 17 apartments with 24-hour support in partnership with Great Places housing association. We were awarded the contract for Birch Lea Park, a new extra care scheme for older people with care and support needs. This band new scheme will offer up to 91 flats once full and will contribute to the re-generation of the Hattersley area. We were also delighted to be re-awarded three contracts in Tameside to provide supported living and intensive support for 70 people with learning disabilities, autism and other needs in 17 services.

Services in the North East

We continue to develop and extend our services in the North East, with our regional office located in Teesside. We now provide services in 12 local authorities in the region, including North Tyneside, Gateshead, Newcastle, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Durham, Hartlepool, Redcar & Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough, Darlington and North Yorkshire. During the year, we were admitted to frameworks in South Tyneside for supported living (High Level Needs) and Newcastle for mental health support.

In Gateshead, the contract for our well-respected prevention service was further extended, based on the positive outcomes we achieve for vulnerable people, including individuals at risk of offending or experiencing mental ill health, substance misuse and homelessness. We provide supported living services for people with a learning disability in South Tyneside and services for people with mental health needs and learning disabilities in North Tyneside.

We have maintained our person-centred services for people with a learning disability who can present with behaviours of concern in County Durham. A new single-tenancy supported living service opened in Durham during the year. We have continued our partnership with seven other voluntary sector providers to deliver mental health services across the County as part of the Durham Mental Health Wellbeing Alliance (DMWA). In Darlington we gained a place on the Darlington framework, ranking first place for supported living.

A 'Sporty Summer' event in South Shields was attended by 60 people across the region who enjoyed an action-packed day of sports and activities. The My MOT event in in Redcar was very successful, encouraging people with a learning disability to better understand their health needs and make meaningful changes. It was attended by health care professionals, agencies and people we support across Teesside, including Sven who said: *"There was a lot of information for us to pick up and take away with us, it was a great experience and I'd like to see more of it."*

The contract for our specialist home care service for people with a learning disability in Stockton-on-Tees was re-awarded to us and we are the lead provider for the North Locality. We continue to provide person-centred community support and supported living in North Yorkshire, in Whitby and Northallerton. We were delighted when Whitby was chosen to host Creative Voices in April 2025 and pleased to welcome people from across the country to our beautiful town on the east coast. It was a great day and our Chair, Joolz Casey was invited back to meet with people we support.

Services in Yorkshire and Humberside

Creative Support is pleased to provide prevention and social care services in 11 local authorities in the region (Calderdale, Kirklees, Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster, Hull, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire and Wakefield) for older people and people with a learning disability, autism and mental health needs. Our services include five Extra Care services for older people in Hull, Leeds, Wakefield and Barnsley. We joined a framework to provide mental health support in Bradford and gained places on frameworks in new areas, in the East riding of Yorkshire and on Rotherham's framework for supported living across three Lots.

In North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire, we provide 16 supported living and outreach services for people with a learning disability and autism. We also provide housing related support in North East Lincolnshire to adults with complex needs and we were awarded a place on the ICB's Framework for Community Services in North East Lincolnshire. In October 2024 we were awarded the contact for Keeper's Cottage, a supported living service in North East Lincolnshire, with 14 staff transferring to our employment.

We deliver a large contract in Doncaster for over 100 people with a learning disability in a range of accommodation across the city. These include a newly-built service for younger people who are moving towards greater independence. Our service model has a strong emphasis on co-production, delivering social value and building community connections. We also provided preventative community support to 250 people experiencing mental ill health.

In Sheffield, we continued to provide high quality supported living services to people with a learning disability and we gained a place on the Council's framework for enhanced supported living for people with complex needs. We were delighted to be offered our first contract to provide social care in Barnsley, when two existing extra care services in Barnsley, Fitzwilliam Court and Westmeads transferred to our management in December 2024.

In Wakefield, we have worked hard to build a positive, unified staff team and a strong person-centred culture in our contract to provide 13 supported living services for 40 people with a learning disability. We welcomed 130 staff from two providers in April 2024. In 2025 July we moved into accessible new offices which will offer a base for co-production activities and training.

Our supported living services in Leeds provided support to 34 people with a learning disability and autism in three supported living services. The Courtyard Café in Horsforth and the adjacent 'Creativities' day opportunities project continue to flourish, offering people with a learning disability an alternative to traditional day services. We have re-furbished the café which offers an attractive and welcoming environment for our trainees and customers. Our new-build scheme in Horsforth is expected to complete at the end of September 2025. This will offer 7 individual apartments with personalised support to people with a learning disability or autism.

In Calderdale, Kirklees and Bradford we support people with a learning disability and autism in 16 supported living services. We are working with commissioners to re-model a service in Kirklees. In Bradford, we continue to provide community-based support for people with mental health needs and we offer mental health supported accommodation in eight locations across Bradford and Keighley. Our crisis support service for adults with mental health needs in Bradford, known as 'Breathing Space' has been re-commissioned as part of a multi-agency service model involving the NHS and voluntary sector partners. Our referrals come from a wide range of sources, including the home treatment team and CMHTs. The service is provided in a calm, therapeutic, non-clinical environment. We are currently re-furbishing the basement to provide a comfortable chill-out space.

Services in the West Midlands

Services in the West Midlands were provided in 12 local authorities in 2024-25, including Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell, Birmingham, Solihull, Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Oxfordshire. During the year we gained a place on both the Stoke-on Trent and Herefordshire frameworks for the provision of supported living.

We offer five supported living services in Staffordshire for people with a learning disability and in Stoke-on-Trent we provide recovery-focused support for people with mental health needs in Leonora Street and Robert Heath Street. We have worked with residents at Leonora Street to co-produce improvements to the garden areas and we are now planning an allotment to grow fresh food on site. We held a fantastic summer fete at Leonora Street, attended by over 60 people we support from across Staffordshire.

In Wolverhampton, we provide six services for people with a learning disability and mental health needs. A highlight in Wolverhampton was a fantastic street party held to celebrate the 77th birthday of a wonderful lady we support. In neighboring Sandwell, we support eight people with a learning disability. In Dudley, we provide six supported living services for people with a learning disability across the Borough. A contract to provide support to a further 10 people in three existing supported living services in Dudley is being mobilised and is expected to commence in October 2025. We have further developed the use of our Dudley Hub as a centre for training and co-produced activities, hosting birthday celebrations, a Valentines party and a well-attended consultation event “Hopes, Dreams and Wishes”.

Across Telford & Wrekin we offer six supported living services for people with a learning disability, including a new service for four people. An existing mental health service known as Orchard Place transferred to our management during the year. We mobilised a completely new mental health recovery service known as White Cottages, comprising 12 self-contained 1 bed apartments with 24-hour on-site support.

We continued to provide our mental health recovery service and crisis café from hubs in East and South Birmingham, commissioned by the NHS and delivered as part of a longstanding partnership with Birmingham MIND. The service offers individual recovery planning, recovery training, co-produced wellbeing activities, peer support and pathways to employment, with the aim of promoting recovery and independence.

Our services in Warwickshire now support over 50 people with a learning disability, autism and mental health needs across the county. People supported at Grove Place took part in the annual Alcester pancake race, winning first place in the Diversity Race. Hope House, our first supported living service in Oxford is now well established. Following our admission to the framework for supported living in Worcestershire in 2024, we were awarded the contract to provide support to 14 people with a learning disability at Samuel Place in Redditch. This service transferred to us in April 2025 with 17 staff, complementing our existing services in the county for people with a learning disability and mental health needs.

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. During the year were admitted to Bedford and Derby's frameworks for supported living.

In Derby, we provide community mental health outreach support across the city and support 24 people with a learning disability in two supported living services. In Bedford we provide seven supported living services and four residential care homes for over 80 people with a learning disability and autism. We were delighted when The Houghtons achieved a rating of 'Good' overall and good in all areas, having previously been rated 'Requires Improvement'.

We continue to provide a range of services across Leicester and Leicestershire, including seven mental health services and 12 supported living services for people with a learning disability. In August 2025 we were awarded the contract to mobilise a new supported living service in Leicester for people with a range of needs, to be known as Meadows Way.

We work in both unitary authorities in Northamptonshire, providing residential care, supported living and community support for people who have a learning disability. We gained the first ranked place on West Northamptonshire's supported living framework and we were re-awarded the contract to provide mental health recovery support at Moray Lodge in Northampton. Our personalised day service in Wellingborough currently supports 24 people to enjoy sports, arts and other enjoyable community activities. In 2025 a group of people we support worked with local arts charity 'Made with Many' to create artwork using techniques such as screen printing and stamping. Once the pieces were complete they worked with the charity to plan a sale held in a local shopping centre. The sale was a great success with people we support manning the stall. It was visited by other people we support, staff and family members who were extremely impressed with the creations. A family member said "*We were very impressed with all the various work on display and particularly pleased with D's contribution to the project. He has produced work that, in the past, we honestly didn't imagine him to be capable of. It was especially pleasing to hear how much he enjoys the craft sessions at Poplar St and to hear how well the group has gelled together.*"

Willowtree House in Wellingborough was inspected by CQC in December 2024 and achieved a rating of 'Good' overall and good in all areas, having previously been 'Requires Improvement'. We have invested over £100k in improving the accommodation and it was pleasing to gain recognition of the quality of the care and support provided at Willowtree.

Services in London and the South East

We currently provide services in six London boroughs, including Barnet, Brent, Bromley, Camden, Tower Hamlets and Wandsworth, with a new service in development in Harrow. We also support older people and people with a learning disability or mental health needs in Thurrock, Essex, West Berkshire, Reading and Slough. During the year we gained a place on frameworks to provide extra care by the London Boroughs of Ealing and Newham.

Pelham House, our supported living service in West Berkshire, continues to provide personalised support to 15 people with a learning disability with a very dedicated team of staff. In Reading we provided support to people with a learning disability and mental health needs. During the year we consulted with stakeholders to develop a new-build scheme of 8 flats on land we own in Reading. We have been working on detailed plans for the accommodation which will create light, spacious, energy efficient apartments and welcoming communal areas and landscaping.

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 and have achieved great outcomes for the individuals we support. In April 2024 we were awarded a second contract in Essex to provide support to six people living in an existing service (Moulsham Lodge) in Chelmsford. In September 2024 we completed on the purchase of Nightingale Close in Witham, Essex, a care home comprising three six-bed bungalows, with 30 staff transferring to our employment. We also gained a place on the Essex framework for supported living.

In the London Borough of Wandsworth, commissioners re-configured and re-tendered their learning disability contracts in 2024 and we were pleased to be awarded the contract for four new services providing supported living for 18 people, with 27 staff transferring to our employment under TUPE. In Brent we have been selected to provide three supported living services in the Wembley area, which will transfer to our management in the autumn of 2025.

We currently provide Extra Care services to over 400 people in London. We deliver a programme of enjoyable and stimulating activities in these services to promote wellbeing and encourage peer support. We were delighted to retain all six of our extra care services in Tower Hamlets, on re-tendering, enabling us to continue providing care and support to over 200 older people across the borough. In the London Borough of Brent, we have recently been awarded a contract to provide extra care in three existing services, including one which provides dementia-specific care. In the previous year Harrow Council awarded us the contract to provide a brand-new Extra Care service in Klute Apartments, named in honour of photographic pioneer, Jeannette Klute, in a purpose-built new building on the iconic Kodak redevelopment site. The service was officially opened in July 2025 by the Mayor of Harrow, Councillor Anjana Patel.

Prevention, Outreach and Wellbeing Services

Our prevention services have supported over 1,000 people across the country in 2024-25 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.

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 in 2024-25. These included the extension of our well-regarded prevention service in Gateshead. Our floating support service in Doncaster provided a recovery focused outreach service to more than 250 people with mental health needs across the city. The service has experienced high demand for the duration of the contract and has achieved some excellent outcomes. These include supporting tenants to find a suitable place they can call home, access the benefits they are entitled to and find pathways to volunteering and paid work.

The Wigan prevention services supported 489 people across the Borough this year. The team continue to receive positive feedback from the people we support, who have said that the service has helped them to regain their confidence, build trust and improve their life skills such as travel and money management. Funding was secured for a further year for The Liverpool Light service which provides preventative and supportive interventions for people experiencing mental distress in a welcoming city centre café setting. The Breathing Space project in Bradford continues to offer a non-clinical, therapeutic environment for people experiencing mental distress and is now widening its referral base.

Creative Space Centre

The Creative Space Centre in Preston provides offers sensory spaces and state-of-the-art sensory experiences. We also offer meeting rooms & host events. We have been delighted to welcome almost 5,000 visitors in the year 2024-25, growing our customer base with new family groups, schools and other providers.

Ambitious plans for development of the indoor and outdoor spaces were mapped out based on ideas and feedback from people who use the service. Space 1 (our largest sensory space) is undergoing extensive refurbishment, with completely new equipment including a waterbed, hut, bubble tubes, trampette and climbing wall. The renovated room will also have state of the art cinema-size visuals. The Garden renovation will aim to improve the accessibility of the space while preserving its important heritage. Both projects should be completed by the end of 2025. In the next year we will be investing in a new booking system to improve ease of access and reduce administration, increasing the time Group Facilitators can spend on making sessions special.

These developments would not have been possible without the 'Friends of Space' charity who have worked hard to fundraise to achieve these changes. The charity has been able to raise £120,000 towards Space 1 and £150,000 towards the ambitious refurbishment of our historic gardens. This included a generous donation of £60,000 from Pete Marquis Contractors in December 2024 and the continued support of Karen Sutton, who has raised thousands of pounds through fundraising events. Our annual Christmas Grotto event welcomed 400 families across a two-day celebration and raised nearly £2,500.

A day service in Preston, FX Project said: *"Space is amazing! We love coming every week, our Service Users really benefit from the sensory input and we then stay afterwards to have our lunch and sometimes use the gardens. The staff are fantastic, very welcoming and always help we need them to."*

Creative Together

It has been another brilliant year for Creative Together focusing on the co-production and empowerment of its members. Over the year we have collaborated with 30+ Creative Support services, engaged over 40 local organisations, hosted five students and been supported by three volunteers.

The Centre invited all services to visit the Art Exhibition by members in May 2024. The theme this year was 'Surrealism' with tarot card reading, tarot card design and art-based workshops. Members created a large collaborative art piece - a dragon wall mural for the back drop of the festival. Resident artist IB said *"It's been really good seeing it all come together, and there was a lot of hard work by everyone"*.

Following the success of the music festival held by the service in 2023 another festival was held in July 2024, 'Be Free, Not Afraid'. The event was fully co-produced with members and was attended by people from services across the country. Our 2023 'Be You, Not Them' festival was nominated in the 'Best Event' category in the prestigious Manchester Culture Awards held in November 2024.

David Johnston, a member passionate about sports and keeping active, decided to start an exercise class at the centre that followed online videos to create opportunities that were safe & appropriate for all. David said "*I was surprised by the turnout of the class - I liked that everyone took part and wanted it put on the timetable".*

Open Mic Night has been a popular feature on the Creative Together calendar for some time and in late 2024, members approached local music venue Band on the Wall who offered to host a monthly open stage event 'Owt on Stage' which started in November 2024 and has been a huge success. Attendance is consistently good and we often have a queue of people waiting to perform.

Creative Voices

Over 2024-25 we held two Creative Voices forums, visiting Visram House in Brent, London in April 2024 and Yardley, Birmingham in December 2024. At Visram House we were joined by two Board members as well as people we support from London, Essex, Manchester, Bedford, Wellingborough and Middlesbrough. The forum considered three important questions: How would you like your life to be? How do you want to live and what does good look like? The forum also discussed co-production in action and described it as 'reaching for the stars.' The discussion involved thinking about what everyone most enjoyed about co-production, what is already being achieved and what other aspects of co-production people would like to see.

In Yardley, we were joined by one of our Trustees as well as people we support from Birmingham, Wigan, Middlesbrough, Warwickshire and Dudley. The Forum considered the I Statements and Joolz Casey, Chair of the Board joined via Zoom to explain the purpose of the 'I Statements' as a way of ensuring that Creative Support ensures that people they support are living their best life. The Forum considered whether they could say yes to the 'I Statements' and we heard from people we support at Lanchester Court in Warwickshire and The Crescent in Middlesbrough about their personal experiences.

A Co-Production Conference was held at the Space Centre in July 2024 with the theme of growing our co-production strategy. The conference was full of energy and was attended by 50 people from Blackburn, Greater Manchester, Doncaster, Calderdale, Stockton, Middlesbrough, Birmingham, Leeds and Warwickshire.

We heard about co-production in action at Creative Together with an inspiring piece about their recent textiles project. We also heard from Brandling Court about co-production there, including Brandling Campers, a recent canal boat trip and many other events and activities. In the afternoon everyone took part in market place style workshops with a garden theme. Discussions included looking at ways to get involved in quality checking and more national projects at Creative Support, planning and arranging fundraising events, taking part in podcasts and being on the Board.

Events and Initiatives

- Our overall marketing theme in 2024 was the 'Year of Living Well'. We focused on the promotion of physical and mental health and wellbeing of the people we support and our staff. Monthly themes included 'Managing Stress' and 'Healthy Eating Month'.

- We held our annual Gala event at the Mercure Manchester Hotel in June 2024, with over 200 people from across the country attending to celebrate Creative Support award winners, enjoy a delicious three course meal, and dance at the disco.

- In the run up to the General Election held on Thursday 4th July, we promoted a set of articles and resources about how to register to vote, what an election is and what ID is accepted at polling stations.

- Across summer 2024, many services held their own 'Sporty Summer' events, in line with the summer marketing initiative of being active and trying new sports.

- We were the headline sponsor of Stockport Pride in 2024. "*It's special to see people be themselves*," said Carolyn, a person we support in Manchester. "*I've enjoyed spending time with everyone and getting to know them better, and I love the atmosphere.*"

- In August 2024 we took part in the Manchester Pride Parade once again. Around 40 people we support and staff took part in our colourful parade. People we support took part in the planning of the day and made banners and posters which we carried on the day.

- We celebrated Black History Month in October 2024, with a blog written by Akeisha Brown, EDI Development Lead. We worked with EDI on a World Mental Health Day article focusing on Black mental health experiences and resources.

- We encouraged people to 'Take Five' for World Mental Health Day. At Head Office we made a 'Wellbeing Wall' full of positive affirmations and words of encouragement.

- Our 2025 theme is 'Doing What Matters to Me', which focuses on everyone's favourite hobbies, interests and activities. We created a journal and poster that concentrated on four main themes: 'Connect with your Community', 'Keep Learning', 'Keep Active', and 'Create and Give'.

- For International Women's Day, we encouraged staff to nominate the women they work with who inspire them everyday. We received 24 heartfelt nominations which we displayed on our website.

- Our 2025 calendar and Christmas card were both well received. The calendar included the winners of our 2024 Art Competition with diverse and engaging artwork from the people we support and staff members in many different mediums including photography, painting, embroidery and sculpture. The Christmas card featured artwork from Raymond, a talented artist who we support in Essex.

- We launched our Creative Mission Competition, which asked people we support to respond creatively to one of our new ‘I’ Statements. A winner was announced for each category and the artwork and writing submitted will be used during the promotion of our ‘I’ Statements next year.

- We held a programme of online activities via Zoom, beginning in December 2024. From December until the end of the financial year, we held 41 online activities initially broadcast at Head Office and in March broadcast from Cranleigh Court in Wigan. The purpose of these activities is to offer opportunities for people we support to get involved in activities and meet other people we support from across the Creative Support community. Activities have included social groups based on themes such as books and gardening, as well as practical activities such as origami, creative writing, and completing the 2025 Doing What Matters to Me journal. Nicola, a person we support who participated, said: “*I enjoyed doing them, they were different. It’s been brilliant.”*

- We published a list of Top Ten Most Inspiring People of 2024 on our website, which included Gisèle Pelicot, who spoke out on behalf of survivors of sexual assault, and Tricia Nicoll, who founded the Gloriously Ordinary Lives campaign.

- We held our 2025 Annual Gala in June in the beautifully refurbished Manchester Hall. We celebrated the people we support and staff who had won awards over the past 12 months with a delicious three course meal, award ceremony, activities such as a photo booth, face painting and a disco.

- Our popular 500 Words competition returned for a second year, asking staff and volunteers for 500 words about their time at Creative Support for a chance to win £500. David MacGowan, Support Worker from Lancashire, won with his fantastic submission titled ‘Trainspotting’ and there were nine brilliant runners up.

Grants Awarded

In 2024-25 we awarded grants of around £11,000 to add value to our services and to create new opportunities for people we support, including:

Our ‘Sporty Summer’ grants were launched in Spring 2024, to provide funding for services looking to hold co-produced, sports-themed events in the summer. The Sporty Summer programme awarded 12 grants worth £6,000. Services in Tameside used their Sporty Summer grant to hire out Tameside Cycle Circuit, where the people they support could try out disability-friendly bikes.

The ‘Be the Difference’ Grant returned in 2024. The programme encourages services to co-produce ideas for activities, social clubs and events that are not currently provided within their local community. In 2024, we awarded grants worth £4,765. This grant funding has been used to set up events such as the now annual Warrington festival for local services which includes overnight camping.

Since the end of the financial year, we have awarded an additional £17,000 to services in a further round of the Be the Difference grant and this year’s ‘Summer of Fun’ grant. For ‘Summer of Fun’, we awarded services funding for an event or activity, which people we support and staff have never tried before.

Creative Support Internal Awards

The **Creative Stars** awards highlight the fantastic achievements of the people we support. Individuals can be nominated in four categories: High Flyer Award, Eco-Friendly Award, Positivity Award and Community Champion Award. The winners are selected by a panel of people we support and staff members from different services around the country. Winners receive a badge, a shopping voucher and a certificate. There were 48 winners of Creative Stars between April 2024 and March 2025 with 12 winners for each category. Co-produced judging panels were held at services in Bolton, Manchester, Barrow-in-Furness, Doncaster, Warrington, St Helens, Grimsby, North Lincolnshire, Wellingborough, Blackpool, Bedford, and Leeds. These are a few of our amazing winners:

Cassie Gill in Middlesbrough won our Eco-Friendly Award in April 2024. Passionate about helping the environment, Cassie regularly goes litter picking. She collects between one to two bags of rubbish every time she goes out, and has been encouraging her fellow tenants to join in. At a service user forum, Cassie suggested a competition for whoever could collect the most bags of rubbish over the year.

Jack Mackel in South Shields won our High Flyer Award in July 2024. Jack noticed a fire in another tenant's back garden. As it was outdoors the alarms had not activated. Jack alerted staff straightaway & called 999 to report it to the fire service. Jack then ran inside to instruct everyone to leave their flats while staff rang the alarm and evacuated everyone safely.

James Connor in Essex won our Community Chamption Award in September 2024. James has been working hard to pursue his dream of working in a café. To gain experience, James searched for voluntary opportunities in his local community. James loves animals, so what better place to volunteer than a cat café! He walked into his first day with "such confidence and initiative", greeting members of the public, serving customers, caring for cats and "generally presenting with great pride and absolutely loving life."

Gemma Tregidgo in Wellingborough won the Positivity Award in November 2024. Gemma is a Service User Representative Champion and Welcome Host at her service. She ensures visitors feel warmly welcomed by introducing them to staff and people we support as well as offering them a hot drink. This all counts towards a great first impression. She helps her staff with recruitment events. Gemma's bubbly personality puts a smile on everyone's face.

The **'We Care'** Awards recognise the people and teams who personify our 'We Care' values and achieve positive outcomes. Between April 2024 and March 2025, the judging panels awarded six Gold awards, 22 Silver awards and one Dignity in Care Award.

Claire Dutton, Support Worker and Stacey Ezirim, Project Manager, Staffordshire, won Gold in August 2024. Claire and Stacey dealt with a precarious situation involving multiple other agencies to assist an individual they support who was unable to return home after a flight to Berlin. Claire and Stacey dealt with members of airport management, flight companies and the foreign office with "a positive mindset and determination". Stacey liaised with the British embassy and Claire travelled to Berlin last-minute during a very busy time, both displaying incredible commitment and care to resolve the situation safely.

Jayne Stenson, Service Manager, Bury won Gold in January 2025. The "approachable, friendly, professional and totally reliable" Jayne goes above and beyond for everyone in her services. On top of running four services seamlessly, she also supports people in the community and always shows up with a smile. Jayne makes sure life is as easy as possible for the people she supports, with creative thinking and problem-solving that has helped massively reduce any anxiety or barriers people face. When one person she supports wanted to go to Alton Towers, Jayne organised the whole trip and took them herself, making sure that the person had a great time. A recent compliment said that "Jayne embodies all of the qualities required to work with people, alongside being a first-class leader. Jayne is awesome – we should all be a little more Jayne!"

Our **Creative People Appreciation Awards** are held monthly, with ten staff members and/or teams selected as winners every month. Staff are encouraged to submit nominations expressing their appreciation for a colleague and what their colleague does that brightens their day. The winners receive a box of Hotel Chocolat chocolates. All winners are entered into Quarterly Prize Draws for the chance to win either two days of extra paid holiday or a gift worth up to £200. A total of 120 Creative Appreciation Awards were given out during the year. Examples of outstanding winners of the Creative People Appreciation Awards:

Support Worker Iara Carro, a Support Worker from Brent won in November 2024. The “always positive” Iara ensures that the people she works with feel appreciated. She is a great team player, supportive in all ways, a wonderful listener, and always wears a smile. Her colleagues “love to work with her”, appreciating how smoothly shifts run when she is around, and also admire how she takes the initiative to make the service even more homely for the people she supports and staff alike. Iara’s consistency has helped foster a sense of community at the service which has made everyone “so happy.”

Mayowa Olowalgba, a Support Worker from Morecambe, won in March 2025. Mayowa is committed and kind, going to great lengths to get to work and nurture “amazing” relationships with everyone at his service. Mayowa is “always smiling and creating a happy atmosphere.” His co-workers find him “dedicated and supportive" and Mayowa is incredibly “person-centred and responsive” with people he supports, so they always receive the very best care. His colleagues said nothing is ever too much trouble, and he’s the first to help out when a favour is asked. Parents and family adore Mayowa.

External Awards

- Our Thyme Lodge respite service in St Helens was a finalist at the 2024 Care Home Awards in the category of ‘Best for Specialist Care’.

- We were delighted that Shirleyann Tingey, Registered Manager of the Laurels Care Home in Cumbria, won the 'Activity Organiser Award' at the North West Great British Care Awards in 2024.

- We had eight finalists in the 2024 regional Great British Care Awards.
    - Longley Lane, Manchester - Care Team Award
    - Shirleyann Tingey, Cumbria - Activity Organiser Award
    - Annita Barker, London - End of Life / Palliative Care Award
    - Lula Wattam, London - Activity Organiser Award
    - Prince of Wales Drive, London - Care Team Award
    - Nichola Harris, London - Outstanding Contribution to Social Care
    - Pia Parekh, London - Frontline Leader Award
    - Sandra Rogers, Northamptonshire - Frontline Leader Award

- We had seven finalists at the Housing with Care Awards, including support worker Hayley Pickering from Wellingborough who won the ‘Care and Support Worker’ award, and Rachel Jenkins, also from Wellingborough, who was Highly Commended in the ‘Frontline Leader’ category. Creative Together, the forum for people we support in Calderdale & Kirklees, was shortlisted for the Housing with Care 2024 awards in the ‘Tenant Co-Production’ category. Adam, a person we support who chairs the forum, represented them at the awards ceremony in London with staff member Helen.

- We were finalists at the Employee Benefits Awards in London in recognition of our excellent employee benefit offer, including our staff welfare fund.

- Creative Together in Manchester were shortlisted for the ‘Best Event’ category at the Manchester Culture Awards.

- Our fantastic teams from Rake Lane in Salford and The Glade in Bedford were finalists in the 2025 Palliative Care Awards.

- Staff from Mansfield View were nominated at the Sheffield Cares Excellence Awards in 2025. Gillian Madey was shortlisted for the Commitment to Care award, while Jose Mathew, Lesley Roberts and Susan Hoyland were shortlisted for Team of the Year.

- Regency Court in London and the Creative Academy Learning & Development team were finalists at the 2024 Laing Buisson Awards in London. Regency Court was nominated in the ‘Excellence in retirement Housing’ category, and the Learning & Development team were nominated for the ‘Excellence in Training’ category.

- Creative Support was shortlisted for the 'Best Third Sector Employer' and 'Best for Learning and Development' categories at the Investors in People Awards.

- Staff members Lyn Campbell, Team Leader and Lynne Shepherd, Supported Living Manager, won the Recognising Quality Improvement Award at the CRISTAL Care Awards in Tameside.

- We were proud to be named in the Financial Times list of Top 500 Employers in the UK. We are pleased that we were ranked 258th overall, and 30th amongst the Health and Social Care category.

- The Laurels Care Home in Cumbria was a finalist at the 2025 Care Home Awards in the ‘Best Nutrition, Food and Dining’ category. The Laurels was also named in a list of top 20 care homes in the North West by review website carehome.co.uk.

- Sally May, Registered Manager at Apsley Court in London, won the Manager Award at the Bromley Care Awards.

- We were proud to have six finalists in the 2025 ‘Made in Manchester’ awards, including our Social Value team who were nominated for Team of the Year.

- John, who we support in Manchester, and Helen, who we support in Stockport, attended the Stockport Rocks Volunteer Awards after being nominated for an award.

- The Communications Team was shortlisted for the Charity Comms Inspiring Communicator Awards in the ‘Inclusive Comms’ category.

- Three members of staff are finalists at the 2025 Inspired to Care – Care Professional of the Year Awards in Leicestershire. Danielle Angus, Team Leader, has been nominated for Learning Disabilities, Mental Health or Autism Professional of the Year Mandy Simpson-Lee, Cluster Manager, and Rebecca Copson, Recovery Team Manager are both finalists for Supported Living Professional of the Year.

Publications and Newsletters

- We have produced three fantastic issues of Creative Life magazine since April 2024, with contributions of stories, photos and art work from people we support. The magazine's themes have included our 40th edition of the magazine titled 'Inspiring Ideas', as well as a Gala themed edition titled 'Reach for the Stars'. We have also produced audio versions of Creative Life, co-produced with the people we support, many of whom narrated their own articles or interviews.

- Workshops to further increase co-production and the active involvement of people we support in the production of Creative Life and our other publications have been well attended. We are proud of the wonderful contributions from people we support including creative ideas, content and photographs. Our most recent edition of Creative Life was largely co-produced with people who attended our London Engagement Workshop Day in January 2025.

- There have been two issues of Creative People magazine since April 2024. The magazine focuses on the achievements of our wonderful staff, sharing information and advice about wellbeing, career development, training opportunities and staff benefits. The vast majority of the articles in Creative People start as ideas from staff, who get in touch with our Communications team to make the article a reality. Creative People is posted to the home addresses of all of our colleagues, as well as our services.

- We have published five blogs as part of CEO Anna Lunt's blog series. The content reacts to contemporary current affairs and timely issues, ensuring that the content is relevant to staff members and the people we support. Blogs have been written on subjects including:
  - Domestic Violence and Mental Health
  - The Infected Blood Scandal and Closed Cultures
  - Violence Against Women and Girls
  - Adult Social Care Sector Reform

- We have continued to publish Creative Connect, our monthly newsletter for staff, which features important news and key dates, award winner announcements, policy updates, staff incentives and compliments. Creative Connect is sent to all staff via email and has become a key communication tool for promoting initiatives, awards and events. Staff are encouraged to read and discuss Creative Connect in their staff meetings. Creative Connect is presented every month at our General Managers meeting, which gives managers the opportunity to ask questions about the content prior to it being sent out to all staff.

Social Media & Multimedia

In April 2024, we launched our Creative Community Podcast. We created a podcast series exploring the Black History Month theme of 'Reclaiming Narratives', launched by the EDI and Communications Team, called 'Your Voice, Your Story.'

We continue to use social media to engage the people we support, staff and stakeholders with a mix of good news stories, initiatives and competitions. We have also been posting more video content on main feed posts and 'Stories' which have proved popular on social media. Our Marketing team has had a focus on multimedia production in recent months producing engaging videos from events across the country. We have grown our Facebook following to over 6,300 and reached over 222,000 people on Facebook between April 2024 and August 2025 through organic posts. On LinkedIn, we have grown our followers to over 8,700, with a reach of over 30,400 people in the past year. We have over 608 followers on Instagram and reached over 5,400 people with our posts between April 2024 and August 2025.

Social Value

The number of contracts monitoring their social value commitments has increased to 32 over the last year, with continued work between the Tendering Team and the Social Value Team during the bidding process to generate targets which are achievable and ambitious. We continue to push for growth of social value delivery and to develop new and innovative ways to deliver against commitments and have an impact in the communities in which we operate. We have seen continued success in delivery and positive impacts on the local communities, including:

Trafford: Continued partnership with a local charity, Trafford Carers, donating the use of a room at the local office for two days per week, to offer free counselling services to unpaid carers.

London: In January, our London Seniors visited Uxbridge College to deliver a career talk to a group of 50 students, promoting the careers available in adult social care. After the presentation, over 40 students expressed an interest in carrying out a placement with Creative Support.

Doncaster: Working in partnership with Doncaster Job Centre we organised a SWAP Scheme supporting unemployed people to boost their employability skills. We provided 57 hours of support to the scheme through the provision of mock interviews to improve interviewing skills and apply for current vacancies. The initiative saw four candidates, who were previously out of work and in receipt of benefits, be successful in the interview process and start work with Creative Support.

Stockport: In our penultimate reporting period in March 2025, our contracts in Stockport were delivering over 100% in eight different targets including spend with local VCSEs reaching 136%. We also delivered 259% against our target of support older, disabled and vulnerable people to build strong community networks through the hosting of our regular discos, which also saw investment of £10,291 investment into the community. The Stockport Disco has continued to support disabled people in Stockport to enjoy meaningful connections outside of commissioned care and support.

Oldham: Despite only being half-way through their contract, Oldham services have already achieved 95% of their target to create initiatives to engage the community in health or wellbeing initiatives. Through innovative practice, the service used this target to engage staff and the people we support in a range of projects including Floral Ferns, a gardening initiative and Flavour Fusion, a group cooking initiative promoting healthy meals which explored different international cuisines and hosting music nights.

Tameside: Our Mental Health Accommodation services have been working hard across all of their targets are already achieving 18% above their expected delivery at this point of their contract.

Volunteers

Our volunteers programme continues to flourish, with 95 active volunteers in post across the country and 43 new volunteers joining us over the course of the year. Work continued to co-produce volunteer roles with people we support. As part of a Volunteer EDI review, we have created Befriender roles for volunteers who can speak Bengali, Polish, Punjabi and Gujarati. Through the year, we have explored new ways to promote the recruitment of volunteers. We have attended Volunteer Fairs in Sheffield, Newcastle and Manchester, where our Service User Volunteers joined us and provided insight into their roles and experiences with Creative Support. In May we saw the return of our annual partnership with global organisation Fanatics for their Global Impact Day, with 68 volunteers joining us across three sites in Manchester supporting with projects including a sensory garden at Clough House and a litter picking event at Dalbeattie Court in Manchester, cleaning up the surroundings and local green space.

We held our Volunteer Appreciation Awards in National Volunteers Week with three winners being recognised and celebrated for their valued contribution. Jonathan from Thistley Green was recognized for his music and gardening sessions and his versatile approach to ensuring everyone can be involved and Braga from Salford Hub for her creative ideas which ensure that each arts and crafts session is fun for everyone. Julie from the Birmingham Hub was nominated for their significant positive impact by using their lived experience to support others. In addition to being recognised internally for his contribution, Jonathan from Thistley Green received a highly commended award at the Essex Braintree Volunteer Awards.

In February, we hosted our first in-person Volunteer Peer Network session in Birmingham, where we welcomed five local volunteers into the Birmingham Hub. Volunteers reflected on why they volunteer for Creative Support with people saying the reason they volunteer is "being able to show people that there is light at the end of the tunnel" and others expressing how as someone previously supported by Creative Support, they enjoyed having this opportunity to gain knowledge and experience to take into a future career. As an accredited Investors in Volunteers organisation, we continue to receive positive feedback from volunteers about their experience with Creative Support, including:

"*It has been an honour to be part of the volunteer community at Creative Support, and I truly appreciate it. Alongside my volunteer work, I have also honed my skills in supporting individuals with support needs, mentoring and project management."*

"It has given me the confidence to engage with service users through different types of activities, and I'm finding it so rewarding to see how much joy these sessions can bring. For me, it's not just about running activities, but also about creating moments of happiness and connection."

Placements

Our Student Placement Programme has continued to grow. We supported 106 student placements across the country, a 28% increase from the previous year. We worked with 27 existing partners including 21 universities and 6 colleges. We commenced work with 13 new partners and expanded our placement offers to new courses such as Occupational Therapy at Sheffield Hallam University, Applied Clinical Psychology at UCLAN and Public Health at University of Greenwich. We supported 20 students from Health and Social Care university and college courses, 25 Nursing students, 31 Social Work students, 2 Learning Disability Nursing and Social Work Students, 10 Occupational Therapy Students, 13 Psychology students, 1 Public Health Student and 4 general work experience. These placements added great value to the work of our paid staff and providing meaningful opportunities for students to develop their skills within a community setting. The placements also generated income of £29,500.

Feedback from students has continued to be positive 100% of students stating they would recommend undertaking their placement with Creative Support. With the experience of on-site supervisors for students and regular support from our Social Value Team, 100% of students were happy with the guidance and supervision from their on-site supervisors and 100% of students felt important in the team and welcomed and included into Creative Support whilst on placement. Feedback includes:

"I have had an amazing experience whilst on placement at Amersham. I was warmly welcomed by all staff members who continued to support and guide me throughout my placement. The care and support that staff put into their job is inspirational and I believe all students would benefit from being placed in a setting like this. I have learnt so much from service users and staff that I will take with me into my future practice. I feel proud to have been a part of the Amersham family over the last 14 weeks, and I am very sad to be leaving. Thank you so much for the opportunity." – Social Work Student at Amersham Road in Middlesbrough.

"*I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Creative Support for allowing me to complete my work placement at Visram House. It has been an incredibly valuable and inspiring experience… I saw the values of Creative Support – 'Welcoming, Empowering, Compassionate, Aspirational, Respectful, and Effective' - consistently reflected in the care and teamwork at Visram House. This has left a lasting impact on me."* Health and Social Care Student at Visram House in London.

"The team and service users were all really friendly and welcoming. It's a lovely homely environment and a really positive person-centred service with enthusiastic caring staff. I settled in quickly and Maria was really supportive and engaging, I felt included and like my contributions were valued. I really enjoyed my time there and my 8 weeks flew by, I'm really sad that I won't be going back!" – Occupational Therapy Student at Brownley Road in Manchester.

We also delivered career talks at colleges in order to raise awareness of the work we do and promote careers and placement opportunities with Creative Support and the wider care sector. This year we developed partnerships with five new colleges, including Oldham College, Marple College, Uxbridge College and Cheadle College. We also participated in mock interview events for students at Hyde High School, Manchester Enterprise Academy and Whalley Range High School. Mock interviews help students feel prepared for life after education, increase their chances of securing work, and help them to feel confident about entering the world of work. We hope that some young people will also feel inspired to seek out opportunities in the social care sector.

Employing a Large and Diverse Workforce

At the end of March 2025, Creative Support employed 5,612 contracted full-time, part-time and sessional employees amounting to 4,080 whole-time equivalents. The average length of service of our permanent employees is just under 5.4 years (if previous TUPE service is included) and 4.1 years (if TUPE service is not included). This is a strong indicator of high employee satisfaction and retention.

During 2024-25, we employed 1,328 new permanent and bank staff. This includes people who have never worked in care who have been motivated by a desire 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 17 staff TUPE transfers over 2024-25, welcoming 365 staff into the company from seven voluntary sector and private employers.

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, over 500 of our relief workers work for us each week and all have access to our training programmes and many of our benefits. Around five of our relief workers transfer to permanent roles every week, contributing greatly to our recruitment efforts.

We have seen the job market become highly competitive in recent years, putting huge pressure on our organisation and the wider social care sector. Despite this challenging context, we received a total of 45,514 completed job applications in 2024-25, averaging 875 per week, compared with 1,041 per week in the previous year. Despite this reduction we actually had more candidates to interview as we shortlisted 12,171 of these (27%), up from 9,906 (18%) in the previous year. By maintaining the capacity of our recruitment team, the average turnaround for on-boarding new employees and ensuring comprehensive pre-employment checks and due diligence has remained at 28 days.

Since July 2023 we have been an A-Rated Licensed Sponsor for visa purposes with the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) department of the Home Office. We can assign and issue Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS) to employees to support their applications to the UKVI for (up to a) 5-year Skilled Worker Visas in Health & Social Care as a Support Worker, Senior Support Worker or Support Team Leader. To assist us with these complex processes we continue to enlist the support of a regulated visa and sponsorship expert service. As a licenced sponsor with the UKVI, we must adhere to strict rules and regulations. To ensure we remain compliant we implemented a set of robust policies, procedures and checks. We have successfully recruited and retained a robust HR Data Compliance Team.

As of 31st March 2025, we had assigned 538 Certificates of Sponsorship to employees and 481 of these remain employed by our organisation. Our ability to sponsor staff has significantly contributed to our recruitment drive and has enabled us to retain experienced staff who joined us on study and post-study visas.

We aim to provide structured career pathways that attract new staff and support 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.

People from minority ethnic backgrounds made up 44.6% of our permanent workforce on 31st March 2025. This demonstrates the diverse profile of our workforce and the wider social care sector and the communities in which we work. As a response to the Black Lives Matter movement, we adopted a Manifesto for Action and we have appointed an EDI Officer to lead on our commitments. Our staff gender breakdown shows that 73.6% of our employees are female and 26.4% are 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.

Retaining our valued staff continues to be a high priority. 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 salaries and benefits are competitive and are benchmarked positively against similar organisations. In response to requests from staff struggling to cope with cost-of-living pressures we now offer all employees the option of weekly pay as an alternative to monthly pay. This has proved to be very popular. We also offer ‘Payroll Connect’ zoom meetings to staff on request to address any payroll issues.

Initiatives to support staff to maintain their health, wellbeing and resilience have included the provision of hardship grants and confidential advice and counselling from our partner Employee Assistance Scheme provider, Health Assured. Our EAP continues to be promoted and well-utilised by our workforce. In the past year, 11.8% of our employees have contacted Health Assured for support and advice. 76.5% of these calls were for counselling and 23.5% for advice. There were 17 referrals for face-to-face counselling, 31 referrals for video counselling, 18 referrals for ‘Live Chat’ counselling and 5 staff received support with online CBT. Over the year 346 counselling sessions were delivered in order to support staff. It is noteworthy that 20% of employees were on sick leave at the outset of their counselling but after engaging in therapy 92% of those off work at the start of therapy returned to work.

Over the last year, we have continued to use a new Proactive Rehabilitation Support benefit for all employees involved in any type of incident at work, accessed through our Insurers. This service works closely with the employee, supporting both physical and psychological recovery to enable employees to return to work. A total of 18 employees were referred to the service during 2024-25. We continue to invest in Mental Health First aid training to provide peer support in the workplace to those experiencing mental distress. We have supported a number of staff under the provisions of the Domestic Violence Policy, and the Staff Menopause Policy, which recognises the impact of the menopause on female employees. The 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.

Challenges ahead include the Employments Rights Bill which is expected to become law in late 2025. This contains a whole suite of employment reforms which will increase costs and risks for employers including protection from unfair dismissal becoming a right from the first day of employment. Currently, employees must have worked for their employer for 2 years before they can pursue an employment tribunal claim for unfair dismissal. To be introduced in 2027, this measure will greatly increase the number of costly tribunal cases and is likely to overwhelm the employment tribunal system.

A Fair Pay Agreement for Care Workers is to be introduced in 2026 and is expected to increase care worker pay above the current National Living Wage and may ensure parity with NHS salaries for front-line roles. Higher levels of care worker pay will inevitably impact on all salaries if career structures and salary differentials are to be maintained. We fear that hard-pressed local authorities will be unable to fund social care providers for these extra costs unless fully funded by central government.

Agency Use and Workforce Trends

The use and cost of agency staff has fallen consistently since July 2023, with agency spend reaching its lowest point for three years in April 2025. We expect to see agency use and costs continuing at the same level in the year ahead, coming just within our ambitious target of no more than 4% of total staff costs. However, reducing the use of agency staff remains a strong focus for the management team, with a number of initiatives to further reduce these, including mandatory use of SONA, our digital bank shift booking system, targeted incentives for bank workers to take up the offer of permanent contracts and the use of comprehensive recruitment methods. The percentage of vacant shifts covered by agency workers has fallen from an average of 36% in 2024-26 to 32% in the first quarter of 2025-26, a key indicator of reduced reliance on agency staff. Our target is to reduce this to 30%.

Recruitment of appropriately skilled people with the right values and work ethic for mid-level management and supervisory vacancies (such as Team Leaders) has been particularly difficult, although we have had some success in filling such vacancies internally through the use of 'Acting Up' trials and investment in the 'Moving Up Programme' for people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Demand for labour across the UK has somewhat weakened in 2025 as more vacancies were filled and unemployment slightly increased. The ONS reported in July 2025 that UK unemployment for the Quarter April to June 2025-26 had increased to 4.7% and that job openings fell by 5.8% to 718,000 between May to July across nearly all industries. Over 9 million people of working age are reported as being economically inactive, including 987,000 young people aged 18-24 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET). We continue to take part in targeted initiatives and events to access hard to reach applicants. However, the proportion of young people in our workforce has declined. We expect these employment trends to continue in 2025-26, with possible further small increases in UK unemployment and associated reduction in vacancies due to the impact of sluggish growth and the fallout from increases in the NLW and employer's national insurance.

The Skills for Care Report published in July 2025 'The size and structure of the adult social care sector and workforce in England Workforce' reported that:

- The total number of adult social care posts was 1.71m in 2024/25 (an increase of 2.2% from 202-/24). Between 2023-24 and 2024-25 the number of posts that were filled increased by 3.4% to 1.60m (an increase of 52,000 filled posts).
- The number of vacant posts decreased by 16,000 vacant posts (-12.4%) from 126,000 to 111,000 over the same period but this was still higher than pre-pandemic levels.
- In 2024-25 the vacancy rate was 7.0%. This compares with vacancies of 6.7% in the NHS and 2.3% in the UK economy as a whole. This was a return to similar levels seen prior to 2021-22. In 2021--22 the rate had peaked at 10.5%.
- Staff turnover in the social care sector remains high but had reduced over the previous year from 25.8% to 24.7%
- An estimated 50,000 people arrived in the UK in 2024-25 and started direct care providing roles in the independent sector. This was a decrease of 55,000 from 2023-24, when the estimated number was 105,000.
- In 2024-25, the number of people employed from outside the UK on the Health and Care Worker visa was an estimated 10,000. Other routes for people joining the sector from outside the UK include dependent, family and student visas.
- The number of posts filled by people with a British nationality decreased by 30,000 in 2024-25 (a decrease of 3%). The decrease in posts filled by people with a British nationality since 2020-2021 was 85,000 (7%).

The Skills for Care report welcomes the recent recovery in care sector recruitment whilst acknowledging the reliance of the health and social care sector on migrant workers and highlighting the scale of future recruitment challenges for the care sector: *"International recruitment has played an important part in this recovery by providing an additional recruitment option for employers. 230,000 people joined the adult social care workforce from outside the UK to take up direct care providing roles in the independent sector since 2022/23. Domestic recruitment remains challenging for the sector. The number of posts filled by people with a British nationality decreased by around 30,000 in 2024/25, and by 85,000 over the previous three years. The new immigration rules coming into place in July 2025, removing care workers and senior care workers from the Health and Care Worker visa route for new overseas recruits, will make it more challenging for the sector to continue to grow in line with demand."*

These workforce trends are expected to continue into 2025-26 and will impact significantly on the availability of new entrants to social care. We recognise this as growing risk from 2026 onwards and a longer-term threat to our ability to maintain service delivery levels and financial sustainability.

Employee Welfare Fund

Our Employee Welfare Fund has continued to support staff experiencing financial hardship throughout 2024-25. Out of the 219 applications received, non-repayable grants were given to 51 staff with a total expenditure of £12,210.

A further 36 staff were supported with the offer of loans, 39 were supported with alternative support and 7 applicants received other welfare interventions from HR. Unsuccessful grant applicants were supported with an information pack with links to other resources and organisations offering support. All applications are considered in a confidential and compassionate manner. Staff coordinating the Welfare Fund have completed Mental Health First Aid training to support staff with their mental health in relation to their finances. All applicants are encouraged to use Creative Support's Employee Assistance Programme for further welfare support. The fund continues to have a positive impact on staff, with feedback including:

"I would like to say thank you so much I cried when I read this […] this has a made a huge difference, so thanks from the bottom of my heart" – Employee from the East Midlands

"Thank you so much for the grant, I will forever be grateful." – Employee from North West

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: Anti-Racism

It has been another productive year for our work on anti-racism and EDI. Following completion of over 100 interviews with Black staff members we have identified areas of common experience, trends, areas of organisational strength and where to prioritise our development work. A priority area has been to ensure that incidents are effectively followed up with timely support, advice & guidance from our EDI and HR officers.
We have worked closely with our Complex Care Team on approaches to address racism as part of positive behaviour support, collaborating to create educational resources to guide conversations about race & culture with people we support.

We have actively celebrated the rich diversity of culture, heritage and ethnicities within our workforce and people we support. This has included publication of a quarterly EDI newsletter, quarterly EDI Network meeting, Eid celebrations and a number of collaborative events & publications with our LGBTQ+ network. Another highlight was co-production with our EDI Champions on guidance on how to offer meaningful and culturally sensitive support to Muslim staff and people we support in the lead up to Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. A key achievement for black history month was creating a series of special episodes for our Creative Community podcast, sharing interviews with Black staff across our organisation which highlighted their lives, voices and experiences.

We have continued to offer advice, guidance or specialist support to employees with any challenges they are facing around racism via The EDI Helpdesk, including direct work with 23 services and delivery of 8 bespoke in-person sessions for staff teams over the year. Our EDI Champions Network now has 22 members of staff from across our services and head office teams (up from 6 in the previous year).
As part of our commitment to anti-racism education and allyship, we have developed our anti-racism training in response to attendee feedback. Anti-racism sessions were delivered twice a week throughout the year for all new staff members as part of their mandatory training.

We have invested in initiatives to encourage and support progression and inclusion of staff of colour at all levels of the organisation, including enrolment of a further 10 staff members within the year on the Skills for Care 'Moving Up' Programme. This specific leadership programme for Black and Asian staff working in health & social care has supported the progression of staff who have completed the course, with 40% of staff who attended in 2024 subsequently achieving a promotion.

We are proud of the positive impact of our EDI work and that staff members across the county are increasingly sharing their ideas. This is alongside more of our services delivering their own celebrations & awareness activities, most notably our services in Salford which organised a cultural celebration for people supported, their families and staff during Race Equity Week in February. The event was a huge success, with around 70 people attending.

Valuing our LGBTQ+ Staff

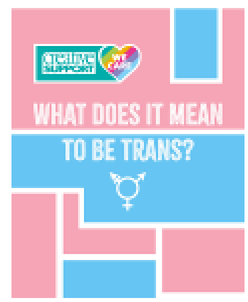
We remain deeply committed to championing diversity, equity, and inclusion across our organisation. As a proud Stonewall Diversity Champion, we actively promote LGBTQ+ inclusion at every level, with our LGBTQ+ employee network at the heart of our efforts driving meaningful change, raising awareness, and nurturing a strong sense of community for staff across the country. Engagement with our network has continued to grow, with new members joining us from Head Office and services nationwide.

Stonewall DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS

This year, we were proud to celebrate Pride at both Stockport Pride and Manchester Pride, walking alongside staff and people we support. At Stockport, we were thrilled to see so many of our community come together enjoying the parade and volunteering at our Creative Support stall.

A key focus this year has been deepening intersectionality in our work, recognising and valuing the interconnected experiences shaped by race, sexuality, gender, and more. In collaboration with the EDI network, we contributed to a series of Lunch and Learn sessions designed to promote education and open dialogue. Each session centred on a carefully selected free resource such as an article, podcast, short video, or personal essay which explored the intersection of race and sexuality. These sessions offered a safe, supportive space for reflection and conversation, encouraging us to explore how our diverse identities shape our experiences at work and beyond.

We also worked closely with trans* staff and our marketing team to create and share a new resource on understanding trans identities, which was published in the Creative Life magazine and distributed across our services. In addition, members of our network took part in a powerful interview about their personal experiences navigating the UK healthcare system as trans individuals. Looking ahead, we are excited to grow our impact and expand our reach, creating even more opportunities for support and positive change for LGBTQ+ staff across all areas of Creative Support.



Manchester Pride 2025

Training and Developing Our People

We have maintained **Investors in People Gold** status for Creative Support whole agency, **Gold** for our Internal Audit Team and **Platinum** status for our Learning and Development (L&D) and Human Resources (HR) teams. The **Gold** accreditation for the agency as a whole is reflective of a culture that is inclusive, values-driven, and underpinned by a commitment to staff engagement and well-being. For prospective employees, it shows that we are an organisation where people matter - and where they will be supported to thrive personally and professionally.

Creative People Development Pathways

To support our learning culture, we have developed, and are beginning to embed our Creative People Development Pathways. These will align with the national workforce strategy as defined by Skills for Care. The Care Workforce Pathway is the first universal career structure for the adult social care workforce which defines the knowledge, skills, values and behaviours needed to work in adult social care. We have built our internal Development Pathways to support this strategy. The Creative Academy Development Pathway will support a career in health and social care from support worker to senior leader. Through this ambitious, high-quality programme of on-going professional development, we are investing not only in skills but in the confidence, resilience and wellbeing of our workforce, ensuring Creative Support remains a learning organisation that people are proud to join and stay with.

Creative Academy Learning & Development

The Learning & Development team continue to offer a blended style of training delivery, through face-to-face classroom sessions and virtual classrooms, as well as e-learning training developed by our creative Digital Coordination Team and managed through Learning Pool (our Learning Management System). Over **94,000** training engagements were delivered this year, equivalent to nearly 400 staff enhancing their knowledge and skills in one way or another, every working day.

Training Type	Number of staff trained	Number of sessions
Virtual classroom (with live trainer)	11,134	972
e-Learning completions	75,293	-
Classroom (face to face) sessions	7,686	984
Total	**94,013**	**1,956**

Virtual and Digital Learning

In 2024-2025, a total of 11,134 staff attended 972 virtual classroom sessions and we supported 75,293 individual e-learning course completions through our learning management software Learning Pool. This equates to 301 e-learning completions taking place every working day (considering there are an average of 250 working days in a year), 45 people attending virtual classrooms, and 31 staff attending classroom training each working day.

Classroom Training

Classroom (face-to-face training) has increased significantly in the year 2024-25. We delivered a total of 984 classroom sessions in our national and regional training centres across the country (or sessions delivered in services with staff), which were attended by 7,686 staff members. The regional statistics are:

Area	Courses	Attended
Bedfordshire	29	188
Berkshire	7	55
Cumbria	35	189
Doncaster	70	421
Essex	35	221
East Midlands	38	228
London	96	641
North East	123	761
North Lincolnshire	53	341
North West	374	3796
West Midlands	67	434
Yorkshire & Humberside	52	378
Individual workshops	5	33
Total	**984**	**7686**

Health and Social Care Diplomas

Our teams have continued to deliver Health & Social Adult Care Diploma qualifications at Levels 2, 3, 4 and 5. We have had 58 completions in 2024-2025, and there were approximately 122 staff on the programme at any one time.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship uptake across all levels remained high, with a total of 81 learners registered on programmes delivered through our external partners and funded via the Apprenticeship Levy, re-investing £203,000 of Apprenticeship Levy funding directly in our workforce. The coming year will see a marked increase in Apprenticeships as we introduce our development pathways.

Apprenticeship	Number
Adult care worker level 2	27
Business administration level 3	3
Chartered manager degree level 6	2
Corporate responsibility and sustainability level 4	1
Cybersecurity technologist (2021) level 4	1
Data analyst level 4	1
Lead adult care worker level 3	27
Lead practitioner in adult care level 4	6
Leader in adult care level 5	11
Team leader or supervisor level 3	2
Total	**81**

Recognition as a High-Quality Training Provider

The quality of our training provision is externally validated by the Royal Society for Public Health, the British Institute of Learning Disabilities, and the CPD Certification Service, ensuring our programmes remain rigorous, relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of health and social care.

The Learning & Development Department was proud to be a finalist at the 2024 LaingBuisson Awards in the 'Excellence in Training' category.

Staff Rewards & Recognition

We invested £160,000 in rewarding staff training achievements, recognising their dedication to professional growth with vouchers and development incentives. We also invite staff who have achieved qualifications to our annual gala, where we show further appreciation for their achievements.

Through this ambitious, high-quality programme of professional development, we are investing not only in skills but in the confidence, resilience and wellbeing of our workforce, ensuring Creative Support remains a leading, learning organisation that people are proud to join and stay with.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

Over the past year, we have trained a further 212 people to become Mental Health First Aiders, 186 of these from Creative Support services and 26 attendees from outside the company. External attendees were from a range of sectors such as construction, NHS, health & social care, education, emergency services, and ecology. Feedback included:

"Absolutely great course. Learnt a lot, and widened my perspective on mental health also. Very informal and friendly which made it easier to learn and absorb information. Thank you!

"The trainer was absolutely fantastic. Great knowledge and understanding. Very welcoming and supportive. Would highly recommend this course."

Mental Health First Aid trained staff	Numbers
Creative Support staff	186
External participants	26
Total	**212**

Ongoing development work with Learning Pool

Learning Pool is our current learning management system and we are happy to report that 92% of staff find it easy to log in to Learning Pool and use the system. Learning Pool is now being used to log staff appraisals as well as training, enabling central targets to be monitored and allowing staff to access a one-stop record of their personal and professional development.

Ensuring Quality and Effective Social Care Governance

Our Quality Team has worked hard in the past year to support operational services to provide the highest quality of care and support. Our focus is on ensuring that we are enabling the people we support to experience a great quality of life and that we achieve the best possible outcomes in CQC and local authority inspections. One of the Quality Team's key focus areas this year has been to support our registered services to be 'inspection ready, in alignment with CQC's Single Assessment Framework and I Statements.

During the year, the team have carried out internal quality audits and compliance visits across the country. As well as a planned audit schedule, we offer focused support with targeted quality improvement. The Quality Team have provided support and guidance in best practice areas to ensure safe medication management and have coordinated and undertaken 'We Care' independent visits. The Quality Team lead the Medication Assurance Group, alongside Service Director Lyndsey Downes, which provides operational services with enhanced medication training, medication campaigns and best practice guidance in respect of medication assurance.

Quality support has been provided to prepare services for external inspections, such as CQC, PAMMS and Local Authority visits. The Quality Team have worked proactively to devise and support quality improvement plans, working in partnership with operational teams and stakeholders, to achieve the best outcomes for people who we support. Quality support has been provided to operational managers in completing investigations and addressing complex complaints, driving any corporate learning and reflection through continuous improvement. We have also provided responsive quality visits where incidents have occurred. The Quality Team has supported operational teams through on-site coaching and we have delivered bespoke training around Quality and Compliance, Mental Capacity and Best Interests, Closed Cultures and Professional Boundaries.

Activity	**No**
Quality audits and visits	369
We Care visits	31
PEG compliance checks	13
Number of quality improvement visits	178
Total	**591**

The Quality Team takes an overview of social care governance, CQC compliance, Internal Quality Auditing, safeguarding, and customer care, complaints & feedback. 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 supported the implementation of new digital systems, which will further support to services to ensure quality compliance. The work is welcomed by operational managers and leads to much improved quality of records and practice.

National social care governance (SCG) meetings take place monthly to review concerns, analyse data and identify any trends arising from quality indicators such as safeguarding alerts, complaints, incidents, accidents, high use of agency staff and the outcome of internal and external inspections. During social care governance meetings, we proactively identify services that may benefit from a quality audit, more intensive monitoring, additional Quality Team support or senior management input.

Social Care Group meetings report back to our Committee for Quality and Practice Development, which provides challenge and oversight to the Executive Team. The committee has organised task and finish meetings to review specific incidents and actions arising from these. The trustees on this committee have lead roles for overseeing serious incidents, safeguarding concerns and our interventions for people with complex care needs. They also oversee a programme of Board visits to services which enables essential insight into the quality of our services and the outcomes achieved for the people we support.

Care Quality Commission Inspections

At the end of March 2025, Creative Support had 86 CQC registered locations. Of these, 77 had been inspected, with 71 (92%) locations being rated as ‘Good’ or above. Two services in Doncaster and Essex are currently rated as ‘Outstanding’. There were nine services which had yet to be inspected and are therefore unrated. Six services were rated as ‘Requires Improvement’. There were two inspections during 2024-25, including two residential services in Northamptonshire and Bedford, both of which went from Requires Improvement to ‘Good’ overall and ‘Good’ in all areas. Our overall CQC ratings compared positively with the national average of 82% (CQC State of Care Report - October 2024).

	Good or Outstanding		Requires Improvement		Total Overall	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
Residential Care	7	9%	3	4%	10	13%
Domiciliary/Extra Care and Supported Living	64	83%	3	4%	67	87%
Total	**71**	**92%**	**6**	**8%**	**77**	**100%**

Our Quality Team are continuing a programme of audits and improvement work within a number of services and registered locations, with a particular focus on the services that have yet to be inspected or are rated as ‘Requires Improvement’. The Quality Team are mentoring and supporting our Registered Managers to ensure that services currently rated as ‘Requires Improvement’ will achieve ‘Good’ at their next inspection.

During the year, we held regular national briefing meetings for Registered Managers and two well attended virtual Registered Managers conferences. The CQC have re-focused their approach to inspections which are now explicitly risk-based and data driven and are based on 34 quality statements. We are supporting our Registered Managers to respond positively to the new inspection methodology through training, peer support, briefings and our conferences for Registered Managers.

Creative Support is a member of the CQC Market Oversight Scheme (MOS) for large providers of social care, ensuring that we have access to emerging CQC inspection themes and intelligence. There are currently 65 corporate providers in the MOS, including large national charities as well as private providers. Creative Support’s CQC ratings of 92% good or above are ahead of our MOS peers and the wider regulated social care sector. The most recent feedback from our CQC MOS Relationship Manager: “For a provider with a similar profile to Creative Support in the Market Oversight Scheme an average of 87.2% of services are rated Good or Outstanding. The average for Creative Support is 4.6% higher.”

Willowtree House CQC Inspection – November 2024

Willowtree House, our residential home in Wellingborough was inspected in November 2024. This was Creative Support’s first inspection under the single assessment framework. The service had previously been rated as Requires Improvement and at this inspection were rated as Good in all five areas. Comments from the report below:

The provider had a proactive and positive culture of safety, based on openness and honesty. One member of staff told us, “*We discuss incidents and how we report them, and managers support us with actions and advice to improve care.”*

Staff knew people well and used distraction techniques to divert people to places or activities that helped them feel safe. A person told us they were involved in their risk assessments and they said*, "I have been looked after properly here and I have no reason to do anything risky."*

People were supported in a dignified and respectful way. One relative told us, *"[Name] is really happy. It is safe because the team are friendly, helpful and inclusive. They make it a home rather than an establishment. It has a pleasant, homely atmosphere. I visit when I need to and just turn up."*

We observed interactions between staff and people who use the service and saw that these relationships were caring and compassionate, People received responsive, personalised care and support that met their needs and reflected their preferences. One relative described how a person had achieved their goal of maintaining a healthy weight, they said*, "J helps the manager to cook, plan meals and look at healthy eating so they can lose weight."*

Care was joined-up, flexible and supported choice and continuity. People told us about how well they got on with the staff and other 'house mates', and how disagreements and differences within the household were thoughtfully addressed to resolve conflicts.

Leaders created a shared direction that made sure each individual person was at the centre of their support when decisions about their lives were being made. The registered manager led the service through example, they did so with integrity, openness and honesty. One relative told us, *"The manager is absolutely good. They are well respected by the staff who have nominated her for a managers' award. The manager is available when I need to speak to them. It seems a happy well-run ship."*

The provider had clear responsibilities, roles, systems of accountability and good governance. They used these to manage and deliver good quality, sustainable care, treatment and support.

The Houghtons CQC Inspection– February 2025

Care Quality Commission — The Houghtons

Overall rating for this service	Good
Is this service safe?	Good
Is the service effective?	Good
Is the service caring?	Good
Is the service responsive?	Good
Is the service well-led?	Good

The Houghtons is a residential home in Bedford which was inspected in February 2025. They previously had an overall rating of Requires Improvement. Following this inspection the service was rated Good in all five areas. Extracts from the report below:

People felt safe with the support they received. One person told us, *"I feel very safe. I feel safer now than I did before I came here. It's the safest I've felt in a long time."* One staff member commented*, "Keeping people safe is our job. I know about safeguarding and would be comfortable reporting anything I was concerned about."*

People were satisfied the environment was safe and accessible to them in all areas. One person told us*, "I love my room and I love this house. It's spacious and homely."*

The provider planned and delivered people's care and treatment with them, including what was important and mattered to them. One person told us*, "I wrote my care plan and I am listened to when I talk about my care."*

Staff supported people to live healthier lives and where possible, reduce their future needs for care and support. One person told us*, "The staff support me to go to hospital appointments as I get anxious about going on my own. I do go to the dentist and opticians on my own and the staff help me organise those appointments.* "People were supported to make daily choices and maintain control of their day-to-day routines. One person told us, *"I like to cook. I choose what I want to cook, and I often cook for me and [person]. The staff respect my choices and my decisions."*

People told us they were encouraged to give feedback about the service in a number of ways. For example, people had 1-1 meetings with a named key worker so that staff could monitor people's wellbeing, celebrate their achievements and find out what was working well and what was not. There were regular reviews of people's care and those in the person's circle of support were invited to give feedback for improvement. A relative told us, *"I am regularly asked for my input about [family members] care."*

There was an extremely positive and open culture that ensured people were at the centre of everything the service did. Staff spoke very highly of the culture within the service and the wider organisation, drawing comparisons with others they had worked within and describing it as the best.

Complex Care & Practice Development Hub

As a team we have been working on a number of areas in addition to the active work with individuals who are either already supported by the team or referred to us for support. These include:

- Proactive seeking information for new contracts
- Risk of Offending Register
- Skills for Active Support
- Anti-racism training for people we support

Our monthly Community of Practice meetings have been really insightful, promoting peer engagement to share experience and practice. We focus on a theme and invite guest speakers as well as share our experiences. The themes covered have included Practice Leadership in the Context of Culture, Support for Working with Families, A Parent's Perspective, Active Support, Managing Services in a Culturally Sensitive Way, Our Role in Advocating for People's Health Need and Rethinking Support. Feedback from managers has been very positive, including a recent compliment from a colleague in Salford *'how useful I find the meetings. In fact, I honestly feel they are so supportive and helpful that it's a shame they haven't always happened! I just wanted to share my thoughts with you and thank you for giving us the opportunity to hear and learn from other people's experiences and to share our own'.*

Reducing Restrictive Interventions

We continue to be proud of our commitment to reducing physical intervention. Our trustees review our progress bi-annually in reducing the use of physical intervention in accordance with our pledge to the Restraint Reduction Network. For the most recent period, 98% of events were effectively managed using proactive strategies. Overall, just six people now have some form of physical intervention as part of their agreed plan and our aim is to reduce this further. The table shows the continued reduction in the number of people who have such interventions in their plans since we began reporting on this important commitment.

	May 2025	May 2024	May 2023	May 2022	May 2021	May 2020	May 2019
No. of people with Physical Intervention in their Care Plan	6	7	10	13	15	17	27

Achieving Positive Outcomes

There are many positive outcomes for the people we support and their teams. One person's situation demonstrates the impact of Complex Care Team in challenging the way support is offered, working within a multi-agency framework and presenting a clear rationale, a plan and evidence to support the change.

For Simon (not his real name), this was a complete rethinking of support to reduce environmental stimulation and support regulation of his sensory system by creating a more structured approach, travelling to quieter areas and providing physical activity without distraction.

At the time we got involved with Simon, he was repetitive in his speech. From the time he woke up until he went to bed it was almost impossible to distract or disengage him. Simon's anxiety manifested in asking for things he didn't want and throwing them away, rubbing his face and hair, damaging property and rushing out of the house to take coke, confectionary and leaflets from every local shop. This was dangerous as he would run across the road and into traffic and meant Simon was drinking over two litres of coke a day.

There had been a lot of professional involvement over the years. The focus was always on communication aids and maintaining a consistent staff team. The problem was Simon couldn't engage with the communication tools consistently enough to benefit and we couldn't maintain a staff team due to his anxiety and the impact he had on others. Our approach was to spend time getting to know Simon and his team, experiencing what it was like to go out in the local area and the reaction of the public, addressing health needs, offering sensory items for regulation and training to the team.

We recognised that Simon was so dysregulated that he couldn't cope. We challenged the multi-agency team and proposed a different way of supporting Simon. Activities were structured both inside and outside of his home. We planned one activity a day outside his local community. Simon was informed of the destination and his choice was to go or not go and he wasn't given any alternative options. Adult Social Care agreed to fund 2:1 support to ensure safety and Creative Support loaned Simon a car while we trialled this new approach. We kept detailed records of Simon's mood and staff were feeling more positive at both the start and the end of their shifts. We were able to build a staff team who really enjoy spending time with him. We have reduced the risk in the local area, increased his quality of life and interactions and as Simon is feeling calmer, he is able to spend time on his own without continuous support. His general level of wellbeing and health has improved and he now has a Mobility car and is planning to move to a quieter area with his team.

Customer Experience

We remain committed to providing excellent customer service throughout the organisation. We strive to be as responsive and accessible as possible to all who wish to provide feedback about the services we provide.

We received 746 compliments during 2024-25, compared with 529 in 2023-24, an increase of 41%, with the average number being 62. Of the compliments received in 2024-25, 40% were around the quality of support delivered and 41% were about staff members. In the 2025-26 year we have set ourselves the ambitious target of achieving 1,000 compliments over the year.

We received 135 complaints in 2024-25, compared with 283 in 2023-24, a reduction of 52%, with the average number being 11. 81% of these complaints were closed before the 20-working day deadline. 13.4% were upheld and 18.3% were partially upheld. Three complaints were escalated to a Stage Two complaint.

Month 2024	Compliments	Complaints
April	69	10
May	39	16
June	40	10
July	66	15
August	57	9
September	39	6
October	70	9
November	61	16
December	81	11
January	70	19
February	94	4
March	60	10
Total for Year	**746**	**135**
Monthly Average	**62**	**11**

Housing Complaints

We record complaints relating to our housing provision separately from our social care services. During 2024-25, we received 28 complaints specifically relating to our housing or property services, compared with 35 complaints the previous year. 27 of these complaints were investigated and responded to within 10 working days and 1 complaint was responded to within an additional day. One of these complaints went to stage 2. This was investigated and responded to within the required 20 working days.

All KPIs for handling our housing complaints were met in accordance with our Housing Complaints Policy. Our second annual Housing Complaints Performance Report will shortly be available on our website in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman.

Examples of compliments received during April 2024 – March 2025

Compliment from a person we support at Sutherland Court, London Borough of Bromley, to the staff team

“I just wanted to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to you and your entire care team. Since I arrived, I have met so many wonderful members of your team, and while I may not remember every name, I do remember the kindness, warmth, and fantastic care each one of them has shown me.

Every morning when they call on me, they always ask if I’d like a cup of tea, and it’s such a simple but thoughtful gesture that makes all the difference. The way they chat with me feels so natural and genuine - I never feel like I am a bother or that my needs are overlooked. I truly appreciate how attentively they listen to me and ensure I feel heard and cared for. Please pass on my heartfelt thanks to everyone. Your team makes a real difference, and I feel so lucky to be in your care; it has really helped me settle into my new home.”

Compliment from a student nurse who completed a placement in Wakefield

“I am a student nurse who completed my enrichment placement in Wakefield. Thank you for having me there. I want to give feedback about the care support workers there. They are a fantastic team. The care they provide to the service users is excellent, compassionate, and person-centred. They promote independence and provide an emotional connection to the service users. I have never seen anyone look after the individuals in such a caring way. They are really well looked after. Creative Support should be proud of the people who work there. Thank you once again.”

Compliment from the granddaughter of a resident at the Laurels Care Home, Carlisle

"The Laurels is truly a home from home. The staff, environment and home itself are all welcoming, friendly and warm. I dreaded having to place my grandad in a home but visiting The Laurels doesn't feel like I'm visiting a care home. The staff feel like friends already and the other residents as well. I have zero concerns over my grandad's care. It's clean, comfortable and happy which makes me happy."

Compliment from the CMHT in Bradford regarding our Community Service in Bradford

“I wanted to take a moment to extend my sincere appreciation to Creative Support for the outstanding care and support they provide to one of my service users from the community mental health team. The person-centred approach that is taken has made a remarkable difference to her life. The team’s encouragement for her to manage her own shopping, along with the on-going support, has empowered her to become more proactive and independent. The regular communication between our services has been invaluable, ensuring seamless collaboration of her care. I am truly impressed by the significant progress she has made, and I attribute much of this to Creative Support.”

Compliment from a Social Worker for the staff team at a supported living service in Bedford

“I cannot express enough appreciation for your efforts in facilitating the move. Your willingness to accommodate last-minute changes and your dedication to ensuring a smooth transition plan were exemplary. Congratulations to all involved; it has been an outstanding team effort. Thank you in advance for your continued support.”

Valued Views Survey 2024

Our annual customer satisfaction survey ‘Valued Views’ was distributed electronically and by post to all services during October 2024. As well as a printed copy, there was a QR code that could be scanned to access the survey. We received 333 responses, compared with 314 the previous year. 29 respondents left valuable comments and suggestions which were all acknowledged and shared.

We chose to use the same format and the same 5 questions as the previous year. A very high percentage of respondents answered ‘Yes’ to each of the questions. The average score was 98%. We were delighted that 99% of those responding reported they were happy with the support they received from Creative Support. However, a small number of respondents (6%) stated that did not know how to raise an issue or concern if they had one. We will be working to improve this rating in the year ahead.

2024 Survey Results with Comparison for Previous Years

No	Question	2024 - Yes	2023 - Yes	2021 - Yes	2020 - Yes
1.	Are you happy with your service from Creative Support?	99%	97%	99%	98%
2.	Are staff supportive and caring?	99%	98%	99%	99%
3.	Are you treated with dignity and respect?	99%	98%	99%	99%
4.	Do you know how to raise an issue if you needed to?	94%	94%	94%	94%
5.	Is your service helping you to achieve your goals?	98%	96%	98%	95%
	Average Score	98%	97%	98%	97%

Some comments included:

“I like living here. I like watching movies in the conservatory. Everyone helps me. I like all my staff. I want to get another job, I’ve mentioned volunteering in a church’ (Pelham House, West Berkshire).

“The relaxation space is brilliant for me and gets rid of stress and happily relieves my anxiety. Thank you” (Birmingham Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub).

“They treat me like gold and silver” (Newlands Avenue supported living, Doncaster).

“Lovely people and my Support Worker is fab” (Doncaster Mental Health Floating Support)

“All services are ideal in every way, especially comforting. Full night cover, this gives a 24-hour service. If I need help, they would give it.” (Whinn Dale Extra Care Service, Wakefield).

Ensuring Safety

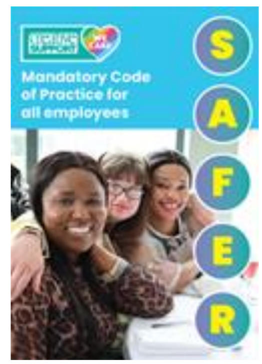
Our Health and Safety Team continues to support the safe provision of our supported housing and social care services. We achieve this by undertaking planned and responsive health and safety inspections, reviewing and following up accidents and incidents, providing health and safety advice, reviewing safety policies and procedures and liaising with statutory bodies including environmental health and fire services. To support safe and effective service implementation we undertake health and safety inspections for all new services and contracts. These inspections assess the suitability and safety of the environment for staff and service users.

The Health & Safety team offers an accessible helpdesk service on all safety matters, which is available to all our staff and managers 5 days a week, which links with our 24-hour Duty Manager and Out of Hours service to provide round the clock support to all our staff in relation to incidents and accidents.

Safety findings and concerns are reviewed in our monthly Social Care Governance meetings. Health & Safety reports and compliance data are scrutinised by the Housing and People & Performance Committees on a bi-monthly basis. A cross-departmental Health & Safety Group has recently been established, bringing together senior staff from HR, Property Services, Quality and the Executive Team to share intelligence and work collaboratively to ensure continuous improvement.

We make every effort to ensure that the properties we own are safe and we are pleased to report that in 2024-25 gas safety and electrical installation inspections were carried out by the required date in 100% of our homes. Our response to sector-wide concerns regarding damp and mould has proved to be very effective with an increase in partnership working with external landlords to address any issues in service user accommodation. We maintain a damp and mould register and report incidences of damp and mould to the Housing Committee.

We retained our CHAS accreditation (Contractors Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme) in 2024, demonstrating compliance with nationally recognised standards in respect of health and safety and are due to submit this again in October 2025. All serious accidents and injuries are reviewed and followed up to identify lessons learned. During 2024-25, we reported 39 accidents to the HSE under RIDDOR, compared with 41 in the previous year. The most significant areas of safety concern were slips, trips and falls and violence at work. All serious accidents and injuries are reviewed and followed up to identify lessons learned.



We have developed a strong relationship with our new main insurer, Travelers, and in light of our successful partnership we have renewed our insurance with Travelers for a further period. Travelers have provided us with excellent training, including claims defensibility and root cause analysis. As part of their insurance offer, Travelers provide our staff with proactive rehabilitation support services, including physiotherapy, following any work-related injuries. We referred 18 staff to this service in 2024-25, compared with 37 in 2023-24.

We promote the active engagement of staff at all levels in improving health and safety. The staff health and safety survey ran in the month of November 2024, with 410 staff responding, an increase of 6.5% compared to the previous year. We hope to further increase participation in the 2025 survey.

Memberships and Partnerships

We are members of many national organisations and networks, including ACEVO, BILD, ASL, Homeless Link, Housing and Support Alliance, HQN, Mind, NCVO, NAPA, Nacro, RoSPA, Anne Craft Trust, VODG, The National Skills Academy for Social Care and many others. We renewed our membership with the National Care Forum for another year. 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 Birmingham MIND and the Durham Mental Health Alliance of voluntary sector providers that works collaboratively to offer a coordinated and joined up service model across the county.

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 2024-25, Creative Support provided or was developing new services in 70 local authorities across England:

Barnsley Council
Bedford Council
Birmingham Council
Blackburn with Darwen
Blackpool Council
Bolton MBC
Bradford City Council
Bury MBC
Calderdale MBC
Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cumberland Council
Darlington Borough Council
Derby City Council
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Dudley MBC
Durham County Council
Essex County Council
Gateshead MBC
Halton Borough Council
Hartlepool Council
Hull City Council
Kirklees Council
Knowsley Council
Lancashire County Council
Leeds City Council
Leicester City Council
Leicestershire County Council
Liverpool City Council
London Borough of Barnet
London Borough of Brent
London Borough of Bromley
London Borough of Camden
London Borough of Harrow
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
London Borough of Wandsworth
Manchester City Council
Middlesbrough City Council
North East Lincolnshire County Council
North Northamptonshire Council
North Lincolnshire County Council
North Tyneside MBC
North Yorkshire Council
Oldham Council
Oxfordshire Council
Reading Borough Council
Redcar with Cleveland MBC
Rochdale MBC
St Helens MBC
Salford City Council
Sandwell Metropolitan BC
Sheffield City Council
Shropshire County Council
Slough Borough Council
South Tyneside MBC
Staffordshire County Council
Stockport MBC
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Tameside MBC
Telford & Wrekin Council
Thurrock Council
Trafford Council
Wakefield Council
Warrington Borough Council
Warwickshire County Council
Westmorland & Furness Council
West Berkshire Council
West Northamptonshire Council
Wigan Borough Council
Wolverhampton City Council
Worcestershire County Council

In addition to services in the above authorities, Creative Support is a member of commissioning frameworks to provide services commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council, Coventry City Council, Cheshire East Council, Derbyshire County Council, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Hampshire County Council, Herefordshire County Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Newcastle City Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Wokingham Borough Council and the London Boroughs of Ealing, Enfield and Newham.

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 across England. We are now 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 people we support to make positive changes in their lives.

A Message from the Chair

I am delighted to reflect on another year of achievements and brilliant outcomes resulting from collaboration with colleagues and co-production with the people we support.

I extend heartfelt thanks to our trustees for their dedication. There has been a marked increase in trustee accountability, presence, and engagement, through attending co-produced events, visiting services and contributing meaningfully to key areas of the organisation. A renewed emphasis on trustee training has enhanced the quality of visits to services and strengthened relationships across the organisation. We are pleased to welcome four new trustees, bringing further knowledge and experience to the Board. Trustee recruitment and development remain a priority, with ongoing efforts to build a strong, diverse, and skilled Board team.

Our governance remains robust and aligned with our charitable ethos. This year has seen a significant strengthening of the working relationship between the Board and Executive Team. This includes spending more dedicated time together, both in person and through dynamic, focused meetings, which has led to more timely and responsive governance. Our committees have evolved, with refreshed Terms of Reference and schedules that ensure timely attention to all matters. We are grateful for the guidance and support of our Company Secretary Hazel Beddows and assistance from our PAs, helping us deliver work more efficiently and on time.

This year, we completed all the tasks arising from last year's Governance Review that has further developed Creative Support's status as a "high performing and effective" organisation. We've built on this foundation by co-producing our new Strategic Plan, capturing the voices and priorities of the people we support to shape our direction for the next five years.

We are proud to report strong financial results and look forward to further sustainable investment in homes and the development of additional co-production hubs.

We have started to implement the five-year strategy with some amazing examples of local empowerment to bring the 'I' Statements from our updated Mission Statement to life. The Mission Statement ensures our strategy is rooted in what truly matters to those we serve. Our cultural development continues, with a renewed focus on being kind, inclusive, and empowering.

We've seen inspiring examples of co-production, such as the work of Creative Together in Manchester, where members are truly empowered to be creative and make decisions. This has resulted in fantastic events including an art exhibition, monthly open mic event and annual music festival.

Creative Voices has gone from strength to strength, growing in popularity and reputation as an increasingly co-produced and inclusive event, reflecting our commitment to meaningful engagement. As a result, we are seeing more people we support choose to train as Quality Checkers. We are also exploring ways to welcome people with lived experience onto the Board, ensuring their voices shape our governance meaningfully. We were proud to celebrate our community at the fantastic Annual Gala in Manchester, where the voices of the people we support were front and centre.

I'd like to show my appreciation for all our wonderful staff and managers for their unwavering focus on delivering exceptional care and support, which has been demonstrated in excellent outcomes from CQC inspections and recognized by many external awards. On behalf of the Board, thank you to everyone who has contributed to our mission this year. Your commitment to our We Care values makes a profound difference.

Joolz Casey - Chair of the Board of Trustees, September 2025

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. Under these regulations, the Board has elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with UK accounting standards including FRS102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

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 Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2022. It has general responsibility for taking reasonable steps to safeguard the assets of the Society and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

The Board is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Society's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

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:

Joolz Casey(Chair)	
Fiona King	
Rachael Corbelli	
Helen O'Sullivan	
Claire Judkins	
Chrissie Cooke	
Robert McDonald	Appointed 24 January 2025
Steven Farmery-Vigus	Appointed 24 January 2025
Mofe Binitie	Appointed 24 July 2025
Robert Graham	Appointed 24 July 2025
Paul Calland	Resigned 26 September 2024
Steven Blezard	Resigned 22 August 2024

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Creative Support Limited

Opinion
We have audited the financial statements of Creative Support Limited (the 'Society') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Changes in Reserves, the Statement of Cash Flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies in note 1. 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 2025 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the 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 2022.

Basis for opinion
We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Society in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern
In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

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

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

Other information
The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The 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:

- the Society has not maintained a satisfactory system of control over transactions; or
- the Society has not kept proper accounting records; or
- the Society's financial statements are not in agreement with 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 Board's responsibilities in respect of the accounts set out on page 57, 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 has 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.

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 risks 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, regulations and guidance that affect the Society, focusing on those that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on its operations. Key laws, regulations and guidance that we identified included the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, the NHF Code of Governance, the Regulatory Standards, the Statement of Recommended Practice for registered housing providers: Housing SORP 2018, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2022, tax legislation, health and safety legislation, and employment legislation.
- We enquired of the Board and reviewed correspondence and Board meeting minutes for evidence of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations. We also reviewed controls the Board have in place, where necessary, to ensure compliance.
- We gained an understanding of the controls that the Board have in place to prevent and detect fraud. We enquired of the Board about any incidences of fraud that had taken place during the accounting period.
- The risk of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations 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: laws related to the provision of social housing recognising the regulated nature of the Society's activities.

- We reviewed financial statements disclosures and supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above.
- We enquired of the Board about actual and potential litigation and claims.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that might indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud due to management override of internal controls we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates were indicative of a potential bias.

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 and Section 128 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. 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
One Express
1 George Leigh Street
Manchester
M4 5DL

Date: 22 September 2025

CREATIVE SUPPORT LIMITED
Statement of Comprehensive Income

	Note	Year ended 31 Mar 25	Year ended 31 Mar 24
		£'000	£'000
Turnover	**2**	**178,500**	155,832
Operating expenditure		**(167,406)**	(146,974)
Gain on disposal of housing property	**5**	**-**	-
Operating surplus		**11,094**	8,858
Interest receivable		**1,346**	660
Interest payable and financing costs	**6**	**-**	(442)
Surplus for the year	**7**	**12,440**	9,076
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	**16**	**57**	95
Total comprehensive income for the year		**12,497**	9,171

The results relate wholly to continuing activities and the notes on pages 65 to 84 form an integral part of these accounts.

The financial statements on pages 61 to 84 were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on 11 September 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

Board Member:
Helen O'Sullivan

Board Member:
Fiona King

Company Secretary:
Hazel Beddows

Statement of Financial Position

	Note	At 31 Mar 25 Society £'000	At 31 Mar 24 Society £'000
Fixed assets			
Intangible assets and goodwill	10	-	28
Tangible fixed assets	11	79,175	76,800
		79,175	76,828
Current assets			
Trade and other debtors	12	19,287	19,202
Cash and cash equivalents	13	38,415	26,052
		57,702	45,254
Less: Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(16,182)	(13,873)
Net current assets		41,520	31,381
Total assets less current liabilities		120,695	108,209
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	15	(3,103)	(3,103)
Provisions for liabilities and charges			
Pensions -DB liability	16	-	(3)
Other provisions	18	(154)	(162)
Total net assets		117,438	104,941
Reserves			
Non-equity share capital	20	-	-
Revenue reserve		114,395	101,955
Pension reserve		2,303	2,246
		116,698	104,201
Restricted reserve		7	7
Revaluation reserve		733	733
Total reserves		117,438	104,941

The financial statements on pages 61 to 84 were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on 11 September 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

Board Member:
Helen O'Sullivan

Board Member:
Fiona King

Company Secretary:
Hazel Beddows

The notes on pages 65 to 84 form an integral part of these accounts

Statement of Changes in Reserves

	Revenue reserve	Restricted reserve	Revaluation Reserve	Pensions reserve	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 31 March 2023	92,879	7	733	2,151	**95,770**
Surplus from Statement of Comprehensive Income	9,076	-	-	-	**9,076**
Other Comprehensive Income for the year:					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	-	-	-	95	**95**
Balance at 31 March 2024	101,955	7	733	2,246	104,941
Surplus from Statement of Comprehensive Income	12,440	-	-	-	**12,440**
Other Comprehensive Income for the year:					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	-	-	-	57	**57**
Balance at 31 March 2025	114,395	7	733	2,303	117,438

The notes on pages 65 to 84 form an integral part of these accounts.

	Note	Year ended 31 Mar 25 £'000	Year ended 31 Mar 24 £'000
Net cash generated from operating activities	Note (a)	**15,350**	12,914
Cash flow from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		**(4,378)**	(3,664)
Proceeds from sale of tangible fixed assets		**11**	48
Grants received (repaid)		**34**	-
Interest received		**1,346**	660
		(2,987)	(2,956)
Cash flow from financing activities			
Interest paid		**-**	(442)
Repayment of borrowings		**-**	(8,833)
		-	(9,275)
Net change in cash and cash equivalents		**12,363**	683
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year		**26,052**	25,369
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year		**38,415**	26,052

Note (a)	Year ended 31 Mar 25 £'000	Year ended 31 Mar 24 £'000
Cash flow from operating activities		
Surplus for the year	**12,440**	9,076
Adjustments for non-cash items:		
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	**2,055**	2,652
Amortisation of intangible assets	**28**	92
Accelerated depreciation on component disposals	**432**	-
Pension costs less contributions payable	**54**	67
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other debtors	**(85)**	1,330
(Decrease)/increase in trade and other creditors	**2,309**	(109)
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	**(8)**	(1)
Donation of Long term leasehold property	**(495)**	-
Adjustments for investing or financing activities:		
Government grants amortised in the year	**(34)**	25
Interest payable	**-**	442
Interest receivable	**(1,346)**	(660)
Net cash generated from operating activities	**15,350**	12,914

The notes on pages 65 to 84 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.

The financial statements comply with 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 2022. The accounts are prepared on the historical cost basis of accounting and are presented in sterling £'000 for the year ended 31 March 2025.

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 Report of the Board of Trustees.

The Trustees have determined that there is currently no material uncertainty that casts doubt on the Society's ability to continue as a going concern.

The Society has a strong balance sheet, no debt following the repayment in full of all loans during the previous financial year, significant cash reserves, and is expected to continue generating positive cash flow from surpluses produced by operating activities. These elements combine to provide sufficient resources to continue delivering high quality accommodation and social care services whilst maintaining and investing in the Society's assets.

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:-

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 significant economic challenges across the UK, being considered a trigger event, and following the assessment of impairment, no significant impairment losses were identified in the reporting period as all impairment tests as detailed below demonstrated that asset values exceeded net book values of each property.

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

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 2.5% 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.

d. Pension Asset

FRS 102 requires that defined benefit plan surpluses are recognised only to the extent that they are recoverable either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the plan. The accounting valuations of The Lancashire County Pension Fund and London Borough of Bromley Pension Fund identified a total accounting surplus of £5.522M.

The Society has considered the asset ceiling report produced by the Scheme Actuary and judged that the surpluses are not recoverable and accordingly, the Society has not recognised the pension asset position, restricting the surpluses to £nil, and reducing actuarial gains by the same amount in respect of these schemes.

Other key sources of estimation and assumptions:

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.

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.

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.

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

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.

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.

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.

UELs for identified components are as follows:

	Years
Kitchens	10
Bathroom	15
Roofs	50
Heating	20
External works	20
Windows	34
Structure	100

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

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.

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.

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

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

As at the year end, there are six pension schemes, two 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 two 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 2025, 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 (if any) on these Local Government Pension Schemes at 31 March 2025 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 2025, included on the Balance Sheet within Provisions for Liabilities and Charges, is £nil. The amount expensed to operating expenditure in the financial year was £54,000 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	2025 Turnover £'000	2024 Turnover £'000
Social housing lettings	3	**15,474**	14,252
Other social housing activities			
Community Care		**153,828**	132,455
Prevention and wellbeing		**8,156**	8,393
Activities other than social housing			
Revenue grants		**88**	126
Donations		**1**	28
Donation of Long term leasehold property		**495**	-
Other income including grants for Infection Control and testing, and Workforce capacity Funding		**458**	578
Total		**178,500**	155,832

Revenue grants includes grants received from Skills for Care amounting to £77,000 (2024: £124,000).
Creative Support has acquired a 999-year lease from Manchester City Council for a peppercorn rent, for a property with a Market value of £495,000, which has been recognised as a donation in the financial year.

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.

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges and voids	**8,130**	7,525
Service charge income	**7,310**	6,694
Amortised government grants	**34**	33
Turnover from Social Housing Lettings	**15,474**	14,252
Operating expenditure on Social Housing Lettings	**12,439**	11,927
Operating Surplus on Social Housing Lettings	**3,035**	2,325
Void losses (being rental income lost as a result of property not being let, although it is available for letting)	**699**	699

4. Accommodation in Management

As at 31 March 2025, the Society had 1,234 units of supported housing under management (2024: 1,223) as set out below:-

	Owned		Managed/leased	
	Supported Housing - Other	**Supported Housing - Older people**	**Supported Housing - Other**	**Supported Housing - Older people**
At 1 April 2024	738	-	434	51
Additions	27	-	14	-
Disposals/decommissioned	-	-	(30)	-
At 31 March 2025	**765**	**-**	**418**	**51**

5. Gains on disposals of housing properties

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Proceeds of sales, net of selling expenses	**-**	-
Less: net book value on disposals	**-**	-
Net gain	**-**	-

6. Interest and financing costs

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
On loans repayable within five years	**-**	442
On loans wholly or partly repayable in more than five years	**-**	-
Defined benefit pension charge	**-**	-
	-	442

7. Surplus on ordinary activities

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
The operating surplus is stated after charging/(crediting):-		
Auditors remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit of the financial statements	43	43
Operating lease rentals:		
Land and buildings	962	934
Plant and machinery	110	100
Depreciation of social housing properties	1,139	1,088
Depreciation of other properties	137	158
Depreciation of other fixed assets	774	642
Rent losses from bad debts	84	69

8. Employee information

	2025	2024	2025	2024
	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 :-				
Senior Management	118	86	122	91
Housing, Support, and Care	3,682	3,342	5,169	4,939
Administration	280	250	321	290
	4,080	3,678	5,612	5,320

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Staff costs (including directors' emoluments detailed in note 9)		
Wages and salaries	123,976	105,491
Social Security costs	10,983	8,715
Other pension costs	2,520	2,270
	137,479	116,476

8. Employee information (continued)

Agency staff costs incurred by Creative Support amounting to £7,663,000 (2024: £10,917,000) are not included in the analysis above. These costs are incurred to provide cover for hours required on contracts that are not delivered by contracted staff.

	2025	2024
Aggregate number of full time equivalent staff whose remuneration exceeded £60,000 in the period (including directors detailed in note9):	**No.**	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	**7**	5
£70,001 - £80,000	**2**	1
£80,001 - £90,000	**4**	4
£90,001 - £100,000	**2**	3
£100,001-£110,000	**2**	1

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

9. Key management personnel and directors' remuneration

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

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Salary	**1,040**	1,044
Benefits in kind	**29**	46
Pension contributions	**27**	34
	1,096	1,124
Aggregate consideration payable to Directors for loss of office	**-**	-

The emoluments of the highest paid director, excluding pension contributions, were £109,973 (2024: £106,171) and are included in the above analysis.

The Chief Executive received remuneration for the year ending 31 March 2025 totalling £109,973 (2024: £97,586), comprising basic salary of £109,973 (2024: £87,675), and £0 (2024: £9,911) in lieu of holidays not taken. Employer contributions of £0 (2024: £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.

9. Key management personnel and directors' remuneration (continued)

The Society commissioned a governance review in 2024, which concluded that the Society is a highly performing and effective organisation. One of the recommendations of the review to further strengthen governance was that Trustees received payment for holding office in line with other registered social housing providers of the same scale. The Trustees considered that the recommendation was in the best interest of the Society in terms of recruitment, retention, diversity and skills. Payments to trustees as office holders is allowed by the Society's rules, and payments commenced in January 2025.
No payments were made to Trustees for pensions or other benefits.
Payments for holding office were made to individual Trustees, as set out below (for the 3 months from January 2025)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trustee Name		
Joolz Casey	3,000.00	-
Chrissie Cooke	1,512.51	-
Rachael Corbelli	1,374.99	-
Steven Farmery-Vigus	439.34	-
Claire Judkins	1,374.99	-
Fiona King	1,374.99	-
Robert McDonald	583.34	-
Helen O'Sullivan	875.01	-
	10,535	**-**

Two trustees received reimbursed expenses totalling £2,758 (2024: £1,189, 1 trustee).

10. Intangible assets and goodwill

	£'000
Cost or valuation	
At 31 March 2024	**1,040**
Additions	**-**
At 31 March 2025	**1,040**
Amortisation	
At 31 March 2024	**1,012**
Amortisation in year	**28**
At 31 March 2025	**1,040**
Net book value	
At 31 March 2025	**-**
At 31 March 2024	**28**

11. 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	88,759	1,669	2,614	1,181	94,223
Additions	3,975	258	550	90	4,873
Disposals	(1,005)	(257)	(71)	(77)	(1,410)
At end of the year	91,729	1,670	3,093	1,194	97,686
Depreciation and impairment					
At start of the year	14,205	1,144	1,394	680	17,423
Charge for the year	1,281	195	420	159	2,055
Disposals	(565)	(257)	(69)	(76)	(967)
At end of the year	14,921	1,082	1,745	763	18,511
Net book value at the end of the year	76,808	588	1,348	431	79,175
Net book value at the start of the year	74,554	525	1,220	501	76,800

Housing Properties comprise:	**2025**	**2024**
Freeholds	58,303	56,280
Long leaseholds	18,354	18,044
Short leaseholds	151	230
	76,808	74,554

12. Trade and other debtors

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Rent arrears	**1,220**	956
Less: provision for bad debts	**(84)**	(290)
	1,136	666
Grants, supported tenancy and other contract fees receivable	**8,013**	9,337
Less: provision for bad debts and credit notes	**(2,078)**	(2,026)
Other debtors	**355**	411
Prepayment and accrued income	**11,861**	10,814
	19,287	19,202

Debtors are all due within one year.

13. Cash and cash equivalents

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Cash at bank short term deposits	**38,415**	26,052
	38,415	26,052

At the balance sheet date, Creative Support acting as appointee, court approved deputy or other approved representative, held funds on behalf of clients supported by Creative Support in a separate general account amounting to £272,864 (2024: £317,648) and in individual accounts amounting to £5,528,399 (2024: £5,849,622). These funds have not been included in the assets or liabilities of the Society.

14. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Note	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Trade creditors		**3,415**	2,755
Other taxation and social security payable		**4,026**	3,122
Accruals and deferred income		**7,462**	6,490
Deferred Capital Grant	19	**34**	34
Other creditors		**1,245**	1,472
		16,182	13,873

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

		2025	2024
		£'000	£'000
Deferred Capital Grant	19	**3,103**	3,103
		3,103	3,103

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 six pension schemes.

(i) Membership details

Scheme	Active members at 31 March 2025	Type of scheme
Legal & General Group Personal Pension Scheme	95	Defined contribution
Royal London Group Personal Pension Scheme	7	Defined contribution
NHS Pension Scheme	48	Defined benefit
Local Government schemes	8	Defined benefit
Peoples Pension (auto-enrolment)	4,232	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 three defined benefit schemes, arising as a result of TUPE transfers of staff. Details of the defined benefit schemes are set out below at note 16 (v) and 16(vi).

(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:

16. Pension obligations (continued)

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 2025, is based on valuation data as 31 March 2023, updated to 31 March 2025 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.

b) Full actuarial (funding) valuation

The last published actuarial valuation undertaken for the NHS Pension Scheme was completed for the year ending 31 March 2020. 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
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 2022 and rolled forward allowing for the different financial assumptions required under FRS102, to 31 March 2025 by a qualified independent actuary.

The employer's contributions to the LGPS by the Society for the year ended 31 March 2025 were £19,000 (2024:£21,000) at a contribution rate between 0.0% and 23.2% of pensionable salaries. The employers' contribution rate for the year ended 31 March 2026 has been set at between 0% and 23.2%. Estimated contributions to the LGPSs during the accounting period commencing 1 April 2025 are £8,000.

Principal actuarial assumptions
Financial assumptions

	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
	% per annum	% per annum
Discount rate	5.8% - 5.9%	4.8% - 4.9%
Future salary increases	4.1% - 4.2%	3.85% - 4.2%
Future pension increases	2.7% - 2.8%	2.0% - 2.8%
Inflation assumptions	2.6% - 2.7%	2.6% - 2.7%

The post-retirement mortality assumptions adopted to value the benefit obligation at 31 March 2025 and 31 March 2024 are based on different assumptions within each scheme including SAPS 4 and SAPS 4 middle.

The Lancashire County Pension Fund and London Borough of Bromley Pension Fund have a total gross accounting surplus at the reporting date of £5.522M, prior to the pension assets ceiling. In line with FRS 102 requirements the Society has recognised an asset on the balance sheet to the extent that it is able to recover the surplus, either through reduced contributions in the future, or through refunds from the plan.

The Society has considered the asset ceiling report produced by the Scheme Actuary and judged that the surpluses are not recoverable and accordingly, the Society has not recognised the pension asset position, restricting the surpluses to £nil, and reducing actuarial gains by the same amount in respect of these schemes.

16. Pension obligations (continued)

Membership of the West Yorkshire Pension Scheme ended in the financial year, as there were no staff remaining in the scheme from 19 May 2024.

The assumed life expectations on retirement at age 65 are:

	2025	2024
	No. of years	No. of years
Retiring today:		
Males	21.1 - 21.8	21.0 - 21.8
Females	23.6 - 24.1	23.5 - 24.2
Retiring in 20 years:		
Males	22.3 - 22.8	22.3 - 22.8
Females	25.4 - 25.8	25.2 - 25.8

Amounts recognised in surplus or deficit

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Current service costs	49	65
Loss on settlements	-	-
Curtailment costs	4	-
Administrative expenses	1	2
Amounts charged to operating costs	**54**	**67**
Net interest	-	-
Amounts charged to other finance costs	**-**	**-**
Actuarial gains	57	95

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

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Opening scheme liabilities	7,455	9,607
Recognition of present value of scheme liabilities	(2,298)	(2,201)
Current service cost	49	65
Past service cost	-	-
Interest cost	247	349
Remeasurements	(751)	(203)
Members contributions	15	19
Curtailments	4	-
Settlements	-	-
Benefits paid (net)	(259)	(181)
Closing scheme liabilities	**4,462**	**7,455**

16. Pension obligations (continued)

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

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Opening fair value of plan assets	**7,452**	9,576
Recognition of fair value of plan assets	(2,298)	(2,182)
Impact of asset ceiling	(794)	(590)
Administration expenses	(1)	(2)
Interest income	248	349
Return on plan assets (in excess of interest income)	80	442
Contributions by employer	19	21
Members contributions	15	19
Benefits paid (net)	(259)	(181)
Closing fair value of plan assets	**4,462**	**7,452**

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Actual return on scheme assets	328	978

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Position

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Fair value of plan assets	**4,462**	7,452
Present value of scheme liabilities	**(4,462)**	(7,455)
FRS 102 (deficit) in the schemes	**-**	**(3)**

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

	2025	2024
	%	%
Equities	0.1% - 52.8%	0.1% - 79.4%
Gilts	0.0% - 2.4%	0.0% - 8.5%
Bonds	0.1% - 10.7%	0.1% - 12.0%
Properties	1.2% - 13.1%	1.3% - 6.0%
Cash	1.5% - 5.3%	1.8% - 5.8%
Other	15.7% - 97.1%	3.3% - 96.7%

17. Analysis of Changes in Net debt

	At 1 April 2024	Cash Flows	Non cash movements	At 31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cash and cash Equivalents	26,052	12,363	-	38,415
	26,052	**12,363**	**-**	**38,415**

18. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	At 1 April 2024	Additional provision	Released/ utilised	At 31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Dilapidations provisions	162	-	(8)	**154**

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

19. Deferred capital grant

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
At start of the year	**3,137**	3,112
Grant received / (disposed of) in the year	**34**	58
Released to income in the year	**(34)**	(33)
At the end of the year	**3,137**	3,137
Amount due to be released in less than 1 year	**34**	34
Amount due to be released after more than 1 year	**3,103**	3,103
	3,137	3,137

20. Non-equity share capital

	2025	2024
	£	£
Association		
Allotted Issued and Fully Paid		
At the start of the year	**70**	70
Issued during the year	**5**	-
At the end of the year	**75**	**70**

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.

21. Capital commitments

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Capital expenditure that has been contracted for but has not been provided for in the financial statements	**1,608**	581
Capital expenditure that has been authorised by the Board but has not yet been contracted for	**265**	2,025
	1,873	2,606

22. Operating leases

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

	2025	**2024**
	£'000	£'000
Within one year	**862**	750
Between one and five years	**2,046**	1,957
Later than five years	**480**	843
	3,388	3,550

23. Grant and financial assistance

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
The total accumulated government grant and financial assistance received or receivable at 31 March:		
Total gross grant at end of year	**3,422**	3,388
Total cumulative amortisation at the start of the year	**(251)**	(218)
Recognised as income in statement of Comprehensive Income in the year	**(34)**	(33)
Held as deferred capital grant at end of year	**3,137**	3,137

24. Related parties

Other than those disclosed in note 9, there are no related party transactions (2024: none).









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Effective


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