



army  
families  
federation

# AFF annual report and accounts 2023/24

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# CHAIRS' FOREWORD

## Heather Key, outgoing Chair

I pen this foreword reflecting on my last year as Chair of AFF, having served as a Trustee for six years. This year has been one of significant change, as we said farewell to our Head of Policy, Michelle Alston following a decade of service with AFF, and Trustee Pari Spencer Smith. We have invested in our ability to analyse information that our beneficiaries share with us. Recently this has enabled AFF to provide evidence to the Modernised Accommodation Offer review, reflecting the views of all Army personnel and their families whatever their make-up or situation.

It has been a privilege to work with our staff and beneficiaries this year, during which we have taken steps to refine our strategy to develop for the next five years.

As part of our work in building these firm foundations, I am delighted to have welcomed three new Trustees who bring a wealth of experience to the Board.

Investment into our data capabilities this year has enabled us to provide evidence and support our third sector partners, for example in response to the changes in Minimum Income Requirements for visa applications.

## Abigail Boyle, incoming Chair

Having served alongside Heather on the Board for a number of years, I would like to take the opportunity to formally thank her for her leadership over this period. AFF now has very strong foundations for the future as we continue to develop our longer-term strategy to ensure no family is disadvantaged by Service.

As we look forward into the next phase of our work, to provide stronger evidence of the concerns of Army personnel and their families, I am confident in the professionalism of our staff team to deliver ever more ambitious outcomes for our beneficiaries. At the recent staff conference I was encouraged to hear from our Specialists about their ongoing work providing advice whilst gathering important evidence.



# TRUSTEE REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2023-2024

The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

### Vision

Our vision is for all soldiers and their families to feel valued and heard throughout their journey as an Army family.

### Mission

The AFF mission statement is:

AFF communicates, questions and influences policy at all levels to improve the lives of the serving and resettling British Army community across the world. We offer support, information and guidance to individuals and communities on issues that impact on the quality of their lives.

### Objectives

The objectives for 2023/24 were:

1. Listen to, respond to and support Army personnel and their families;
2. Provide information and guidance that empowers Army personnel and their families, recognises diversity and encourages resilience;
3. Gather robust evidence, using credible methods, to support and challenge change for Army personnel and their families;
4. Engage effectively with command and the MOD in order to promote the interest of the diverse range of Army personnel and their families;
5. Collaborate with public, private, and third sector to provide the support and service that Army personnel and their families need;
6. Influence change to policy, products and services that disadvantage Army personnel and their families;
7. Build a strong organisation in line with statutory guidelines and manage charitable funds effectively;
8. Promote an organisational culture that values diversity and tolerates differences by facilitating the recruitment, retention and promotion of individuals irrelevant of background, gender or ethnicity.
9. Run a change programme with external partner Trust Impact, focusing on evidence gathering processes and IT structure.

### Structure, governance and management

The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) governed according to the constitution dated 6 December 2017, (as amended on 11 May 2021 and 6 March 2024). It was established to take forward the work of the Unincorporated registered Charity number 291202.

## Activities

In 2023 work commenced with Trust Impact to undertake a theory of change and impact measurement. This work allowed us to:

### Theory of change:

- a. Focus on the difference we want to make, not what we do as an organisation.
- b. Better understand our beneficiaries' needs.
- c. Ensure organisational understanding about who we are and what we do.
- d. Clearly set out our activities and the rationale behind them.
- e. Align our strategies.
- f. More effectively measure impact and report on this.

### Impact measurement:

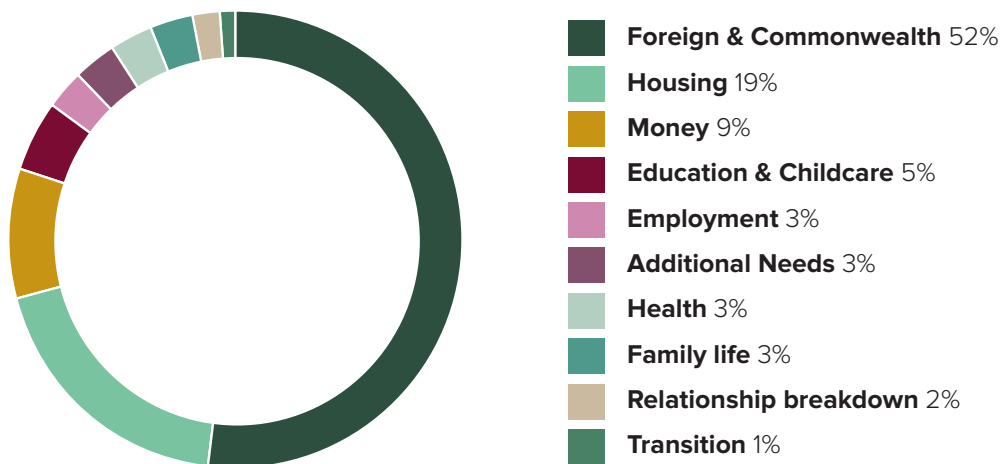
- a. Draft a strategy based on staff feedback and workshops.
- b. Test with beneficiaries who felt outcomes resonated with them.
- c. Feed directly into our measurement framework.
- d. Give clarity on the outcomes and impact we want to achieve for our families.
- e. Provide clarity and enable accountability to funders.

The work of Trust Impact, in co-ordination with the AFF Executive Team, also reviewed and identified a revised vision for the organisation, as highlighted on page 3.

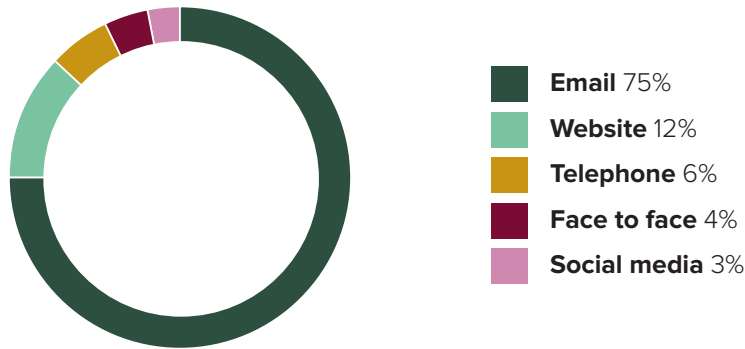
Our support to non-UK personnel and families remains our largest area of work, comprising more than 50% of enquiries, due to the unique support provided by our team of qualified immigration advisors and the complexity of the Armed Forces immigration rules. As a co-chair of the Cobseo Non-UK Cluster, we have been able to identify the key immigration issues facing non-UK family members and raised these with both the MOD and the Home Office.

Housing continued to be the focus of a significant number of enquiries. The announcement of the Modernised Accommodation Offer saw an increase in enquiries. The Specialist team continues to compile evidence to champion the views of all Army personnel and their families impacted by the proposed changes. Evidence supplied by AFF is being reviewed by policy teams ensuring that the views of Army personnel and their families are understood.

### Enquiry by category



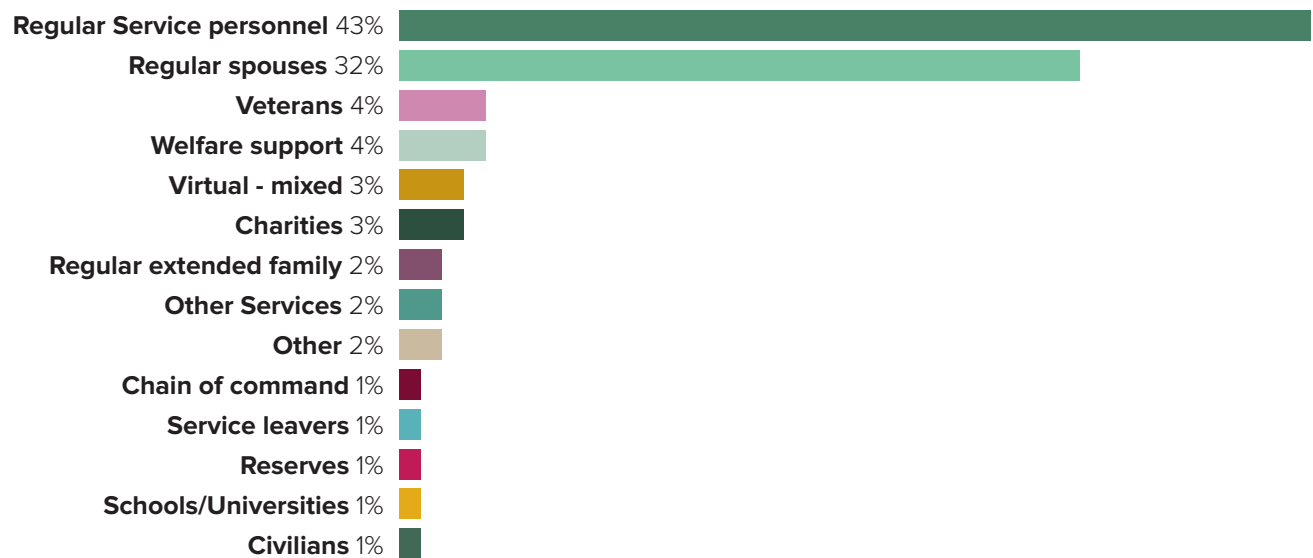
### How enquiries were received



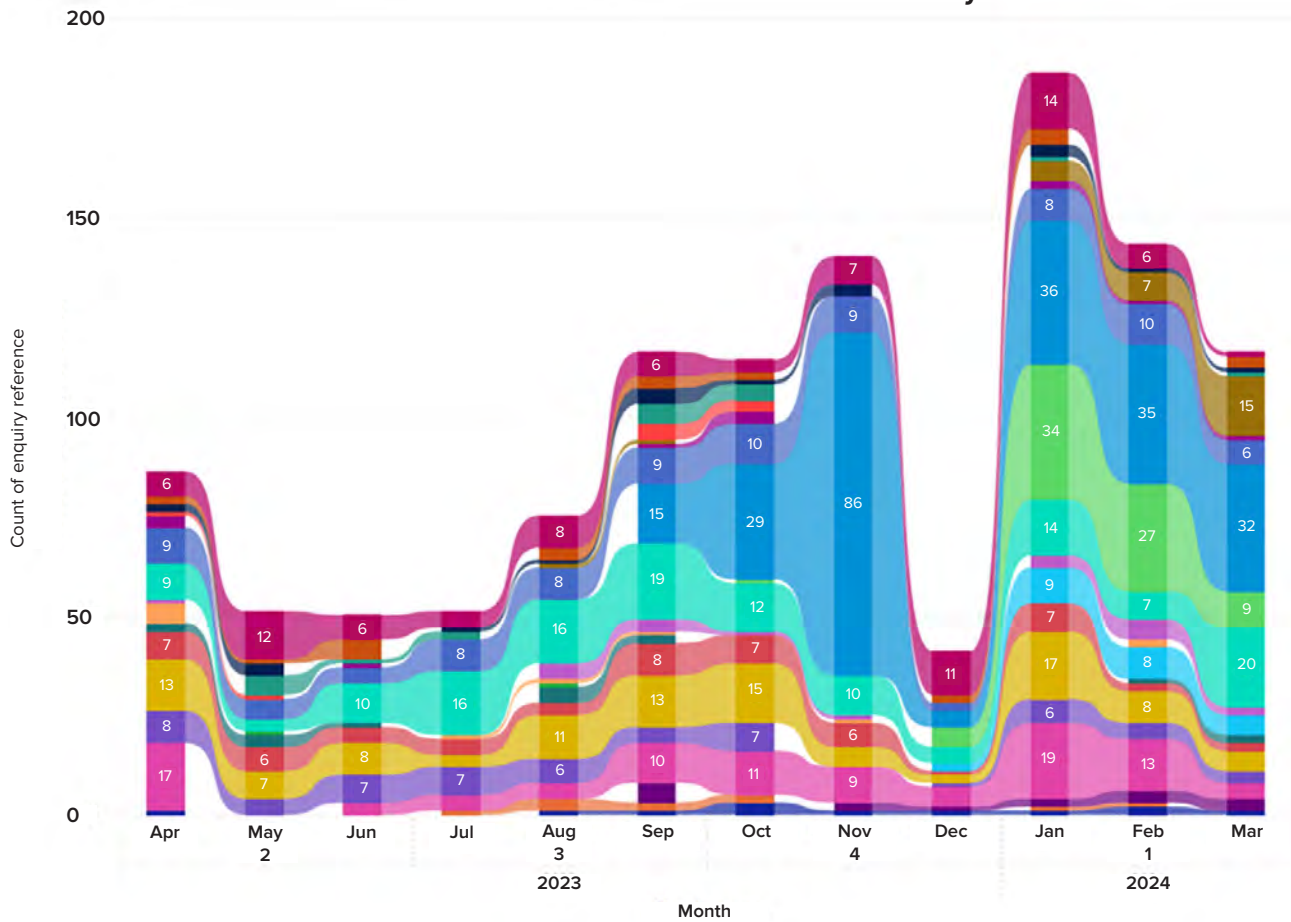
### Types of enquiry



### Enquirer type



## A selection of themes tracked across the financial year



- Army employment advice
- Brexit
- Civilian employment advice
- Communication
- Compensation
- Complaints
- Cost of living
- Armed Forces Covenant
- COVID-19
- Damp and mould
- Future Accommodation Model (FAM)
- Family-friendly policies/leave
- Long term relationships (LTR(E))
- Minimum Income Requirement (MIR)
- Modernised Accommodation Offer (MAO)
- Overseas employment
- Pay & Allowance Casework and Complaints Cell (PACCC)
- Royal British Legion cases
- Rebasing
- Return to UK
- Unit errors
- University/student finances
- Wellbeing

Supporting personnel and families with their money and allowances issues has been key, with AFF providing evidence to key departments within Army Command and the Ministry of Defence (MOD). We continue to see enquiries from Army personnel and their families in long-term relationships as policies have not kept pace with modern family structures, and from all Army personnel and their families on the growing complexities of allowance entitlements. We evidence these issues to the MOD.

Our work with Army personnel and their families on health and additional needs issues has continued to bring together key stakeholders across Defence, public health and NHS trusts, providing evidence to support new initiatives and access provision.

Spousal employment remains a key issue for our Army personnel and their families, particularly for those on overseas assignments. Army personnel and their families have highlighted a lack of clear guidance and advice on remote working and we continue to raise this with the MOD to ensure they are fully supported to make informed decisions about their employment and overseas postings. Forces Families Jobs continues to not only offer employment opportunities for partners and spouses, but also connects them to training and other options, such as apprenticeships or self-employment. It has also allowed us to raise spousal employment issues with both employers and policy makers.

Collaboration has been key in delivering positive change for soldiers and their families. For example, our Money & Allowances and Foreign & Commonwealth teams worked closely with the Army, providing evidence to the Home Office to support the MOD's discretion for the Minimum Income Requirement.

In order to deliver the most effective impact for our beneficiaries, we have implemented the recommendations of our impact review and theory of change. Full roll-out of our newly refined data gathering processes took place towards the end of the year, and a full review of our pilot measurements will be conducted in autumn 2024. We continue to work on securing appropriate funding to ensure continuity in the support we can give to all Army personnel and their families, however they choose to live. As modern family life evolves, the challenge for Service personnel and their families in navigating policies and processes, and accessing appropriate and timely support, continues to grow, even as overall numbers within the Army community have fallen slightly. We continue to work hard within AFF to identify and meet the changing needs of our beneficiaries, and to allow us to influence positive change in support of Army family life.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Within the organisation, there are four teams, who work together to meet our objectives.

The Policy & Research (P&R) team supports personnel and families with complex enquiries and issues relating to housing, education, childcare, health, additional needs, training, employment, allowances, money and Foreign & Commonwealth visa and immigration issues. By raising the issues and evidence from Army personnel and their families, we are able to ensure that their lived experience is considered as policy is developed.

One such example of evidencing these issues includes the submissions to the Scottish Government's consultation on changes to residency criteria for access to financial support in further education which resulted in the agreement to consider the situation of Forces families further. The Student Awards Agency Scotland has since revised its guidance to local authorities to clarify the entitlement of Service children to 16+ further education funding in Scotland in line with the reciprocal agreement.

The UK & Overseas team provides, through regionally-focused roles and a central enquiries team, day-to-day support to Army personnel and their families across the UK and overseas. This team works with the local chain of command, service deliverers and local authorities, and the governments of the devolved nations to ensure that Army family life is understood and supported in service delivery.

In 2023 the AFF Roadshow (Ask AFF) was launched, enabling local face-to-face information briefs for Army personnel and their families. The roadshows are tailored for local issues and update Army personnel and their families on key areas of work in which AFF is engaged. We are developing the AFF Roadshow model to provide a focal point for these discussions and to provide Service personnel and families with information on the support that is available to them in different locations, particularly the devolved nations and overseas.



Due to a continued demand for immediate engagement and support, AFF has continued to develop and improve online and telephone support, and to streamline internal enquiry handling processes. The enquiries team provides a single and reliable entry point for new enquiries from Service personnel and their families, and is now open Monday – Thursday 8.30am-5pm and Friday 8.30am-1pm. Enquiries are triaged and directed to the relevant Specialist teams, to ensure that Army personnel and their families can receive a timely response, and that resolution of their issues is achieved as efficiently as possible.

The Communications team provides the expertise within AFF to ensure that information and guidance is available to Army personnel and their families across a range of digital and hard copy material and media. Providing information and guidance to Army personnel and their families is one of AFF's key objectives, and this team leads that work with a focus on ensuring that information is accessible, appropriate and engaging. In 2023 we had 556,906 views on our website, reached more than 14,500 followers on Facebook, 9,490 on X, 2,650 on Instagram and 2,150 on LinkedIn. The regular quarterly editions of Army&You magazine were produced and delivered to an average of 35,000 families per edition. During the year the Communications team also ran a number of targeted evidence gathering social media posts and surveys.

The Operations team provides continuous support across AFF administration, finance, governance, IT, data protection and HR functions to ensure that the organisation remains 'fit to deliver'. In 2023-24 the team conducted a fundamental review of our IT structures, programs and data security with the support of external expertise. The resulting changes and improvements allowed AFF to successfully apply for Cyber Essentials certification and in addition, enable regular security health checks. The team has focussed on continual improvement of our IT platforms, data protection and cyber security processes, and internal IT support; ensuring that all internal policies and processes follow best practice for our size of Charity and that all statutory obligations are met in full; and that our workforce management is both professional and responsive to the needs of our team members. In 2023 the Board supported the proposal to conduct a full review and upgrade of AFF's CRM system, which would bring more advanced and timely evidence gathering to the fingertips of the team and better support tools, enabling improved evidence presentation delivery to stakeholders. Both Trust Impact and TES supported the Operations team with this work.

We have reviewed our performance against the needs of Army personnel and their families; these needs and how we've met them, are evident in our activities as described above.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### **Income & allocated funding**

AFF receives its main funding from MOD Grant in Aid (public money) and a charitable grant from the Army Central Fund. In addition to this core funding, AFF has received smaller, project specific funding from ABF, the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, Annington and the Royal British Legion. Details of this funding are at Note 13 to the Financial Statement.

### **Total funds**

At the end of the financial year, AFF held funds of £1,124,929 with £637,076 being held in the Armed Forces Charities Growth and Income Fund (AFCGIF).

At 31 March 2024, AFF had unspent restricted funds (funds committed to a specific project or event) of £47,763.

### **Investment powers**

The constitution permits the investment of monies not immediately required for the objects of the CIO.

### **Investment performance**

AFF holds its reserves in units of the AFCGIF, a mixed asset class Charity Authorised Investment Fund (CAIF) managed by BlackRock Investment Managers. The fund has an advisory committee, which oversees the investment performance and governance of the AFCGIF. AFCGIF offers two types of units to Armed Forces charities' investors – accumulation (reinvestment) units and distribution (income) units.

AFF currently holds only accumulation units (which reinvest income into the fund).

At 31 March 2024, the total value of investments was £637,076 and during the year, £24,967 (2023 £26,884) was reinvested.

AFF's holding in the Armed Forces Charities Growth and Income Fund reported a net unrealised gain, after taking into account the reinvested income, of £11,232. This reflects the stabilising of the financial markets which was seen towards the end of the previous financial year, after a period of volatility in the UK markets coupled with political instability which had caused a drop in the value of AFF's investments. The investment fund has consistently performed well since its inception in 2012 and overall continues an upward growth.

The Trustees continue to actively monitor AFF's investments and regularly review the appropriateness of the fund. A full review of the Investment policy was undertaken during the financial year.

### Investment risk management

The Trustees constantly review the investment and the investment risks to which AFF may be exposed. Their overall assessment of specific risk to the CIO is low. The Trustees are confident that the AFCGIF overall widespread investment strategy, which encompasses many different asset classes, is sound. The Trustees feel that the investment of the CIO, namely its reserves which are currently held in AFCGIF accumulation units, are sufficiently well diversified and are likely to provide long-term capital growth.

The CAIF has an advisory committee which continues to oversee the investment performance and governance of AFCGIF.

The fund is managed by BlackRock Investment Management (UK) (BRIM) under a charity authorised investment fund (CAIF) managed by BlackRock Financial Management.

### Reserves policy

AFF is run as a charitable incorporated organisation and is responsible for all internal functions including employment practices and payment of wages, employee insurance and liability, direct and indirect running costs and project capital.

The Trustees continued to monitor the reserves policy during the financial year to ensure it was relevant, adequate and reflected current best practice across the sector and takes into account AFF's key current risks.

The CIO's policy is to hold reserves for the following purposes:

- Flexibility of cash flow to support expenditure between deliveries of income.
- A minimum of six months' basic running costs in the eventuality of the CIO either losing its primary sources of income, or having to close down completely. A sum of around £709,000 would be optimal based on AFF budgets for the next three years.

### Reserves

In line with the above policy at 31 March 2024, optimal general reserves stand at £693,115. At the year end, the CIO is holding **general reserves** of £930,826. The reserves built up as a result of the unexpected and prolonged reduction in activity levels as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Trustees have a three-year fully supported programme of investments in strategic data gathering and assessment which will bring the reserves levels in line with the optimal amount.

As part of this work and to support AFF's strategy and the resulting three-year budget, the Trustees hold **designated reserves** to underpin AFF's strategic goals.

- a. IT projects/improvements – to support the current work and ongoing work to AFF's database and Cyber Security, £13,640 was spent during the financial year on continued improvements to the database. A further £65,550 has been carried forward for planned improvements in the next three years.
- b. Impact measurement – to support the work started with Trust Impact and any other work deemed necessary as a result going forward. A further £65,000 was transferred in-year from general reserves. Of this, £39,962 was spent by the end of the financial year.

In addition, the CIO is holding **restricted reserves** of £47,763, which are not available for the general purposes of the CIO. This represents the ongoing first year of work of the three-year project with the Royal British Legion developing AFF's support of our families through our Foreign and Commonwealth team.

## PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIOD

2023/24 saw significant investment into AFF's data gathering and analysis. A key focus of the Trustees' future plans includes a regular programme of data collection to evidence and champion key issues facing Army personnel and their families. In 2024/25 in particular this will inform the new government, by best representing the views of Army personnel and their families, maintaining insights on core issues and amplifying these voices both to the new government and other stakeholders. An equally important focus is regular, timely engagement with Army personnel and their families wherever they are, ensuring our communications are informative and accessible. AFF strives to ensure Army personnel and their families are confident in the information and advice provided. The impact information being gathered will also enable the Trustees to explore wider and more sustainable funding opportunities and to strengthen relationships with our core funders, developing multi-year funding relationships. This will allow greater investment in longer-term projects supporting Army personnel and their families. We will continue to commit to the continuing professional development of all staff with regular training events, both virtual and in person.

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

### Trustees

The AFF Board sets the strategic direction and is responsible for ensuring that AFF upholds its values and governance, and delivers its objectives. The Board offers guidance, advice and support to the Chief Executive.

In 2023 the AFF Board increased capacity to 12 Trustees and appointed three new Trustees in December 2023. The Board met three times during the reporting period and they communicated frequently between meetings, holding regular sub committees between full Board meetings.

The AFF Trustees' Code of Practice document and Trustee role responsibilities are reviewed annually.

### Trustee appointments

The appointment of Trustees is governed by the Army Families Federation Constitution, which states that the Chair of the Board shall appoint Trustees, with the majority agreement of the rest of the Trustees. Appointments are for an initial period of three years. Following this first term, Trustees can be re-elected for a further term of three years. If required due to exceptional circumstances, Trustees may serve one additional and final year. Trustee positions will be reviewed based on the skills, experience and knowledge required, and advertised on the AFF website and other advertising methods agreed by the Trustees, appropriate to the skills required by the position. The Chair, a Trustee and the Chief Executive interview candidates and a recommendation is made to the Board.

### Trustee induction and training

On appointment, each Trustee undergoes an induction programme tailored to their knowledge and experience. The Trustees deploy a wide range of skills and experience essential to good governance. Skills audits are regularly conducted to ensure an appropriate expertise across the Board.

New Trustees are provided with the NCVO Good Trustee Guide, the Charity's Constitution, minutes of the last Trustees' meeting, latest copy of the annual report accounts, risk assessment and business plan, and copies of all recent AFF publications. The Chair of Trustees and Chief Executive of AFF both invite new Trustees to meet them. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events.

### Executive Team (ET)

The day-to-day administration of the CIO is delegated to the Chief Executive and Executive Team. At the end of the reporting period, the Executive Team comprised the Chief Executive, the Operations Director and the Head of Finance. The Policy Director resigned during the reporting period and a new Head of Policy was appointed in April 2024.

The way that AFF is governed fully complies with the Charity Governance Code.

The Executive Team sets AFF policies as endorsed by the Trustees.

## **Committees**

The Board of Trustees works with two subcommittees, the Finance and Remuneration Committee and the Risk and Governance Committee.

The aim of AFF's committees is to examine the recommendations of the Chief Executive and the Executive Team in order to take forward and ratify recommended actions.

The committees also carry out the detailed work, which is then recommended to the full Board of AFF Trustees for approval.

## **Employees**

The employees are line managed by the Chief Executive and the directors, either as direct reports or indirectly through their line managers.

## **Remuneration to key management personnel**

An annual review of all staff remuneration is carried out by the Finance and Remuneration Committee, which consists of a sub-set of the Trustee Board, the Chief Executive, the Head of Finance and the Operations Director. Recommendations for this committee for any staff increases are put to the full Trustee Board for their approval. Remuneration of the Chief Executive is set by the Trustees.

## **Our charitable objectives**

The Constitution of the CIO is laid down in the Army Families Federation Constitution adopted on 7 December 2017 (as amended on 11 May 2021 and 6 March 2024).

The objects of the Federation are:

1. Promotion of social inclusion and military efficiency, for the public benefit, by assisting in the prevention of Army personnel and their families being disadvantaged through military Service.
2. Such other charitable purposes for the general benefit of Army personnel and their families as the Trustees from time-to-time think fit.

## **Public benefit statement**

The Trustees have given due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on reporting public benefit when planning the Charity's activities.

The paragraphs on pages 3-8 set out the CIO's objectives, activities, achievements and performance during the year, which directly relate to the objects and purposes for which the CIO exists. The CIO achieves its objects and purposes through a series of projects and services to deliver employment, training, housing and welfare support to Army personnel and their families. The benefits of this support are fully compliant with the Charity Commission principles on public benefit.

## **Risk management**

Throughout 2023/24 the Risk and Governance Committee continued to refine risk management processes enabling the Board to manage the risks and associated mitigations in a more effective way. The fundamental review of risk management undertaken in 2022/23 has enabled AFF to update its risk management processes and register to ensure it is more aligned to strategic and dynamic risk capture. In doing so, we significantly reduced the number of risks the Board was managing. Our Trustees are satisfied that the new risk management process delivers a more effective picture to support their decision making and welcome the new process. The risk register and risk heat map are reviewed at all Trustee Board meetings. The Chief Executive reports on key movement in risk, and mitigations that are identified and actioned. The Executive Team reviews and assesses risks as they arise and routinely as part of the monthly Strategic Executive meeting. The safeguarding register is reviewed monthly by the Executive Team and approved by the Trustees as required.

## REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

### REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER

1176393 (England and Wales) | SC048282 (Scotland)

### CHARITY OFFICES

Army HQ, Ramillies Building, Marlborough Lines, Monxton Road, Andover, SP11 8HJ

### PATRON

HRH The Duchess of Gloucester GCVO

### TRUSTEES

Heather Key (resigned as Chair 2 July 2024)  
Abigail Boyle (appointed as Chair 2 July 2024)  
James Banks (appointed 13 December 2023)  
Julia Rogers (appointed 13 December 2023)  
Mark Watkins  
Nicola Scarr (appointed 13 December 2023)  
Pari Spencer Smith (resigned 13 December 2023)  
Paul Collard  
Vicki Wentworth

### SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Collette Musgrave – Chief Executive  
Michelle Alston – Director of Policy and Research (resigned September 2023)  
Paddy Bleakley MBE – Director of Operations and Engagement  
Vivienne Franklin – Head of Finance  
Rachel Smith - Head of Policy (appointed April 2024)

### INVESTMENT MANAGERS

BlackRock Investment Management (UK) Ltd, 12 Throgmorton Avenue, London EC2N 2DL

### AUDITORS

Azets Audit Services, Athenia House, 10 – 14 Andover Road, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 7BS

### BANKERS

Barclays Bank Plc, Leicester LE87 2BB

Signed by order of the Trustees:



Mrs Abigail Boyle  
Chair of the Trustees  
Approved by the Board of Trustees on 12 December 2024

## ARMY FAMILIES FEDERATION

### REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES for the year ended 31 March 2024

#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England, Wales, and Scotland requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- 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;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charity Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), and the provisions of the trust deed. 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.

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

Signed by order of the Trustees



Mrs Abigail Boyle  
Chair of the Trustees  
Army Families Federation  
Approved by the Board of Trustees on 12 December 2024

## ARMY FAMILIES FEDERATION

### REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE TRUSTEES OF ARMY FAMILIES FEDERATION

We have audited the financial statements of Army Families Federation (the 'Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, 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 regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

#### **Basis for opinion**

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

#### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

#### **Other information**

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

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### **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 require 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
- the Charity has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; 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 the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to the 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 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with regulations made under section 154 of that Act.

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.

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

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the Charity through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.
- Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Audit/Audit-and-assurance/Standards-and-guidance/Standards-and-guidance-for-auditors/Auditors-responsibilities-for-audit/Description-of-auditors-responsibilities-for-audit.aspx](http://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Audit/Audit-and-assurance/Standards-and-guidance/Standards-and-guidance-for-auditors/Auditors-responsibilities-for-audit/Description-of-auditors-responsibilities-for-audit.aspx). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### **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.

*Azets Audit Service*

Azets Audit Services (Statutory Auditor)  
Athenia House  
10 – 14 Andover Road  
Winchester SO23 7BS

Dated: *23 December 2024*

Azets Audit Services is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.



ARMY FAMILIES FEDERATION  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024			2023
		£ Unrestricted	£ Restricted	£ Total	£ Total
<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE</b>					
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>					
Donations and grants	2	1,090,663	293,047	1,383,710	1,098,423
Other income		52	-	52	243
Investment income	3	29,053	-	29,053	27,986
<b>Total income</b>		<b>1,119,768</b>	<b>293,047</b>	<b>1,412,815</b>	<b>1,126,652</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE FROM:</b>					
Charitable activities	7	1,125,065	274,985	1,400,050	1,314,492
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>1,125,065</b>	<b>274,985</b>	<b>1,400,050</b>	<b>1,314,492</b>
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) BEFORE GAINS AND LOSSES</b>		<b>(5,297)</b>	<b>18,062</b>	<b>12,765</b>	<b>(187,840)</b>
Net gains on investments	11	11,232	0	11,232	(74,208)
<b>NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>5,935</b>	<b>18,062</b>	<b>23,997</b>	<b>(262,048)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward at 1 April 2023		1,071,231	29,701	1,100,932	1,362,980
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 March 2024</b>		<b>1,077,166</b>	<b>47,763</b>	<b>1,124,929</b>	<b>1,100,932</b>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

The notes form part of these financial statements

ARMY FAMILIES FEDERATION

BALANCE SHEET

31 March 2024

		2024		2023	
	NOTES	£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS:</b>					
Tangible assets	8	6,407		20,228	
Investments	11	637,076		600,875	
			643,483		621,103
<b>CURRENT ASSETS:</b>					
Debtors	9	208,933		11,033	
Cash at bank and in hand		367,112		580,314	
		576,045		591,347	
<b>CREDITORS:</b> Amounts falling due within one year	10	(94,599)		(111,520)	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS:</b>			481,446		479,827
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES:</b>			<b>1,124,929</b>		<b>1,100,930</b>
<b>FUNDS:</b>					
Unrestricted funds: general reserve	12		930,826		936,288
Unrestricted funds: designated funds	12		146,340		134,942
Restricted funds	13		47,763		29,700
			<b>1,124,929</b>		<b>1,100,930</b>

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the members of the Board of Trustees on 12 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by Abigail Boyle (Chair).



.....  
Mrs Abigail Boyle  
Chair of the Trustees

Dated: 12 December 2024

The notes form part of these financial statements

ARMY FAMILIES FEDERATION

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

31 March 2024

		2024	2023
	NOTES	£	£
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>			
Net cash provided by operating activities	a	(217,287)	(135,814)
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Interest from investments		4,085	1,098
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-	-
Purchase of investment units		-	-
Proceeds from sale of investments		-	-
<b>CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>(213,202)</b>	<b>(134,716)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward at 1 April 2023	b	580,314	715,030
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 March 2024</b>	b	<b>367,112</b>	<b>580,314</b>
<b>a) Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities</b>			
		2024	2023
		£	£
Net (expenditure)/income for the year as per the Statement of Financial Activities		23,997	(262,048)
Adjusted for:			
Depreciation		13,821	14,226
(Gains)/Losses on investments		(11,232)	74,209
Interest from investments		(29,053)	(27,986)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors		(197,900)	(9,425)
Decrease in creditors		(16,920)	75,210
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>		<b>(217,287)</b>	<b>(135,814)</b>
<b>b) Analysis of cash and cash equivalents</b>			
		2024	2023
		£	£
Cash at bank and in hand		<b>367,112</b>	<b>580,314</b>

**ARMY FAMILIES FEDERATION**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

## **1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Accounting convention**

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 on the historical cost convention, except investment assets that are carried at market value. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Charities SORP FRS102.

The Trust constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102.

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern.

The following principal accounting policies have been consistently applied in preparing these financial statements which remain unchanged from the previous year.

### **Fund accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements. Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

### **Incoming resources**

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the Charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. Such income is only deferred when the donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting periods or when the donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the Charity has unconditional entitlement. For legacies, entitlement is the earlier of the Charity being notified of an impending distribution or the legacy being received.

Gifts in kind donated for distribution are included at valuation and recognised as income when they are distributed to the projects. Gifts donated for resale are included as income when they are sold. Donated facilities are included at the value to the Charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

### **Resources expended**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources.

### **Tangible fixed assets**

Expenditure on fixed assets over £1,000 is capitalised. Repair expenditure is written off as expenditure in the statement of financial activities. The cost of fixed assets is their purchase cost, together with any incidental costs of acquisition.

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Computer and office equipment - 33% on cost

### **Income and funds policy**

Voluntary income and donations are accounted for as received by the Charity.

### **Investments and investment income**

Investments are included at closing mid-market value at the balance sheet date. Any gain or loss on revaluation is taken to the statement of financial activities. Investment income is accounted for on an accruals basis.

### **Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

### **Value added tax**

Value added tax is not recoverable by the Charity, and as such is included in the relevant costs in the Statement of Financial Activities.

### **Governance costs**

Governance costs include all expenditure which is not directly related to the charitable activity. This includes salaries for administrative staff, auditors' remuneration and Trustees' meeting expenses.

### **Foreign currencies**

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate ruling at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are retranslated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. All differences are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities.

## 2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Grant in Aid (Public money funding)	575,000	562,190
Grant in Aid (additional)	0	15,000
Army Central Fund (non-public money)	510,318	504,644
Royal British Legion	170,047	
Army Benevolent Fund	58,000	-
British Forces Cyprus (Honorarium)	4,800	4,219
Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust	50,000	
Annington	15,000	-
Miscellaneous Donations	545	2,370
RAND	-	10,000
	<u>1,383,710</u>	<u>1,098,423</u>

## 3. INVESTMENT INCOME

The Charity's investment income arises from both interest bearing deposit accounts and dividends from the Accumulation Units held within the Armed Forces Charity Growth & Income Fund. Funds invested in the AFCGIF are in accumulation units where income is reinvested.

## 4. EXPENDITURE

Expenditure for the year is stated after charging:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration- for audit	<u>7,290</u>	<u>5,940</u>

## 5. PENSION COMMITMENTS

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme in respect of certain employees. The assets of the scheme are administered by Trustees in a fund independent from those of the Charity.

Contributions are charged in the Statement of Financial Activities as they fall due and amounted to £16,304 in the year (2023 - £17,105). At the balance sheet date there were outstanding contributions of £0 (2023 - £3,661).

## 6. STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	888,900	881,915
Employer's National Insurance	71,430	68,640
Employer's pension contributions	<u>16,304</u>	<u>17,105</u>
	<u>976,635</u>	<u>967,660</u>

The average number of employees during the year, calculated on a full-time equivalent basis, was as follows:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Core staffing	34	31
Governance	1	1
	<u>35</u>	<u>32</u>

The majority of AFF staff are part-time. This takes the actual number of employees to 39 (2023 - 38).

One employee received a salary between £80,000 and £90,000 in the year. (2023 one employee received a salary between £60,000 and £70,000 in the year)

The total amount paid to key management personnel in the year was £197,048 (2023 £207,727).

No remuneration was paid to Trustees, or persons closely connected with them, in the period. £152 was paid to Trustees for travel expenses in the period (2023 – no remuneration paid).

## 7. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE

	Staff salaries and costs £	Support costs £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Core staff	945,649	413,899	1,359,548	1,269,720
Governance costs	30,986	9,516	40,502	44,772
	<u>976,635</u>	<u>423,415</u>	<u>1,400,050</u>	<u>1,314,492</u>

The Federation occupies premises on MOD sites at no cost. Certain utility and premises costs are also provided free. It is not currently possible to quantify the value of these services so they have not been included in the accounts.

## 8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer and office equipment £
<b>COST:</b>	
At 1 April 2023	50,189
Additions	-
Disposals	-
At 31 March 2024	<u>50,189</u>
<b>DEPRECIATION:</b>	
At 1 April 2023	29,961
Charge for year	13,821
Eliminated on disposal	-
At 31 March 2024	<u>43,782</u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE:</b>	
At 31 March 2024	6,407
At 31 March 2023	<u>20,228</u>

## 9. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	174,847	8,000
Prepayments and accrued income	34,086	3,033
	<u>208,933</u>	<u>11,033</u>

## 10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	9,984	20,097
Accruals and deferred income	84,615	91,423
	<u>94,599</u>	<u>111,520</u>

## 11. INVESTMENTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance as at 1 April 2023	600,877	648,199
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
Reinvested income	24,967	26,884
Unrealised (Losses)/Gains	11,232	(74,208)
Listed investments as at 31 March 2024	<u>637,076</u>	<u>600,875</u>

The listed investment is held in Blackrock's Armed Forces Charities Growth and Income Fund.

## 12. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	General reserve £	Designated funds £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2023	936,289	134,942	1,071,231
Surplus for the year	59,537	(53,602)	5,935
Transfers between funds	(65,000)	65,000	-
Balance at 31 March 2024	<u>930,826</u>	<u>146,340</u>	<u>1,077,166</u>

## Designated Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Movement in funds			Balance at 31 March 2024
		Incoming resources	Transfers	Resources expended	
It Spend - Hardware	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
IT Projects/Improvements	79,190	-	-	13,640	65,550
Impact Measurement	25,752	-	65,000	39,962	50,790
	<u>134,942</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>	<u>53,602</u>	<u>146,340</u>

During the year, the Trustees reviewed the designated reserves to ensure that they continue to adequately support the Charity and its strategic aims. The designated funds comprise:

1. An annual amount (£30,000) committed by the Trustees to enable the improvement of IT hardware capabilities ensure these adequately support the Charity's work.
2. A reserve, to support IT projects and improvements.
3. A further reserve to support the Charity's work on its strategy and Impact measurement. A further £65,000 was committed in the year to support this ongoing work.

## 13. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The income funds of the Charity include restricted funds comprising the following balances of grants held on trust to be applied for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Movement in funds		Balance at 31 March 2024
		Incoming resources	Resources expended/transfers	
The Army Benevolent Fund	-	58,000	58,000	-
Royal British Legion	29,701	170,047	158,979	40,769
Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust	-	50,000	43,006	6,994
Annington	-	15,000	15,000	-
	<u>29,701</u>	<u>293,047</u>	<u>274,985</u>	<u>47,763</u>

Comparative information from the previous financial year as follows:

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Movement in funds		Balance at 31 March 2023
		Incoming resources	Resources expended/transfers	
The Army Benevolent Fund	45,000	-	45,000	-
GiA (additional funding)	503	15,000	15,503	-
Royal British Legion	132,301	-	102,601	29,700
LIBOR funding - 2018 (five-year)	44,856	-	44,856	-
Lloyd's Patriotic Fund	2,984	-	2,984	-
Forces Families Jobs funding	10,000	-	10,000	-
	<u>235,644</u>	<u>15,000</u>	<u>220,944</u>	<u>29,700</u>

### **The Army Benevolent Fund (ABF The Soldiers' Charity)**

The funding was provided to support AFF's work in supporting Army family life.

### **Royal British Legion**

The funding was provided to increase the capacity of the Foreign & Commonwealth team who provide visa and immigration advice to non-British UK Service personnel and their families, and push for change to Government and Defence policy and processes.

### **The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust**

Funding was received for a tri-Service project between the three Families Federations, on 'Positive Futures for Military Partners'. Its purpose was to undertake a review of current employment support available to spouses and partners and how the offer could be made to best meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

### **Annington**

The funding was provided to support military families living in Service Family Accommodation, to provide dongles for families with poor internet connections.

### **GiA (additional funding)**

The funding received in the financial year 2022/23 was provided to support the purchase of new IT equipment.

### **LIBOR funding**

The 2018 funding carried forward was made to support additional costs associated with supporting the rebasing of Army personnel and their families back to the UK and to support the employment of an additional Foreign & Commonwealth Assistant. This grant is to cover a five-year time period.

### **Lloyd's Patriotic Fund**

The grant was made to assist the Charity with continuing a project on domestic abuse in Foreign and Commonwealth families.

### **Forces Families Jobs funding**

Funding was received to support the initial set-up, launch event and ongoing support costs of the FFJ website from the following funders: The Army Benevolent Fund, Army Central Fund, Annington, Defence Relationship Management, Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, Royal Air Forces Association, and University of Wolverhampton.

## **14. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS**

	Fixed assets	Current assets	Current liabilities	Total net assets at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	643,483	381,942	(94,599)	930,826
Designated funds	-	146,340	-	146,340
Restricted funds	-	47,763	-	47,763
Balance at 31 March 2024	643,483	576,045	(94,599)	1,124,929



Comparative information from the previous financial year as follows:

	Fixed assets	Current assets	Current liabilities	Total net assets at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	621,103	426,705	(111,520)	936,288
Designated funds	-	134,942	-	134,942
Restricted funds	-	29,700	-	29,700
Balance at 31 March 2023	621,103	591,347	(111,520)	1,100,930

## THANKS TO OUR AFF FUNDERS

Army Central Fund  
 Grant in Aid  
 Army Benevolent Fund  
 Royal British Legion  
 LIBOR funds  
 Lloyd's Patriotic Fund  
 Annington  
 Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust





**Army Families Federation is a charitable incorporated organisation registered in England and Wales.**

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SC048282 (Scotland)**

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