

there for you

supporting UNISON members
when life gets tough



Annual report & accounts
Year ended 31 December 2023

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General information

Charity

There for You (working name of UNISON Welfare) is a registered charity no.1023552 and is governed by a Constitution and Rules approved by the Charity Commission on 1 July 1993 and as amended in 1995, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2011, 2019. It is also a registered charity in Scotland SCO 38305.

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Interim Head of Charity

Abigail Coombs

Board of Trustees

Jayne Bouskill – appointed June 2023

Mandy Buckley

Alison Dingle– end of elected term June 2023

Sara Evans – appointed June 2023

Mark Fisher – appointed June 2023

Margaret McKee – end of elected term June 2023

Julia Mwaluke – end of elected term June 2023

David Page

Karen Poole

Debi Potter

Theresa Rollinson– end of elected term June 2023

Donnie Taylor

Denise Thomas - appointed June 2023

Maxine Warrican

Tony Wright

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Solicitors

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Message from the Chair



I would like to welcome you to this year's Annual Report.

When I wrote last year's report, I feared then that 2023 would not be any easier for UNISON members, given the scale of the cost-of-living crisis we've been facing. And so it is, that the demand for grants has indeed continued to increase.

Volatile international markets have seen the charity's investments rise and fall over the course of the year, but we continue to remain resilient and well-placed to weather these challenging times.

This year, as we do every year, we want to reach as many members as we can, but we can only do this with your help. A reminder to everyone to please spread the word and, if you are aware of anyone who is finding life difficult, and struggling financially, then please let them know about There for You.

It has been my pleasure to work with the There for You staff team: they've shown real dedication and compassion throughout what has been a really challenging year for them. They have maintained a focus and first-class service to the people who matter most: our members.

Our volunteer branch welfare officers continue to show resilience on the ground, signposting and fundraising for us like never before: giving up time in their busy lives to help drive the charity forward and provide support locally when it is needed – we couldn't do it without you!

I would also like to thank the Board of Trustees and regional welfare committees for their positive involvement and leadership when we've needed it most.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are beginning to see faint flickers of hope on the horizon - though it is unlikely to bring about any immediate reduction in demand for help. However, with your help, I am confident that we are well positioned to support those who need it most.

Finally, I hope this report gives you some idea of the work we have done and the difference we have made together.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed and for the invaluable work that you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Wright', written in a cursive style.

Tony Wright

Chair

Structure, governance, and management

Who we are and how we work together

Board of Trustees

There for You is the working name of UNISON Welfare. The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees who are responsible for:

- the strategic direction and operational oversight of the charity's activities
- compliance with our legal and statutory requirements
- the safe and effective running of the charity.

Of the 12 board members, six are required to be members of UNISON's National Executive Council (NEC). A further six members are elected at the charity's AGM from UNISON's network of welfare activists who are either branch welfare officers or members of the regional welfare committees. Trustees hold office for two years and may be re-elected.

Any vacancy is filled by appointment or election. The Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed by trustees from among their number. The board has agreed that the position of Chair shall be held by an NEC appointed trustee. The Vice-Chair position is held by a trustee elected by the AGM.

All trustees have signed an 'eligibility to serve' declaration form and a declaration of any conflicts of interest. These are reviewed annually. On appointment, trustees are also given the Constitution and Rules, the Trustee Handbook, as well as relevant policies and procedures.

The Board meets quarterly to take all important strategic, policy and financial decisions. At these meetings, trustees receive reports from the head of the charity, as well as from other officers covering specific areas of responsibility. Trustees are responsible for reviewing

the structure, size, and composition of the board, including the skills, knowledge and experience required. Day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the head of the charity. The Board authorises sub-delegation by the head of the charity to other staff.

The Board met throughout 2023 with regular briefings held in between where the Chair and Vice-Chair were updated on developments.

According to individual skills or areas of interest, trustees are invited to support any sub-committees or working groups. These sub-committees will have their own terms of reference and delegated responsibilities as approved by the Board.



Trustee induction and training

The charity provides training for trustees including a mandatory induction programme. On induction, new trustees are provided with relevant background information to help familiarise them with their responsibilities covering:

- Their legal obligations under charity law and an overview of their responsibilities
- Understanding the Constitution and Rules
- Understanding key policies
- The committee and decision-making process
- An overview of current and future activities
- Any other information that is relevant at the time of joining the Board.

Governance

UNISON Welfare takes account of its charitable status, the nature of its activities and risk profile. Internal controls over all forms of financial commitment and expenditure are in place and reviewed regularly. Similarly, processes exist to ensure performance is monitored and that appropriate management information is prepared and reviewed regularly. The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material misstatement or loss and include:

- an annual budget and operational plan approved by the trustees.
- regular consideration by the trustees of financial results and variances from budget.
- delegation of day-to-day management authority and segregation of duties.
- identification and management of risks.

Charity Governance Code

The Board has considered the Charity Governance Code and concluded that the charity is compliant with its principles. Areas of improvement are factored into the annual work programme. We believe that good governance is key to the ongoing success of the organisation.

In terms of maintaining high standards of governance and on the back of the adoption of the Charity Governance Code, the Board continues to review and strengthen its governance practices.

Fundraising

We do not employ professional fundraisers however we do run a lottery and have commissioned Sterling Lotteries Ltd, a licensed ELM (External Lottery Manager) to administer the UNISON Lottery on our behalf. The rules of the lottery have been designed to afford what the Board of Trustees believe to be a reasonable degree of protection and avoid issues such as problem gambling by limiting the amount individuals can play to a maximum of £10 each month.

We have a clear complaints procedure in place and aim to provide a response or an update to any concern within 5 working days. For the 12 months to 31 December 2023, we received no complaints in relation to our fundraising activities.

Related parties

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity, although expenses are paid. Any connection between a trustee and a request for financial assistance under discussion will be disclosed at a Board meeting in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year, no such related party transactions were reported.

Details of trustee expenses are disclosed in note 9 to the accounts.

Regional structure

There are 10 regional welfare committees and in the Eastern and East Midlands regions they have replaced their committee with a 'forum' which all branch welfare officers are encouraged to attend. All act as a link between the Board of Trustees and our branch welfare officers who in turn provide support and assistance to our beneficiaries. Their primary role is to encourage and support the branch welfare officers in their work. Members of regional welfare committees and other stakeholders can also serve in an advisory capacity on task groups.

Valuing volunteers

This report gives an indication of the amount that is achieved considering our modest staff headcount. A large part of this is down to the contribution made by UNISON activists and the network of branch welfare officers – often a key point of contact for members – and our regional welfare committees. Around 700 UNISON members actively support the charity at any one time.

Key management and personnel

The activities and performance of the charity rely on the commitment and hard work of its valued staff. Overall management responsibility and the day-to-day running of the charity is delegated to the head of the charity who reports to the Board of Trustees, assisted by a team of staff who work hard to turn vision into reality.

In June 2022 Abigail Coombs was appointed on an interim basis to head up the charity. The head of the charity ensures that the staff team is recruited and supported to provide the skills and expertise needed to run a successful organisation. There is currently a staff headcount of 11 (10.6 FTE).

There are also nominated staff in the regions who support the regional welfare committees. While their 'welfare' duties are just a small part of a much bigger role that they have within UNISON, they make an important contribution to the charity's overall success.

Pay policy for senior staff

Our staff are employed by UNISON under its 'terms and conditions'. Staff salaries and pension on-costs form part of their annual donation to the charity. The pay of senior staff is reviewed in the same way as all staff remuneration – on an annual basis and governed by the pay and grading agreement and negotiation arrangements as set out in UNISON's Recognition Agreement.

Risk management and internal controls

The management and trustees review the major risks which confront the charity at least annually. This includes reviewing the adequacy of the actions being taken in response to each risk.

A formal risk management process to assess business risks and implement risk management strategies is in place and involves identifying the types of risks the charity faces, prioritising them in terms of potential impact and likelihood. Trustees take all reasonable steps to mitigate risk by:

- Operating a risk register.
- Establishing policies, systems, and procedures to mitigate risks identified.
- Providing training in key areas such as GDPR.
- Budgeting and financial reporting which indicate financial performance are reviewed regularly and agreed by the Board.
- Insuring against third party risks.

The Board is satisfied that the major risks facing the Charity have been identified and are being appropriately addressed.

Key risks include

The charity has a relatively low and stable risk profile with risks that typically can be managed, rather than eliminated. The Board considers the following to be the key risks currently facing the charity:

Increasing demands for services

In the current climate, this risk represents a significant challenge and is subject to trends. To mitigate this risk:

- Demand is managed as far as possible through regular review of operational statistics and other management information, exploring new fundraising initiatives and discussion with UNISON, our primary donor.

Sustainable funding

Our financial position is continually under review which ensures that the long-term financial stability of the charity is maintained. To mitigate this risk:

- We continue to strengthen our internal controls and to operate tight budget management with a focus on efficiency and controlling costs.

Fall in investment returns

A key financial risk for the Charity is a significant loss in value of its investment portfolio. The Charity is a long-term investor with a significant portfolio and can sustain short-term market fluctuations. A significant decline in the value of invested reserves could materially reduce the ability to support beneficiaries in the future. To mitigate this risk:

- Funds are invested in diversified portfolios and are managed by professional fund managers.
- Performance and asset allocation is regularly reviewed using available benchmarking information.
- The Board receive quarterly reports from the Fund Manager and meet with them at least annually.

Data protection

Ensuring confidentiality remains a fundamental core principle of the service we provide. We pay close attention to data protection risks as a reflection of our concern for our beneficiaries and for the reputation of the service. To mitigate this risk:

- We pay close attention to the regulatory environment and monitor compliance requirements, with particular regard to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Reputational damage

Reputational damage or unexpectedly being prevented from providing some services. To mitigate this risk:

- Robust processes and procedures are implemented and reviewed. We monitor performance, establish service level agreements with third party service providers as needed and undertake regular staff training.

Technology

The Charity is reliant on its systems to run its operations and these need to be kept up to date. Failing to keep pace with technological developments would present issues for the Charity's operation and continue to impact on our efficiency and turnaround times. Technology underpins and services our financial assistance programme. To mitigate this risk:

- A project to deliver a new case management system, and website capabilities and functions is underway to include the further development of online applications aimed at enabling more members to self-refer.

Increasing regulation

Increasing regulation may constrain the activities of the charity. To mitigate this risk:

- The regulation environment is monitored, relevant matters are brought to the Board's attention and professional advice is sought on key issues where appropriate.

Objects and principal activities

The Objects of the Charity **Grant-making policy**

The charity's objects and purpose are defined by our Constitution and Rules as approved by the Charity Commission. These are:

To help UNISON members and their dependants in such a way as the trustees consider appropriate at times of financial hardship or personal difficulty such as redundancy, bereavement, illness, or relationship breakdown. We also help members with special needs or who may be caring for a relative.

Most of our charitable work is awarding grants to individuals. Applications are considered in accordance with our financial assistance policy and agreed strategy. Eligibility criteria and the kind of assistance on offer is published on our website. Our key aim is to improve the beneficiary's ability to manage their situation and not to repeatedly request financial support to rely on.

We invite applications through promotion via UNISON and applications are assessed against specific criteria agreed by the Board. The award of financial assistance is based on various criteria:

Eligibility

The applicant must be a UNISON member or their financial dependant.

Situation

The circumstances that have led to hardship including reduced income, caring, bereavements, ill-health, domestic abuse, unsuitable accommodation. Generally, we will only assist where there is unexpected difficulty and wide-ranging support can be provided for example with household bills, grants to replace essential household items that are broken or beyond repair, property adaptations and mobility equipment, and more. Help with the cost of a break following illness or injury for example or for families who are experiencing difficult circumstances. Our breaks form a distinct service under the Wellbeing Breaks programme.

Need

Establishing the specific needs and deciding the financial support that will have most impact which sometimes may not be exactly the help asked for.

Alternative assistance

Applications are also guided by the availability of alternative statutory and voluntary help. This may be an entitlement to benefits, or grants from other charities which, in some cases may be to share the funding or alternatively additional help beyond what we are able to provide.

All applications are subject to an application process which takes into consideration the above criteria as well as length of membership, income, expenditure, and savings. In most cases, we require the last two months' bank statements for all members and their partner (if applicable), so that we have a complete understanding of their situation.

While there are very few restrictions on the number of times someone can apply, a review of previous applications is undertaken including any financial support paid and advice given. All applications are considered objectively on their individual merits and when we do make a grant it is made on an entirely discretionary basis.

At various levels of the organisation, decisions are reviewed to ensure their appropriateness and compliance with the fund's policies and procedures. The trustees also review grant-making policy at regular intervals and staff will refer grants outside their discretion to the trustees where appropriate.

Advice and assistance

Often, the help and advice offered is all that is needed to empower individuals to deal with their problems and many members value the support they receive from their local branch welfare officer as they give our work a human face. However increasingly, members contact us direct, for advice and assistance with most enquiries dealt with on the same day.

Our financial support often provides the breathing space needed while we work with outside agencies and other parts of UNISON to find longer-term solutions. Many members will have multiple and complex needs and casework potentially can become time-consuming and in common with most grant-giving charities, we always try to ensure applicants are claiming or made aware of their full entitlement to state benefits. Unfortunately, the number of applications received in 2023 made it difficult to deliver the full spectrum of help that we would have wanted.

Applicants with debt problems are referred to UNISON Debtline for specialist advice. The service is provided in partnership with PayPlan, a national debt management service. Self-referrals are also made via a freephone number.

Advisers at PayPlan are aware of the range of help we offer and will refer members to us if they think we might be able to assist with a grant.

Support for other charities

The charity also administers the Ambulance Service Workers' Hardship Fund. Eligibility is restricted to ambulance personnel who are either members of UNISON, Unite or GMB.

Our mission

Our mission is to:

- Be an invaluable resource to UNISON.
- Provide quality advice, information, and assistance to UNISON members.
- Offer financial assistance to all UNISON members and their dependants, who are in financial difficulty and meet our criteria for help.
- Deliver services that are flexible, responsive, and relevant.

Strategic aims

Our strategic aims are to:

- Deliver excellence in governance.
- Manage our finances and increase our income through capitalising on all fundraising opportunities.
- Maintain and expand our services in response to the changing needs of UNISON members.
- Be effective and efficient in everything we do.

Achievements, activities and performance

Financial assistance

Our financial support programmes are an essential part of the safety net There for You provides for members to help them through their toughest times.

We understand that sometimes, unexpected or life changing events can turn lives upside down. We also understand that everyone can experience financial difficulties or struggle to meet everyday living costs.

The rise this year in both energy and housing costs, as well as general inflation, has affected so many of our members. Once again, when support was most acutely needed, There for You stepped up to ensure members continued to get financial support.

In 2023, 3,838 members received financial assistance, resulting in £835,809 being awarded in financial support. This reflects the impact that both the increase in energy and housing costs has had, as well as general inflation. Once again, our programme of grants became a critical means of support for many of our most vulnerable members.

So often, a grant is a lifeline for those in need of a helping hand to cope with events totally outside their control which have impacted negatively on their finances. Whatever the issue, we are a safety net for UNISON members. Whether its struggling to put food on the table, paying for everyday essentials, providing support while benefit applications are processed, urgent home repairs or helping pay for the funeral of a loved one.

There for You provides for members to help them through their toughest times.

Grant type summary	£
Crisis payments (member has no money for food or fuel)	2,200
COVID Response Fund	10,410
Energy-related grants	298,190
Special payments including hospital travel, car repairs	12,776
Help with essential living costs	133,010
Housing costs	19,852
Household items – white goods and furniture	59,332
Disability, health, medical, wellbeing	5,355
Household maintenance & services	7,707
Clothing	2,020
Priority debt including rent, mortgage, council tax, debt relief and bankruptcy	53,577
School uniform grants	63,500
Winter fuel grants	144,800
Funeral costs	17,839
Buy A Gift	5,241
Total	835,809

Small grants programme

There for You have run small grant programmes for a number of years: opening up for a finite number of applications with fixed funding. In recent years the majority of applications have been received online, but have opened and closed in a matter of minutes due to overwhelming demand. In 2022, BWOs and members told us that they found it difficult to apply during the day, due to being at work. That's why in 2023, we changed the format: opening two time slots at either end of the traditional working day. Feedback has been

overwhelmingly positive: you spoke, we listened.

COVID Response Fund

The pandemic brought hardship to more people than ever through illness, bereavement, loss of earnings and in some cases loss of employment. For the fourth year running, There for You was able to support members still affected by the pandemic. Over those four years, more than 3000 members were helped financially through the Covid-19 Response Fund, which in many instances provided an emergency lifeline for those whose lives had been negatively affected by the pandemic. In June this year the Covid-19 Healthcare Support Appeal (CHSA) was officially wound up, which means that 2023 will be the last year that CHSA grants will be paid out. Over the lifetime of the fund, we are proud that we were able to award a total of £1,583,074.

What our help meant to members:

- 66% said it would help to keep on top of their bills and living costs
- 54% said it would ease their stress and anxiety levels
- 53% said it would mean they could put food on the table
- 32% said it gave them some breathing space while looking for additional support or work.
- 46% said it would help pay for rent or mortgage and/or council tax payments

“Thank you very much for the offer of a family day out experience, it really couldn't have come at a better time to try and cheer ourselves up!”

“Thanks for the support u did offer me x”

“Thank you so much for all the great help that you have accorded my family and I. We feel honoured to be associated with UNISON.”

“Thank you so much it's truly appreciated ”

“Thank you so much to you and the entire team. I really appreciated. God bless you all..”

“Thank you! Such a great help and relief. I am very grateful for Unison's help and support - it's made a huge difference to my mental health to feel less alone.”

“Thank you so much for sorting this out for me. It'll be a massive help to my family. I know it's silly but the bit about the day trip had me in tears.”

“Thank you so so much for this kind gesture and for your help. I appreciate it so much.”

“Thank you for all you do for our members and me!”

“I just wanted to email you to thank you so very much for this money, I'm speechless at the incredible generosity shown and your kindness and support. This will make the next few months a little easier and have a huge positive impact on my mental health.”

“Amazing. Thank you very much..”

“I am overwhelmed with amount of support I have received from Unison and everyone involved in my case. I am truly grateful.”

“I am thankful for the financial assistance my family have received from Unison, there is no way we could have made much progress without this support. My family and I are thankful.”

“I can't thank you enough, from the bottom of my heart, thank you. You don't know how much that means. I have replied to accept the family day out, we will all have that to look forward to.”

“Thank you very much for the rescue at this crucial moment. I really appreciate as I was beginning to feel like I was drowning. Oh I honestly cannot explain the feeling of relief. Nothing will ever be small for us. This gesture is really appreciated..”

“Thanks so much for all you have done and efforts towards supporting my children and I, we deeply appreciate. GOD bless you all.”

“I can't remember the last time I had a nice surprise. Thank you so much!”

Energy Support Grant

The increase in cost-of-living prices, teamed with turmoil in international oil prices meant that UNISON members were faced with choices over whether to heat their homes or feed their families. The Trustees took the decision in May 2022 to launch an ambitious target to raise £1 million and to try to help as many members as we could with their energy bills over the next two winters to try to weather the storm. Incredibly, by the end of the year the target had been met and members had begun applying for our £200 energy support grants. In 2022, from October to December, There for You was able to award grants of £145,575 to 728 members. A further two phases of the grant meant that so far, £266,300 has been paid out over 2023 in both £200 grants and £30 winter clothing vouchers to another 1490 members. The demand for the grant was overwhelming, and administering the programme proved challenging. Further payments are due to be made into 2024, to make sure members stay warm in winter.

“I'm here to thank unison therefor you for their immense support so far. I wouldn't have made it this far if not for UNISON. I joined UNISON not knowing that I would have been a victim of circumstances but now I think I took a great initiative joining UNISON.”

School uniform grant

With national and local government help towards school uniform costs varying across the UK, our School Uniform Grant programme has become a vital source of support for many low-paid UNISON members.

In 2023, 709 children were helped to return to school after the summer break wearing the correct uniform at a total cost of £63,500.

“Hi thank you so much this will change my life and my kids.”

“I am so grateful of this assistance and I know I have gone on and on but it's so I can feed my children. I'm so thankful to you, I will fill our fridge and freezer, I'll get them uniform I couldn't get in summer and clothes they need essentially. Thank you so much.”

“I would once again want to express my heartfelt gratitude to you as an individual and to Unison, There for You. There couldn't have been a better name for the Association/Organisation. You indeed have been there for me in times of need. Thank you so much for your assistance. I now appreciate the importance of being part of Unison even more than before. That once off assistance that one may require during a time of desperation is mostly appreciated. Please continue doing this noble thing.”

“Huge thanks. This is amazing news. Thank you so much.”

“I would like to thank you so much for the support. It makes me breakdown how much relief you have provided from the start.”

“I would to express my heartfelt gratitude for your assistance. I don't know what I would have done if you had not intervened. I'm really grateful.”

“Aw that's fantastic news thank you so much for your help and support during this extremely difficult time.”



“I'm at loss for words and even crying now. Thank you so much for your help and kindness. I greatly appreciate this as this will get me out of debt.”

“Oh my stars!!! Thank you very very much. I really appreciate it!!!”

“Thanks again for all the help - you went above and beyond, in offering help to my family and I am so grateful.”

“I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude. As a migrant with no alternative means of assistance in difficult times such as these not only do I appreciate but I am also grateful.”

Winter fuel grant

As members struggled to find the money to pay for essential living costs, we paid out £144,800 in financial assistance as part of the Winter Fuel Grant programme. This helped 724 eligible and successful households with £200 each, which went a long way to help alleviate the financial pressures that members were facing.

“Thank you so much for this financial assistance, I really am grateful for your decision to help me & In turn my daughter. In addition, the offer of an experience day was a complete surprise & made me feel very emotional! Thank you.”

“Please may I offer you a huge heartfelt THANK YOU. I emailed at my lowest point in my life feeling I was begging for money, both yourself and your team are the most caring, compassionate and none judgemental service and people I have ever had the pleasure in having to talk and communicate with, the grant I received is more than I ever imagined it would be, my family will GREATLY appreciate all your help and advice all of which I'm taking and accepting of now, thank you for everything.”

“I sincerely appreciate your assistance. Thank you very much.”

“Thank you so much it's really appreciated.”

“Words can never express my gratitude, for your help through this difficult time in my life. Thank you so much.”

“Thank you very much for all your support in this, and the amount awarded will help so much.”

“I would firstly like to say a huge thank you for the help you have given me, you don’t understand how much this will help me, I am very appreciative thank you. I am so grateful for your help, this is a huge weight off my shoulders.”

“Thank you so much. that will help me a lot.”

“Thank you so much for your kindness. It is really appreciated. I am so humbled and grateful.”

“Thank you so much for your support.”

“Thank you so so much ,very grateful for this it will be a massive help to me. And thanks for all your help xx”

“I just wanted to say it’s meant so much how lovely and helpful you have been.”

“Thank you so much for your email, I really appreciate the help you have provided.”

“The last few months have been awful for myself and my family and your kindness has made a huge difference. It is incredibly reassuring to us that we are able to top up the meters and fill up the fridge, and we couldn’t have done this without you. Thank you so much again.”



Financial assistance across the regions

Region	£ Total grants paid
Eastern	53,954
East Midlands	45,501
Greater London	65,548
Northern	53,669
Northern Ireland	76,796
North West	136,101
Scotland	148,677
South East	43,608
South West	33,675
Wales/Cymru	42,134
West Midlands	59,748
Yorkshire & Humberside	76,398
Total	835,809

Advice and support

The trend over the last decade has been a steady increase in the number of members who are facing challenges that can often seem overwhelming. In addition to one-off grants, our dedicated welfare team continued to advise on a full spectrum of welfare issues including benefits, signposting to other organisations as well as working with other grant-giving charities to maximise the amount of support that can be offered.

“Thank you! Such a great help and relief. I am very grateful for Unison’s help and support - it’s made a huge difference to my mental health to feel less alone.”

“Thank you so much I should be pay all of my rent arrears off now and get in front. I honestly can’t thank you enough.”

Benefits calculator

With over £15 billion in benefits unclaimed last year, many found our benefits calculator a massive help in identifying a range of benefits that they potentially could claim. In total, the online tool was accessed 6823 times with each calculation taking seven minutes 6 seconds to complete.

Budget planner

Following its launch last year, our online budget planner has provided 363 members with an easy-to-use resource and understanding of what they are earning and spending, where they might be able to cut costs, other useful hints and tips and have better control of their finances.

Measuring success

One of the difficulties for a charity like UNISON Welfare is to quantify the impact we have on those we help. How much difference does a grant make for someone on a low income struggling to pay their bills, or having to decide between eating and heating? How do you measure the relief someone may get from speaking to their branch welfare officer or one of the many calls taken by our team of staff. From the messages of thanks received, there is no doubt that we truly do make a difference.

“I could not thank you enough for considering my application. It’s been tough for the last couple weeks and it had me broke down for a minute or two. Thank you.”

“Wow that’s amazing thank you so much! Honestly that’s an absolute god send at the moment I haven’t got enough words of gratitude. Thank you.”

Operations

In 2023, we continued working on a hybrid basis. We developed our ways of working to ensure staff could use their time efficiently focusing all our energies on helping members. Working closely with UNISON Communications and UNISONdirect, we also ensured that up to date information was available to members, and despite technical challenges, where it was possible to do so we continued with online applications. The project to deliver an updated case management system was re-started in 2022 albeit as part of a wider scoping piece of work: looking at how we work and operate as a charity, and whether changes to our internal process and procedures would benefit our members. Developments to the case management system have been ongoing in 2023, and we aim to go live with our new system in 2024.

Our success in balancing improvements to the service with the demand from the members, was down to the hard work and commitment of our staff.



“Thank you so much this has just made my day i am so great full an amazed by the generosity and help from you. thank you thank thank you.”

“Thank you so much for the grant funding. It will really help make a difference. Thank you very much!”

“Thank you so much for the grant, ive received it today and been able to pay my gas and electric with it. I really appreciate the help.”

“Thank you thank you thank you!! This is great news, it really is appreciated.”

“Words cannot express my sincere appreciation to you and your team for approving this financial assistance. Because of all your help, I will be able to pay my house rent and pay some of my bills during this difficult time. I hope one day I can return the favor to all of you. God bless you and your family. Again, Thank you so much.”

Working in partnership

UNISON Debtline

We continued to offer professional debt and budgeting service through our partnership with PayPlan – providers of debt solutions and free impartial debt advice to UNISON members. PayPlan is accredited by the FCA (Financial Conduct Authority). The service helps members with managing their money and debts by reducing or delaying bills payments, including credit cards where necessary. One of their aims is to help members in building financial resilience.

In 2023, 538 members contacted UNISON Debtline. The advice members received included:

- Budgeting
- Income maximisation, including advice on claiming benefits
- Flexible debt management plans
- Individual Voluntary Arrangements, trust deeds, bankruptcy etc.

Of those that used the service, 27.3% stated the reasons they were struggling with debt was due to increased cost of living; and individual average level of debt was just under £14,000.

Building on our work in 2022 to improve our referral process, we ensured we had a Debtline presence at numerous UNISON events and conferences. It is hoped that as a result, more members will take advantage of the help and support that is available through UNISON Debtline.

Branch welfare officers and regional welfare committees

Newly appointed branch welfare officers still access our online module ‘Introduction to There for You’ which provides an overview of how to get started in the role, how we operate and the services on offer. In addition, branch welfare officers are required to complete the online GDPR module.

After three years without specific branch welfare officer training, 2023 saw our staff delivering a new online course, consisting of two half day sessions. We are delighted that 113 branch welfare

officers signed up and successfully completed the training.

Whilst the overwhelming number of members continue to apply to the charity direct, the branch welfare officer role remains vital in providing local support to those members who are particularly vulnerable.

Our national network of Regional Welfare Committees continued to hold most meetings virtually.

Various members of the Board of Trustees act as ‘link trustees’ with specific regions and have attended numerous regional committee meetings in 2023: speak to branch welfare officers directly about their role and what more the charity could do to help our members.

Raising awareness

We are acutely aware that communicating with those most in need is vital. In 2023, a key focus of our work was to increase engagement and build awareness of the help that is on offer. Wherever possible, UNISON Welfare was promoted within UNISON media and events.

- Each edition of UNISON’s in-house magazine contained adverts and occasional articles about how the charity is helping members.
- Targeted emails and social media campaigns aimed at raising awareness especially about help available through our small grants programme and Energy Support Fund continued to be widely publicised and was a contributory factor in the number of enquiries and high volume of applications.
- A regular bulletin gives updates to branch welfare activists and regional welfare committees.
- A regular branch secretary mailing gives updates and key dates for branches to publicise to their members.

Looking ahead to 2024

We will focus our energies in the areas that really matter to our members and allow us to support more people. Plans include:

- Review options and internal processes for ensuring we have the services and financial support in place to help more members.
- Undertake a top to bottom governance review of the charity.
- Undertake a review of the charity's finances and investments.
- Endeavour to update the charity's financial assessment criteria.
- Hold a one-day branch welfare seminar.
- Do more to raise awareness and take up of the benefits calculator and budgeting tool.
- Continue to deliver online training to increase the number of trained branch welfare officers.
- Launch an improved case management system so that more staff time can be given to support members.
- Look to develop an online application form for our main financial assistance grants.
- Use the union's Organising Space to showcase our guidance and toolkits as well as encourage discussions on best practice for welfare in the branches.
- Engage positively with our regional welfare committees, consider the role they have in UNISON Welfare's success and how communication can be improved going forward.
- Improve our online presence which tells our story better, allowing those seeking help more easily to understand what we do, how we do it and how they can access help.



Where our money comes from

It was another fantastic year for the charity and altogether, a magnificent £1,635,701 was raised during 2023.

Annual donation

UNISON provides the single largest donation to UNISON Welfare. In 2023 we received a £937,690 donation, plus £63,800 donation in kind which includes accommodation and other services free of charge.

UNISON Lottery

The UNISON Lottery produces a regular annual income generating £116,713. From this, £36,000 was paid in prize money. The surplus is used to support the grants programmes.

Financial review

For the year ended 31 December 2023, the total funds of the charity have increased by 1.5% and amounted to £9,152,452 (2022: £9,011,366) of which £8,868,948 (2022: £8,448,111) are the unrestricted and designated funds of the charity.

Gains on investments totalling £314,728 (2022: losses (£1,159,976) contributed to the overall movements in funds and are entirely attributable to unrestricted funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet provide further details of the charity's financial performance for the year and its financial position at the year end.

Income

Incoming resources for the year amounted to £1,635,701 (2022: £2,146,802). This represents a decrease of £511,101 (24%) compared to the previous financial year. It is important to note that although there was a reduction of £546,662 in restricted income, unrestricted income, year-on-year, actually showed an increase of £35,601.

In 2023, the main source of financial support of £943,669 came from UNISON (2022: £1,136,920) together with an additional donation-in-kind of £63,800 (2022: £81,030). This donation-in-kind includes accommodation and other services received free of charge from UNISON to an estimated value. There were no additional donations from UNISON as in the previous year of £250,000.

The total donation received from branches amounted to £248,087.

Lottery income was stable showing a decrease of £7,983 to £116,713 (2022: £124,696).

No legacy income was received this year (2022: £0). This demonstrates the unpredictable nature of such and therefore cannot be relied upon as a consistent or reliable source of income.

Investment income had a small decrease of £6,355 (2.5%) bringing the total to £253,760 (2022: £260,095).

Expenditure

The total expenditure for the year was £1,809,344 (2022: £1,915,165), which is a decrease of 6%.

Unrestricted grant payments decreased by £147,113 (21% decrease) to a total of £553,858 (2022: £700,971). The restricted grant payments amounted to £281,951, bringing the total grant payments made to £835,809. Three restricted grant programs were run during the year, which included Winter Fuel, Energy Support, and School Uniform.

The analysis of these costs is shown in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and the Notes to the Accounts representing the areas of remit and what the expenditure is for.

Investment policy and performance

Our investments had a total value of £8,974,026 on 31 December 2023 (2022: £8,059,432) after capital deposited during the year totalling £400,000. This represents a total increase (net of fees) of 11.1% compared to the Asset Risk Consultants (ARC) steady growth charity index of 7.5%.

2023 had been a bad year for investment performance up to the 3rd Quarter, when a much-improved set of figures turned it around. This improvement represented a return of 5.9% over the final quarter. Both bond and equity markets finished 2023 on a positive note, cheered by the prospect of a slowdown in economic growth, thus avoiding recession.

Our investment approach aims to increase the value of investments while achieving appropriate returns by adopting a managed and diversified portfolio with acceptable risk levels. Our primary investment objectives include:

- Holding investments in a manner that aligns with our short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals
- Achieving a total rate of return of CPI plus 2.5%, ensuring that real capital value is preserved, and income is generated to support our activities

- Comparing our overall performance to a market-derived benchmark and using an industry-wide peer group benchmark to evaluate our performance against the average
- Employing investment managers who can develop stable portfolio that align with our long-term objectives.

Brewin Dolphin (BD), an investment management company, has been appointed to manage the Charity's investments on a fully discretionary basis. Throughout the year, the portfolio has been managed at a diversified mid-level risk.

BD are required to consider the Charity's request to apply ethical considerations when selecting investments. The Trustees have specifically directed that the Charity's investments must not include companies primarily engaged in debt collection, armament manufacturing, supply or trading.

The investments consist of two portfolios, combined in Note 11: a longer-term portfolio with a majority of equities, and a second portfolio with 75% invested in bonds.

To ensure that the asset allocation meets the objectives and performance meets expectations, investment manager reports are reviewed quarterly.

Reserves

At 31 December 2023, the total reserves amounted to £9,152,452 (2022: £9,011,366) of which £8,557,594 (2022: £7,948,111) are unrestricted and £311,354 (2022: £500,000) are designated funds and £283,503 (2022: £563,255) are restricted funds.

The majority of the Charity's reserves are held in the form of investments.

The income generated from these investments is essential to provide support for both present and future beneficiaries.

The trustees review the charity's reserves policy each year as part of the budget process.

Our policy remains to maintain reserves that cover at least five years of average grant expenditure, which is currently around £4.6 million. We recognise that our current level of reserves of £8.9 million exceeds this target, but the Board has agreed that this is appropriate due to the anticipated high demand for financial support over the next few years, and the Charity's need to draw down on investments to maintain the current level of grant payments. We must be prepared to support our members who may face financial difficulties due to rising living costs, especially those who already live on tight budgets.

Financial expectations and plans for 2024

Income raised throughout the year was a combination of restricted and unrestricted funds. The majority of the income was unrestricted, providing the charity with the flexibility to use its funds to best meet its strategic objectives. This is especially crucial during economic downturns, allowing the charity to use its spending where it is most needed. The restricted income was minimal recognizing the vestiges of the successful Energy Support Appeal from 2022.

Like all similar charities, UNISON Welfare faces numerous trends, threats and opportunities that are expected to continue well into the future. The Trustees have identified several key priorities:

- As the demand for assistance provided to UNISON members increases, it will be required to maintain adequate cash reserves
- We will maintain a focus on ongoing review of funding arrangements to ensure sustainable capacity for the future, given the limited potential for significant income growth.
- Careful management of the investment portfolio, with income secured to enable further development of the charity.
- Increasing long-term participation in the lottery is an objective.

The Trustees are confident that the charity is well-equipped to meet the challenges ahead.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and, of the surplus or deficit of the charity, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosures and explained in the financial statement.
- Prepare the accounts on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statement comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Board of Trustees, and signed on its behalf on 31st May, 2024 by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Wright', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Tony Wright
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Independent auditor's report to the trustees of UNISON Welfare

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of UNISON Welfare for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of UNISON Welfare's affairs as at 31 December 2023 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 Charities Act 2011 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (amended).

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 UNISON Welfare in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these

requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial

statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

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 Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- The information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees' report; or
- Sufficient and proper accounting records have not been kept by UNISON Welfare; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing UNISON Welfare's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations. Or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section of the Charities Act 2011, and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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 be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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

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

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error, and discussed these between our audit team members.

We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks including obtaining audit evidence

sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which UNISON Welfare operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Charities Act 2011 and The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 together with the Charities SORP (FRS 102). We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

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

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

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

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and Regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees 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 charity and the charity's trustees as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Crowe U.K. LLP

Crowe U.K. LLP
Statutory Auditor
55 Ludgate Hill
London
EC4M 7JW

05 June 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
INCOME					
Donations and legacies:					
Donation from UNISON	2	943,669	-	943,669	1,136,920
Donation from UNISON in kind	2	63,800	-	63,800	81,030
Other donations	2	227,387	20,700	248,087	492,364
Grants		-	-	-	50,000
Income from charitable activities:					
Providing advice and support to members and their dependants		1,621	-	1,621	1,697
Income from other trading activities:					
Lottery Income		116,713	-	116,713	124,696
Investment income	3	253,760	-	253,760	260,095
Other income		8,051	-	8,051	-
Total		1,615,001	20,700	1,635,701	2,146,802
EXPENDITURE					
Cost of raising funds:					
Generating voluntary income		47,846	-	47,846	48,829
Investment manager and other fees		43,250	-	43,250	43,250
Expenditure on charitable activities:					
Providing advice and support to members and their dependants	4	1,436,297	281,951	1,718,248	1,823,086
Total		1,527,393	281,951	1,809,344	1,915,165
Net (losses)/gains on investments		314,728	-	314,728	(1,159,976)
Net income/expenditure		402,336	(261,251)	141,086	(928,339)
Transfer between funds		18,501	(18,501)	0	0
Net movement in funds		420,838	(279,752)	141,086	(928,339)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Funds brought forward		8,448,111	563,255	9,011,366	9,939,705
Balance carried forward		8,868,949	283,503	9,152,452	9,011,366

There were no gains during the year other than as stated above. All activities are continuing.

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS				
Intangible fixed assets	10	-		-
Investments	11	<u>8,974,026</u>		<u>8,059,432</u>
			8,974,026	8,059,432
CURRENT ASSETS				
Loans to members (due after one year)		90,550		93,366
Debtors	12	25,907		9,044
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>125,769</u>		<u>880,495</u>
			242,226	982,905
CREDITORS:				
Amounts falling due within one year	13		<u>63,800</u>	<u>30,971</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			178,426	951,934
NET ASSETS			<u>9,152,452</u>	<u>9,011,366</u>
FUNDS				
Unrestricted				
General	14		8,557,595	7,948,111
Designated	14		311,354	500,000
			<u>8,868,949</u>	<u>8,448,111</u>
Restricted	14		283,503	563,255
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>9,152,452</u>	<u>9,011,366</u>

Approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue and signed on its behalf on 31 May 2024 by:



Tony Wright

Chair of the Board of Trustees

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flow from operating activities:			
Net cash provided/(used in) by operating activities	18	(408,621)	<i>20,615</i>
Cash flow from investing activities:	11		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		253,760	<i>260,095</i>
Reinvested dividends, drawdowns / injections, fees		(599,865)	<i>234,332</i>
Net cash provided by investing activities		(346,105)	<i>494,426</i>
Increase / (Decrease) in cash and cash equivalent in the year		(754,726)	<i>515,042</i>
Cash and cash equivalent at the beginning of the year		880,495	<i>365,453</i>
Cash and cash equivalent at the end of the year		125,769	<i>880,495</i>

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

b. Critical accounting judgement and key sources of estimation uncertainty

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

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

In the view of the Trustees, no assumptions concerning the future or estimation uncertainty affecting assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date are likely to result in a material adjustment to their carrying amounts in the next financial year.

c. Going concern

The Trustees approve the annual budgets and periodic forecasts to ensure there is sufficient working capital to meet the charity's obligations over the subsequent 12 months. The charity meets its ordinary working capital requirements through its existing cash balances. Having regard to the above, the current cash position, and the expected cashflow over the following 12 months the Trustees believe it is appropriate to adopt a going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

d. Income

All incoming resources are recognised once the charity has entitlement to the resources, it is probable (more likely than not) that the resources will be received and the monetary value of incoming resources can be measured with sufficient reliability.

e. Income from legacies

Legacies are accounted for as income at the earlier of the legacy being received or where the receipt of the legacy is probable and reliably measurable.

Where the charity has been notified of material legacies which have not been included in the SOFA because the conditions for recognition have not been met, this fact and an estimate of the amounts receivable has been disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

f. Donations in kind

Goods and services received at no cost for which UNISON Welfare would otherwise have to pay for are recognised in the financial statements at the value to the charity where this can be reasonably quantified.

g. Intangible fixed assets

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, intangible assets are measured at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses. All intangible assets are considered to have a finite useful life. If a reliable estimate of the useful life cannot be made, the useful life shall not exceed ten years.

The estimated useful lives range as follows:

Website: 3 - 5 years

h. Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated in the balance sheet at cost less depreciation. Assets with a cost of less than £5,000 are fully depreciated in the year of purchase. Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis over the anticipated useful life of fixed assets with a cost in excess of £5,000 as follows:

Computer equipment - over four years.

i. Grants

Grants are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which beneficiaries are notified and so a constructive obligation is entered into by the charity.

j. Expenditure

Costs of raising funds comprise those costs directly attributable to managing the investment portfolio and fundraising costs.

Costs of charitable activities include grants, plus an apportionment of staff and overhead costs. Governance costs are those associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

k. Investments

Fixed asset investments are stated at mid-market value at the balance sheet date.

l. Fund accounting

Restricted funds arise from grants and donations given to UNISON Welfare for specific areas and activities of the charity's work in furthering its objectives. The aim and use of each material restricted fund are set out in Note 14.

Unrestricted funds include the general funds of UNISON Welfare and arise from surpluses of income over expenditure, which may be used at the discretion of the Trustees in accordance with the objectives of the charity.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that had been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aims and use of the designated funds are set out in Note 14.

The change in the market value of investments between the value at the start of the year or date of acquisition (if this is during the year) and the year end is recorded as an unrealised gain or loss in the financial statements. Realised gains reflect the difference between the value of an investment at the start of the year and the proceeds received on disposal. Unrealised and realised gain and losses are shown net in the Statement of Financial Activities.

m. Financial instruments

UNISON Welfare has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Financial assets held at amortised cost, comprise cash at bank and in hand, together with trade and other debtors. Financial assets measured at Fair Value at the Balance sheet date are represented by Listed equity investments, with gains and losses being recognised within income and expenditure through the Profit and Loss Account. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost, comprise bank loans and overdraft, trade and other creditors.

n. Charity information

The Charity is registered with the Charity Commission in the England and Wales and Scotland (registration numbers: 1023552 and SCO38305) and operates from its registered office address 130 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AY.

2. DONATIONS, LEGACIES AND GRANTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Donation from UNISON – Staff	657,690	600,941
Cash Funding from UNISON	285,979	285,979
Donation from UNISON in kind	63,800	81,030
Other donations	248,087	742,364
Grants	-	50,000
	1,255,556	1,760,314

UNISON Welfare receives office space and a number of services free of charge from UNISON to an estimated value of £63,800 per annum which have been recognised as Donations in kind.

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2023 £	2022 £
Dividends and interest from investment portfolio	253,760	260,095
	253,760	260,095

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Providing advice and support to members and their dependents

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Grants	5	835,809	1,024,739
Staff Costs	7	736,273	612,984
Support Costs	8	146,166	185,363
		1,718,248	1,823,086

5. GRANTS

	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £
	Unrestricted/ Designated	Restricted	Total	Total
Health	2,634	-	2,634	7,264
Wellbeing breaks	2,721	5,241	7,962	5,350
Household	86,891	-	86,891	249,938
Debt and bankruptcy	53,577	-	53,577	52,404
Funeral expenses	17,839	-	17,839	17,351
Income subsidy	133,010	-	133,010	163,345
Living Costs	17,096	10,410	27,506	24,130
Employment Loss	-	-	-	1,750
School Uniform	63,500	-	63,500	-
Utility Support	176,590	266,300	442,890	503,207
	553,858	281,951	835,809	1,024,739

All beneficiaries of grants during the year were individuals

6. TRAINING

Training costs include expenditure directly attributable to the volunteer training and information programme and the Annual General Meeting.

7. STAFF COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries	539,677	431,435
Employers NI Costs	51,683	43,614
Pension Costs	134,552	100,581
Consultants costs	10,360	37,353
	736,272	612,983

The average number of employees during the period was 11 (2022 - 9).

UNISON Welfare considers its key management personnel to be Head of UNISON Welfare.

The total earnings, including employer pension and employer national insurance contributions received by key management personnel amounted to £97,235 (2022: £81,815).

Pension contributions in respect of higher paid employee amounted to £19,495 (2022 - £11,027).

The number of higher paid employees was:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Between £60,000 - £70,000	1	-
	1	0

8. SUPPORT COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Office rent	55,000	60,000
Promotion & Advertising	-	2,655
Travelling and subsistence	5,045	380
Staff training	2,527	1,338
Office expenses	46,716	73,240
Software support	9,962	21,671
Governance Costs (Note 9)	26,917	26,079
	146,167	185,363

9. GOVERNANCE COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Statutory audit fees (incl.VAT)	17,064	17,496
Legal and Professional fees	574	504
Trustees' expenses	9,279	8,079
	26,917	26,079

During the year 10 trustees (2022: 12) have claimed expenses or had their expenses met by the charity. In total £9,279 (2022: £8,079) were reimbursed to trustees or paid directly to third parties. Trustees expenses related to travel, accommodation, subsistence and insurance costs.

None of the Trustees received remuneration during this or the previous year.

10. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Software £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 January 2023	30,611	30,611
Additions	-	-
At 31 December 2023	30,611	30,611
Amortisation		
At 1 January 2023	30,611	30,611
Impairment	-	-
At 31 December 2023	30,611	30,611
Net book value		
At 31 December 2023	-	-
At 31 December 2022	-	-

11. INVESTMENTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Market value at start of year	8,059,433	9,453,740
Cash injections (transfers in)	400,000	-
Cash withdrawals (transfers out)	-	(450,000)
Investment managers' fee	(43,250)	(44,426)
Investment Income	253,760	260,095
Unrealised and realised gains	304,083	(1,159,976)
Market value at end of year	8,974,026	8,059,433

12. DEBTORS

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade Debtors	3,536	-
Amounts owed by UNISON	5,979	5,979
Accrued income	1,828	3,065
Buy-A-Gift	14,564	-
	25,907	9,044

13. CREDITORS

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	1,894	2,832
Amounts owed to UNISON	6,055	-
Accruals and deferred income	55,851	28,139
	63,800	30,971

14. ANALYSIS OF CHARITABLE FUNDS

Analysis of movements in funds

	Balance at 1 January 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment gains £	Transfer between funds £	Balance at 31 December 2023 £
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	7,948,111	1,615,001	(1,338,747)	314,728	18,501	8,557,594
Designated funds	500,000	-	(188,646)	-	-	311,354
Total unrestricted funds	<u>8,448,111</u>	<u>1,615,001</u>	<u>(1,527,393)</u>	<u>314,728</u>	<u>18,501</u>	<u>8,868,948</u>
Restricted funds						
Bucket and spade appeal	90,242	-	(3,729)	-	-	86,513
2010 Centenary	32,531	-	-	-	-	32,531
CSIS Short Break	4,315	-	(252)	-	-	4,063
Silent Witness domestic abuse	36,779	-	(1,260)	-	-	35,519
CHSA Healthcare Support Appeal	28,911	-	(10,410)	-	(18,501)	-
Energy Support	370,477	20,700	(266,300)	-	-	124,877
Total restricted funds	<u>563,255</u>	<u>20,700</u>	<u>(281,951)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(18,501)</u>	<u>283,503</u>
Total funds	<u>9,011,366</u>	<u>1,635,701</u>	<u>(1,809,344)</u>	<u>314,728</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,152,452</u>

Analysis of movements in funds - previous year

	Balance at 1 January 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment losses £	Transfer between funds £	Balance at 31 December 2022 £
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	9,620,044	1,579,440	(1,591,397)	(1,159,976)	(500,000)	7,948,111
Designated funds	-	-	-	-	500,000	500,000
Total unrestricted funds	<u>9,620,044</u>	<u>1,579,440</u>	<u>(1,591,397)</u>	<u>(1,159,976)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,448,111</u>
Restricted funds						
Bucket and spade appeal	90,242	-	-	-	-	90,242
2010 Centenary	32,531	-	-	-	-	32,531
CSIS Short Break	4,315	-	-	-	-	4,315
Silent Witness domestic abuse	36,779	-	-	-	-	36,779
Make A Child Smile	8,983	-	(8,983)	-	-	-
COVID-19 Appeal	-	1,310	(1,310)	-	-	-
CHSA Healthcare Support Appeal	146,811	50,000	(167,900)	-	-	28,911
Energy Support	-	516,052	(145,575)	-	-	370,477
Total restricted funds	<u>319,661</u>	<u>567,362</u>	<u>(323,768)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>563,255</u>
Total funds	<u>9,939,705</u>	<u>2,146,802</u>	<u>(1,915,165)</u>	<u>(1,159,976)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,011,366</u>

Description of Designated funds:

Energy Support Designated Fund - The Board of Trustees passed a resolution in 2022 to set up a Designated Energy Support Fund to fund future grant payments to beneficiaries. £500,000 were transferred into this designated fund from the general unrestricted fund. It's expected that the fund will be fully expended in 2024.

Description of restricted funds:

Bucket and Spade Appeal - Representing funds raised for breaks for UNISON families experiencing difficulty and distress.

CSIS Short Break - A contribution towards the cost of organising a 'healthy break' aimed at women suffering the effects of domestic abuse.

Silent Witness domestic abuse - Funds raised by UNISON's 2009-10 President for the purposes of offering respite breaks for UNISON women suffering the effects of domestic abuse.

2010 Centenary - These funds have been donated to help to subsidise the costs of activities associated with the centenary and beyond. These funds were donated in part to subsidise centenary associated and fundraising activities. The balance was provided for the purpose of delivering on any project linked to the programme of developing new services.

Make A Child Smile - Funds raised by UNISON's 2011-12 President for the purposes of offering breaks for children in need. The fund will not necessarily be restricted to UNISON members and the scope of activity will be dependent on the amount raised.

CHSA Healthcare Support Appeal - Grant received to meet hardship of UNISON members employed within the health services caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Energy Support Fund - Fund was established in 2022 to support UNISON members struggling with rising energy bills.

15. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Analysis of movement in funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	-
Investments	8,974,026	-	8,974,026
Net current assets	(105,077)	283,503	178,426
Total assets	8,868,949	283,503	9,152,452

Analysis of movement in funds – previous year

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	-
Investments	8,059,432	-	8,059,432
Net current assets	388,679	563,255	951,934
Total assets	8,448,111	563,255	9,011,366

16. RELATED PARTIES

As reported on page 3, the Board of Trustees are elected substantially from the UNISON NEC and the regional and branch network. The objects of the charity provide support to the members of UNISON and UNISON together with its branches donates the majority of the funding.

17. ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

The Charity benefits greatly from the involvement and support of its many volunteers, details of which are given in our annual report. In accordance with FRS 102 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the economic contribution of general volunteers is not recognised in the accounts due to the absence of any reliable measurement basis.

18. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023 £	2022 £
Net (expenditure)/income as per the statement of financial activities	141,086	<i>(928,339)</i>
Adjusted for:		
Impairment	-	63,751
Losses / (gains) on investments	(314,728)	1,159,976
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(253,760)	<i>(260,095)</i>
Decrease in loans to members in debtors	2,816	19,686
Increase in debtors	(16,863)	<i>(1,111)</i>
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	32,828	<i>(33,253)</i>
Net cash provided by/(Used in) operating activities	(408,621)	20,615

19. STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total £
INCOME				
Donations and legacies:				
Donation from UNISON	2	886,920	250,000	1,136,920
Donation from UNISON in kind	2	81,030	-	81,030
Other donations	2	225,002	267,362	492,364
Grants	2	-	50,000	50,000
Income from charitable activities:				
Providing advice and support to members and their dependants		1,697	-	1,697
Income from other trading activities:				
Lottery Income		124,696	-	124,696
Investment income	3	260,095	-	260,095
Total		1,579,440	567,362	2,146,802
EXPENDITURE				
Cost of raising funds:				
Generating voluntary income		48,829	-	48,829
Investment manager and other fees		43,250	-	43,250
Expenditure on charitable activities:				
Providing advice and support to members and their dependants	4	1,499,318	323,768	1,823,086
Total		1,591,397	323,768	1,915,165
Net (losses)/gains on investments		(1,159,976)	-	(1,159,976)
Net income/expenditure		(1,171,933)	243,594	(928,339)
Transfers between funds		-	-	-
Net Movement in funds		(1,171,933)	243,594	(928,339)
Reconciliation of funds:				
Funds brought forward		9,620,044	319,661	9,939,705
Balance carried forward		8,448,111	563,255	9,011,366

