

Department for Culture, Media and Sport



**NATIONAL CITIZEN
SERVICE TRUST**

**Annual Report and
Accounts 2022-2023**

For the period from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 6 of the National Citizen Service Act 2017

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 07 December 2023

HC 81



© Crown copyright, **2023**

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/official-documents.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at: pr@ncstrust.org.uk

ISBN 978-1-5286-4523-2
E03008536 11/23

Printed on paper containing 40% recycled fibre content minimum

Printed in the UK by HH Associates Ltd. on behalf of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office.

Contents

4 Foreword from the Chair

5 Statement from the CEO

7 Performance Report

7 Performance Overview

9 Performance Summary

11 Performance Analysis

30 Accountability Report

30 Corporate Governance Report

40 Governance Statement

44 Statement of Accounting Officer's
Responsibilities

45 Remuneration and Staff Report

58 Parliamentary Accountability
and Audit Report

59 The Certificate and Report of the
Comptroller and Auditor General
to the Houses of Parliament

63 Financial Statements and Notes



Foreword from the Chair



Harris Bokhari OBE

It is with feelings of both pride and humility that I write this, my first foreword to the Annual Report, as chair of the wonderful and important organisation that is NCS.

As a British-born Muslim of Pakistani descent, and the son of the first British Muslim to run a secondary school in the UK, the NCS vision of 'a country of connected, confident and caring citizens where everyone feels at home' is incredibly close to my heart. As the founder and trustee of a number of charities, I have been, for many decades, committed to integration and social mobility across society. I have dedicated my life to public service and, as a chartered accountant, I will ensure every penny spent will be focused on delivering the maximum return on impact.

NCS matters, now more than ever. The educational and social development of our country's young people has — and will continue to be — profoundly impacted by the pandemic, with cost of living pressures serving only to widen the attainment gap.

NCS has always believed in the power of youth to drive positive change in society, and my priority and main focus as chair will be to ensure we deliver meaningful impact with the voice of young people — particularly those young people we seek to serve — at the heart of everything we do.

In recent years, under the strong stewardship of our CEO Mark Gifford, NCS has developed a refreshed strategy that responds to the changing priorities and aspirations of young people. I am excited about this new strategy, offering a delivery model that makes NCS even more accessible to every young person — whenever, wherever and however they want to engage with us.

Young people today need champions. They need relatable role models and, as chair of the board of NCS Trust, I will be one of those champions for young people, whatever their background, challenges, or aspirations.

In our role as the only arm's length body of DCMS which has a dedicated focus on young people, I want us to continue to convene across the youth sector and government to amplify the support and opportunities for young people.

I want NCS to help to break down the barriers to opportunity that hold young people back. NCS can play a vital role in preparing young people for the future that lies ahead of them, supporting their creativity, resilience, emotional intelligence, growing their strengths, and building their ability to adapt. This will not only benefit young people themselves, but also enrich our communities and our society.

I am excited about supporting Mark and his team as they continue transforming NCS into what I passionately believe it should be — a transformative experience for every young person on the cusp of adulthood and a cornerstone of British society.

Harris Bokhari

Harris Bokhari OBE, (He/him)

Statement from the CEO



Mark Gifford

Reflecting on my third year as CEO of NCS, it's evident that our transformation has significantly enhanced our reputation and demonstrated our unwavering commitment to making young people world ready and work ready.

The passing of Queen Elizabeth II and the coronation of King Charles III marked a profound change in our country. NCS proudly played its role, with young volunteers actively supporting these historic national events.

Seeing hundreds of young people supporting the public at railway stations, major locations, and at the Royal Parks, was profoundly moving. Images of NCS youngsters in high-vis jackets helping thousands of mourners lay flowers in tribute to our late Queen, remain etched in my memory.

Equally remarkable was our participation in a national celebration that featured 50 NCS young people at St Margaret's Chapel on the day of the Coronation, symbolising the diverse population of modern Britain against the backdrop of centuries-old tradition and ceremony.

Within NCS itself, we witnessed a change in leadership as Harris Bokhari OBE took over as chair. We extend our gratitude to the outgoing chair, Brett Wigdortz OBE, for his exemplary leadership, and we wholeheartedly welcome Harris, who has already demonstrated his deep passion for working with young people.

When I took up my role, I talked about the need for NCS to change in order to remain relevant and impactful. The needs and attitudes of young people had changed. Advances in technology needed to be reflected in our strategy. The economic backdrop and government priorities needed to be considered. In 2020, we embarked on our transformation and we can now show some

of the benefits; a new portfolio of services, reduced trust costs, and greater numbers of young people participating in NCS experiences.

In FY 22/23, we successfully delivered against our strategic objectives:

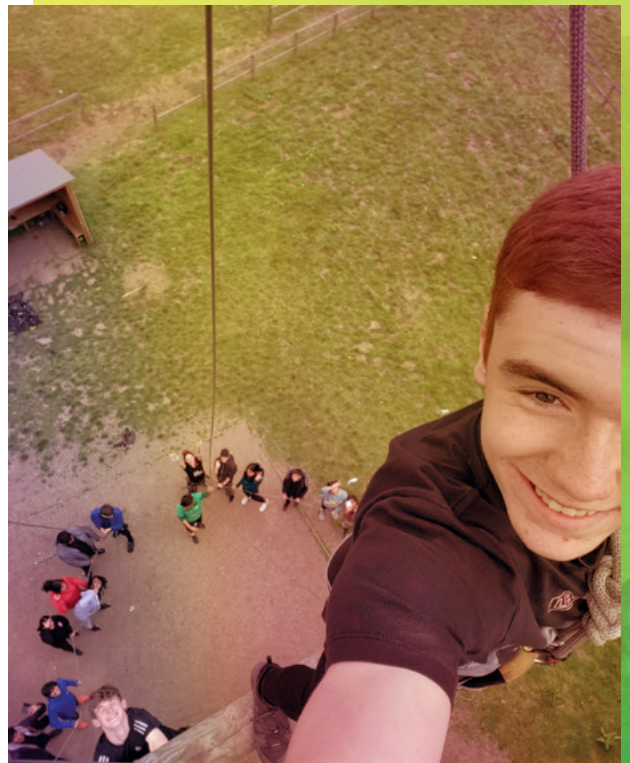
- » **Delivering high-quality services.** 121,019 young people engaged in NCS experiences across various service lines, including Residential, Skills Booster, and Changemakers. This figure is a historic high in NCS history. Importantly, 86% of participants reported that they were able to practise and develop three or more Skills Builder skills during their summer 2022 experience.
- » **Preparing for the future.** NCS Trust designed and commissioned a new strategy and offer for young people for 2023–2025, which now forms an integral part of the government's National Youth Guarantee. Our new approach allows young people to choose how they want to engage with NCS experiences, be it a five-day adventure away from home, local year-round community experiences, or online activities. This newfound flexibility offers young people more choice than ever before.
- » **Building strong partnerships.** One of my primary aims as CEO has been to establish robust and sustainable partnerships within the youth sector. We are proud to report that we have consistently worked, collaborated, and partnered with a diverse range of organisations throughout FY 22/23. In the next Annual Report, we will further delve into how our new strategy will continue to strengthen relationships across the sector, especially with grassroots youth organisations.

» **Transforming the Trust.** Recognising the need to adapt to support our new strategy post-COVID, we implemented a new delivery model for commissioning experiences. This combined contracting and grant funding to provide greater flexibility to partners and young people. We restructured our organisation to ensure that the trust is equipped to successfully deliver our new model. We extend our gratitude to all our colleagues for their professionalism and resilience during this transformative phase.

I am proud of everything that NCS has achieved during this necessary period of change, culminating in an ambitious strategy and updated offer appropriate to support young people in our changing post-pandemic world. I look forward to leading the trust into the next year and continuing to deliver our vision of *'a country of connected, confident and caring citizens where everyone feels at home'*.



Mark Gifford, (he/him)



Performance Report

Performance Overview

2022/23 Achievements

In 2022/23 over 120,000 young people took part in an NCS experience.

- » 21% of participants in summer and autumn programmes were eligible for free school meals compared to 19% of state secondary school pupils.
- » 9% of participants in summer and autumn programmes had SEND (EHC plan) compared to 2% of state secondary school pupils.
- » 33% of participants in summer and autumn programmes were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds compared to 26% of state secondary school pupils.
- » 28% of participants in summer and autumn programmes were from NCS Priority Areas compared to 25% of state secondary school pupils.

Having taken part in an NCS experience a young person feels more:

- » **Employable.** 86% of respondents felt they could practise and develop three or more Skills Builder skills during their summer 2022 experience.
- » **Able to give back.** 75% of respondents think that the likelihood of engaging in volunteering and/or social action in the future increased as a result of their summer 2022 residential experience.
- » **Connected.** 80% of respondents report feeling more positive towards people from different backgrounds to themselves, following the summer 2022 programme.

Overview of NCS Purpose and Activities

NCS offers a range of experiences for young people which support them to become world ready and work ready by growing their confidence, independence and skills, connecting them with people from all walks of life, and empowering them to make a difference in their communities and wider society.

Our vision is of *'a country of connected, confident and caring citizens where everyone feels at home'*.

Through NCS experiences, we want young people to have greater confidence, resilience, and wellbeing, and feel able to have an impact on their world while having respect and tolerance for difference and diversity.

NCS is run by NCS Trust, a body incorporated by Royal Charter pursuant to the National Citizen Service Act (2017). NCS is governed by a diverse board of trustees. The NCS programme is almost entirely funded by HM Government, through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), as a core part of the [National Youth Guarantee](#), with the trust having responsibility for commissioning and overseeing the delivery of the programme.

Strategic Objectives

We have clearly defined objectives for 2022/23, as described in our Annual Business Plan.

- » Deliver high-quality and high-impact services in 2022.
- » Prepare for and commission the new national offer for 2023 and beyond.
- » Build capabilities and strengthen collaboration with the youth sector.
- » Continue to transform NCS Trust.

In order to meet these objectives, NCS has continued its journey of transformation. In 2022/23 NCS delivered a high-impact service portfolio while

designing a new strategy for 2023 in partnership with DCMS.

After the COVID-19 lockdowns and almost two years of restricted movement, 2022/23 represented a return to normality and NCS offered in-person residential experiences for young people. To deliver our new strategy and offer from 2023, we re-commissioned our services, distributed grants for the first time, and explored our role as an outcomes-focused commissioner providing greater flexibility to partners and young people.

Our Services

For 2022/23, NCS Trust continued to build on learnings from the pandemic to best meet the needs of young people — supporting them to become active citizens, learn skills for life, and connect with their communities and people from different backgrounds.

- » **Summer & Autumn Experiences.** These programmes involve a trip away from home, bringing together young people from different backgrounds.
- » **Skills Booster.** NCS content is delivered in schools and other educational settings. The content focuses on personal development, volunteering, and social action.
- » **Changemakers.** These accessible monthly community action groups, which are available in every local authority, empower young people to get involved in the social action projects that are important to them and their community.
- » **UK Year of Service.** These 9–12 month work placements, which are based in local communities, are paid at the real Living Wage.¹
- » **NCS Connect (now NCS Blog).** This digital hub created for young people, and contributed to by young people, focuses on the issues they care about most.
- » **Winter Residential.** A one-week residential programme in February and March 2023.

¹ UK Year of Service is funded by the NCS Trust Community Interest Company (NCS CIC, [now known as UK Year CiC]) and run by NCS Royal Charter Body (RCB) acting as the 'National Partner'.

Performance Summary

This section provides a summary of our performance against objectives for 2022/23. A full overview of our performance against the KPIs is included in the Performance Analysis section of this report.

Objective: Deliver high quality and high impact services in 2022

- » **Summer & Autumn Experiences.** 46,753 young people benefited from the summer programme and 4,195 from the autumn programme. They enjoyed adventure activities, learned life skills, met new people, and supported their local communities. The Summer Impact Survey found that:
 - Young people felt more confident meeting new people after having done the programme (13 pp increase).
 - The life satisfaction of young people increased after having done the programme (6 pp increase).
- » **Skills Booster.** 17,023 young people completed 15 hours of sessions delivered by network partners, and NCS Trust resources were downloaded by educators and used in lessons with an estimated 47,605 young people. Topics covered personal development themes such as citizenship and British values, careers guidance, health and wellbeing, and skills for independent living.
- » **Changemakers.** 9,396 young people took part in 73,474 hours of social action and volunteering activities with Changemakers. The Changemakers projects cover a broad range of topics and approaches which are aligned to the interests of young people and the needs of their communities.
- » **UK Year of Service.** In addition to our existing 278 UK Year of Service participants, we supported an extra 58 young people into work that's grounded in local communities — across healthcare, public service and environmental sectors.

- » **NCS Connect (now NCS Blog).** 101,148 young people (including 22,426 returning visitors) engaged with short-form content on the NCS blog, accessing opinion pieces, debates, life lessons and advice, creativity challenges, features, and stories. The NCS social media channels had 1.2 million engagements across a range of content.

Feedback from our Brand Tracker has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly around social action:

- 84% of respondents agreed that the NCS blog has given them ideas and opportunities to volunteer in their local community.
- 81% of respondents agreed that the NCS blog has helped them to develop their skills.

- » **Winter Residential.** 2,750 young people took part in a one-week 'Winter Residential' programme in February and March 2023. The programme focused on young people who do not usually engage with NCS, and it aimed to develop their life skills.

Objective: Prepare for and commission the new national offer for 2023 and beyond

Alongside delivering impactful experiences to over 120,000 young people in 2022/23, NCS was also preparing and commissioning a new strategy and offer for 2023-2025. To support this, NCS designed a new delivery model for commissioning experiences through both contracting and grant funding. This will provide greater flexibility to partners and young people. NCS connected with hundreds of organisations during in-person and virtual market engagement events, and we will be working with over 300 partners to deliver a range of experiences. Designed in partnership with DCMS, the strategy and offer have youth voice at their heart.

Objective: Build capabilities and strengthen collaboration with the youth sector

NCS is continuing to build on the rich expertise in the youth sector, working with and learning from a broad range of partners who deliver the experiences. We have convened stakeholders on key issues for young people, and contributed to youth insights as well as being a trusted voice and partner in the sector.

NCS Trust co-hosted a roundtable on enrichment and non-formal learning with the Department for Education in partnership with The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This has led to significant engagement from the education, youth sector, and government.

NCS Trust has been working actively with DCMS and other youth sector organisations to create the foundations for a Youth Work Evidence Alliance, influencing and inputting into creating shared outcomes across the youth sector as well as providing secretariat support for the Back Youth Alliance, a strategic alliance of national youth sector organisations.

NCS Trust responded to a consultation led by the Department for Education on Skills for Jobs, highlighting UK Year of Service as a positive example of new, tangible, employer or employability-focused non-qualification provision.

Objective: Continue to transform the trust

To ensure that NCS Trust is set up to deliver the new strategy and offer we have continued to transform the trust, finishing the year with a 25% year-on-year reduction in headcount.

The restructure ensures that the organisation is set up to best support the new delivery model, addressing any inefficiencies. Internal governance structures and ways of working have also evolved. A new People Plan was designed to build our collective culture, prioritising reward and recognition, work planning, and learning and development. Our Youth Voice Forum continued to play an integral role in decision-making at the trust, with young people involved in the appointment of the new chair of the board for the first time. Our Employee Voice Forum continued to evolve and influence, building relationships with staff, senior leadership, and the board.

Performance Analysis

The purpose of this section is to provide a detailed overview of NCS performance against its objectives, and provide an overview of financial performance, and a detailed examination of the trust's risk profile and commentary on sustainability, equality, and environmental matters. NCS Trust agreed a set of KPIs with DCMS to measure performance in 2022/23.

- » Scale & Reach
- » Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness
- » Customer Experience
- » Social Benefit & Impact
- » Quality



	Metric	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Indicative Result	Comments
Scale & Reach Generate demand to fill places across the NCS portfolio of services, and improve retention of participants	Number of young people participating in NCS programmes	TOTAL: 102,780 60,500 Summer and autumn programmes, plus Network Skills Booster 40,000 Trust Skills Booster 2,250 Changemakers 30 UK Year of Service (new enrolments this year)	TOTAL: 121,019 67,971 Summer and autumn programmes, plus Network Skills Booster 47,605 Trust Skills Booster 9,396 Changemakers 58 UK Year of Service 2,750 Winter Residential	Total participation represents, as far as possible, unique young people. Those who took part in both summer and autumn programmes and Changemakers are only counted once in this total. Those who participated in Skills Booster as well as summer or autumn programmes may be counted twice, as records are not captured at individual young person level. The 'Winter Residential' participants are included in the total figure but did not have a separate target from DCMS.
	NCS participants vs. population: FSM, SEND, Black, Asian and minority ethnic	NCS participation over-indexes on all measures	21% of NCS summer and autumn participants were eligible for free school meals compared to 19% of state secondary school pupils. 9% of NCS summer and autumn participants had SEND (EHC plan) compared to 2% of state secondary school pupils. 33% of NCS summer and autumn participants were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds compared to 26% of state secondary school pupils.	
	NCS participation vs. population: Priority Areas	NCS participation over-indexes	28% of participants in summer and autumn programmes were from NCS Priority Areas compared to 25% of state secondary school pupils.	'Priority Areas' include Opportunity Areas, Integration Areas, and the lowest 20% of areas as ranked by Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

	Metric	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Indicative Result	Comments
<p>Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness</p> <p><i>NCS Trust to increase value for taxpayers</i></p>	Spend vs. budget	Spend at or below the budget of: Admin costs, £12.4M Programme costs, £59.7M	Actual costs: Admin costs, £11.9m Programme costs, £59.9m	Favourable administration variance is primarily due to litigation and TUPE provisions that until NCS2.0 exit management had concluded and Residential 2023 contracts had been signed (March 2023) couldn't have been released. Small overspend in programme relates to additional delivery, primarily One Million Mentors.
<p>Customer Experience</p> <p><i>How likely young people are to recommend NCS</i></p>	Net Promoter Score of Summer & Autumn programmes (Young Person)	55	45	<p>There are a range of factors that drove a lower NPS score, and the trust has scrutinised in detail. The factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointment in actual experience versus expectation. For example, the programme didn't match what participants thought it would be (informed by previous experiences of their friends and family). Some of the differences to what they expected included the length of the programme, types of activities, and size/impact of the social action projects. Their disappointment also occurred as a result of comparisons between programmes in the same year — the fact that each programme was different opened up the opportunity for disappointment. Note that disappointment drives negative feedback more than mediocre quality. • Young people requiring more support post-lockdown. Some examples include young people having lower resilience and more challenging behaviours. • Staff. There was some inconsistency with how staff applied the rules. For example, young people knew/saw the rules being applied differently for different groups, particularly around social distancing and mixing. Staff also needed more support in handling challenging young people, which disrupted the experience of other young people and sometimes distracted leaders from spending time with the rest of the group.

	Metric	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Indicative Result	Comments
Social benefits & impact <i>NCS Trust to ensure the programme is impacting participants positively</i>	Skills Builder % of young people who developed three or more Skills Builder skills <i>Volunteering/social action</i> <i>% of young people responding positively to the question "How much more or less likely are you to continue volunteering or doing social action locally?"</i>	Propose using 2021 results as a benchmark, with a 3pp margin to allow for potential outliers in the initial year of data. 2021 Results Skills Builder Summer: 83% Volunteering/social action Summer: 78% Positive towards different backgrounds Summer: 74%	Skills Builder 86% Volunteering/social action 75% Positive towards different backgrounds 80%	These are final findings from the evaluation of the summer 2022 residential programme, which involved a pre- and post-survey. Please note that the summer 2021 residential evaluation was conducted using a post-survey. This difference in methodology is an important caveat when comparing both sets of findings. The impact of the autumn 2022 residential was not evaluated due to resource constraints.
	<i>Positive towards different backgrounds</i> <i>% of young people agreeing with the statement "I now feel more positive towards people from different backgrounds to myself"</i>			
Quality <i>NCS Trust to ensure delivery of high quality and socially mixed programmes</i>	Completion of summer and autumn programmes	85%	90%	
	Health, Safety, and Safeguarding pre-programme assessments	100% of regions 'pass' pre-programme assessment (score of 80% or more)	100% (9/9) regions 'passed' pre-programme assessments (scored 80% or more)	The average score was 95.91% and all 9 regions significantly improved their scores from 2021/ 2022 (where the average score was 83.88%). There were 0 'non-conformity' scores across the assessments

Achievements of Young People

At NCS Trust we are proud of the inspirational young people who participate in NCS experiences. Here are just a few examples of what our amazing participants have achieved.

Kitty Connolly (she/her), 17, London

Kitty joined an NCS programme in autumn 2022 and, after a few busy days of team building and skills training, she and her teammates started to plan ideas for a social action project. Kitty shared about her aunt who had lived with dementia, and the group decided to create knitted patchwork fidget blankets for elderly people at a care home in Kentish Town.

The blankets aimed to trigger memories and stimulate senses. One resident, James, said, *“I enjoyed the visit and didn’t want it to end. The gift and the visit were lovely and delightful. We talked about different subjects and I think they enjoyed it too.”* Kitty said, *“Our project opened my eyes to social issues and allowed me to fight for a difference in a way that I know best, through my creative outlets. Knowing that I am making a difference, even if only for a day, is an indescribably rewarding feeling.”*

Jake Curbison (he/him), 17, Gateshead

Jake is an avid volunteer, donating his time to work with St. John Ambulance and as a youth ambassador for his local council. Having taken part in NCS in 2021, Jake answered the call to join as a volunteer at the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Pageant celebrations, where he looked after VIP guests.

At the event, Jake met another Platinum Jubilee volunteer and together they co-founded an initiative called the All Boys Campaign, with an aim to encourage young males to become part of the solution in combating peer-to-peer sexual abuse in schools. Jake said, *“Volunteering has given me an insight into a whole new world — it’s opened my eyes to different cultures and religions, and given me a whole new perspective whilst also gaining valuable and much needed real world experience.”*

Tilly Guest (she/her), 17, Stockton-on-Tees

Tilly started volunteering regularly in 2022 after joining her local NCS Changemakers team, and she quickly developed a passion for helping others. She played a major role in setting up different events and fundraisers to help various charities and causes across Stockton-on-Tees, including revamping a family room at a domestic violence refuge.

Tilly’s most hard-hitting project was one that had a close personal connection. Last summer she led a team of young volunteers on a donation drive for the North Tees Chemotherapy Ward where they raised over £1,000 to provide care packages for the patients and nurses on the ward. Tilly said, *“The project held deep meaning for myself and other members of the team who had seen family members in the same ward to receive treatment. For me, this was my father who lost his battle in December of 2018. Now I think about him every time I achieve anything and think of how proud he would be to see me today.”*

Her volunteering exploits in 2022 helped Tilly win NE Youth’s Young Volunteer of the Year award, and she’s since become a young community panel member for The Key, which helped fund one of her team’s projects.



NCS Blog: Writers' Club

Writers' Club is made up of young people (aged 15 to 24 years old) from across the country who contribute regular written pieces for the blog on topics that matter to them — from mental health, race and gender equality, to climate change, books, movies, life hacks, and body confidence (and anything else within our writing guidelines). With over 60 written pieces submitted, the young writers have been an inspiration and a voice for other young people.

Ryan, a Writers' Club member, said, "I've had the privilege to write a range of blogs on some really interesting topics, including 'Why I Love Being Extroverted' and 'LGBTQIA+ Onscreen Characters Who Are Much More Than Their Sexuality'. It's not only helped me grow as a writer, but as a person too.

One of the most obvious things about being part of Writers' Club is that it's helped develop my writing skills. From being able to write better emails to my teachers, to journaling and writing creative short stories in my free time, I've learned the importance of language and tone depending on what you're writing. All of this has helped me to start writing my own psychological thriller novel.

While Writers' Club didn't directly 'fix' my mental health, it did support me immensely and it acted as a nice distraction whenever I felt overwhelmed or stressed. It helped me recognise the importance of going for opportunities, standing up for what I think is right, and most importantly being kind to myself and others.

Having now written blogs for almost a year, I've become more familiar with my own strengths and weaknesses. I've been able to engage in deeper everyday conversations and expand my curiosity by researching the topics I've wanted to write about. I've conducted interviews as part of my research for blogs, and these have helped me build stronger friendships. One example of that is when my friend answered my questions about her dyslexia, and that conversation really brought us closer together as friends."

Statistics show the impact Ryan had as part of the Writers' Club between 2022 and 2023:

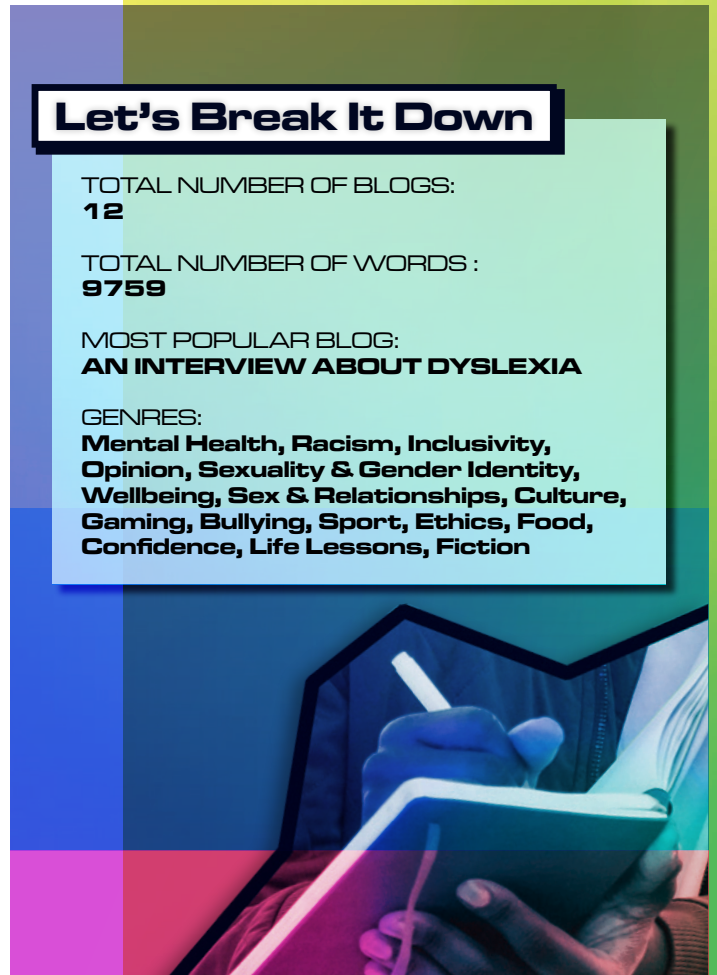
Let's Break It Down

TOTAL NUMBER OF BLOGS:
12

TOTAL NUMBER OF WORDS :
9759

MOST POPULAR BLOG:
AN INTERVIEW ABOUT DYSLEXIA

GENRES:
Mental Health, Racism, Inclusivity, Opinion, Sexuality & Gender Identity, Wellbeing, Sex & Relationships, Culture, Gaming, Bullying, Sport, Ethics, Food, Confidence, Life Lessons, Fiction



Achievements at the Trust

NCS Programme Delivery 2022/23

In a post-pandemic year, with a significant transformation programme going on across the whole trust, NCS programmes significantly outperformed targets.

- » 53,698 residential places across summer, autumn and winter exceeded the targeted volume whilst still delivering a significant cost saving.
- » 17,023 network-delivered Skills Booster places exceeded our target.
- » 9,396 Changemaker places significantly outperformed our target.

The winter residential offer allowed the trust to test year-round delivery and one-week programmes. It was hugely successful, with 2,750 young people from over 40 separate organisations attending 10 socially-mixed residential programmes between 01 February and 31 March 2023.

We worked with outdoor education sector bodies — The Institute of Outdoor Learning, British Activity Providers Association, and the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres — to support outdoor learning professionals to be involved in NCS day trips and community work.

Skills Booster

Building on the delivery in 2021/22, Skills Booster has continued to grow. The offer is based on personal development curriculum materials created in line with Ofsted regulations and the Gatsby benchmark. During 2022/23, over 45,000 young people benefited from in-school sessions delivered by partners, highlighting its continued popularity across the country. This activity was in addition to Skills Booster Trust Resources, which enriched the learning of thousands of classroom students through materials downloaded and delivered by teachers.

UK Year of Service (UKYoS)

UKYoS is a truly unique national employability programme for 18 to 24-year-olds which is designed to tackle youth employability challenges. UKYoS comprises paid work placements lasting 9 to 12 months, an embedded skills training programme, wrap-around support within and beyond placement, and support for exit routes into further education or employment. UKYoS has supported 336 young people into socially beneficial roles since 2021 and engaged with 82 employers. The placements are diverse, inclusive, accessible, and prioritise those furthest from the labour market.

Some key findings from a recent independent evaluation report we commissioned from the Behavioural Insights Team:

- » 57% of UKYoS participants are on Universal Credit prior to joining.
- » 23.9% of UKYoS participants were eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the national average of 22.5%.
- » Partner-reported post-placement outcome data for UKYoS suggest that over 80% of participants go directly into education, employment, or training following their placement.

Demonstrating National Citizenship

Through NCS, young people have shown their commitment to community and society during a year of reflection and celebration. The Platinum Jubilee in 2022 marked 70 years since Queen Elizabeth II's coronation. NCS young people volunteered at the Jubilee celebrations alongside military personnel, performers, key workers, and other volunteers. They also played a part as volunteers in the days surrounding the Queen's funeral and at the Coronation of King Charles III.

Partnership Working

NCS continues to emphasise the importance of collaboration and partnership in meeting its strategic objectives and delivering outcomes for young people. We have already begun to address two supporting objectives: *'Deliver in partnership with the youth sector'* and *'Shape the government's ambition for young people'*.

Convening and collaborating at a national level. NCS provides the secretariat function to the Back Youth Alliance, which engages and collaborates with the government to support effective outcomes for young people. In early 2023, NCS made significant strides with the Alliance by leading a roundtable with DCMS Minister Stuart Andrew where young people discussed issues such as the cost of living crisis.

Supporting young people to be at the heart of historical national events. This year, NCS has enabled young people to engage in purposeful, significant opportunities, including the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, and the Coronation of King Charles III. Young people have also been able, through NCS, to contribute to discussions around youth mental health, employability, and pandemic recovery.

Youth Voice

Youth voice is key to NCS. In order to ensure that young people feel empowered to inform our work, the Youth Voice Forum has now become the Youth Advisory Board. NCS is committed to responding to the needs of young people by amplifying their voices and putting them at the heart of decision-making. We are evolving how youth voice operates at the NCS through the Youth Advisory Board, which is creating meaningful and incentivised opportunities for young people to influence decision-making while developing their professional skills.

The Youth Advisory Board is made up of 12 incredible young people. Collectively, and as individuals, they play a vital role in helping us to ensure that youth voice is embedded across all activities at the trust. The Youth Advisory Board is a mixed-gender group of people, aged 18 to 24, who live in London, the South East, the South West, West Midlands, and the North East.

Seven of the board members have been on an NCS experience themselves. Five of the group are at university, three have just completed their A levels, three are in full-time employment, and one is doing an apprenticeship.

For the second time this year, a youth panel was involved in the public appointments process at NCS — both for new board members and, for the first time, the new chair of NCS Trust.

Audit, Risk, Governance, Compliance, and Transparency

- » Negotiated a new Framework Agreement, clarifying governance arrangements between NCS Trust and DCMS.
- » Supported the public appointments campaign for the new chair of NCS, Harris Bokhari OBE.
- » Recognised by DCMS and the DMJ / Computershare HOT 100 Governance Awards for being the first organisation to involve young people in a public appointments process by having a youth panel.
- » Took part in the Board Apprentice programme, welcoming an apprentice onto the NCS Board of Directors to ensure an inclusive and diverse range of viewpoints.
- » Welcomed a new Chair of the ARC Committee, Darren Xiberras.
- » Welcomed a new external member onto our Audit and Risk Committee Board to improve financial rigour and management.
- » Welcomed two new youth advisors onto our board as co-chairs, Lamin Tarawally and Jess Evans.
- » Appointed Darren Xiberras and Amanda Timberg as new NEDs.
- » Introduced new policies including around internal governance and decision-making to streamline and support effective governance.
- » Ensured employee voice remained at the forefront of organisational decision-making by supporting an Employee Voice Forum which reports directly to the People Committee.
- » Board and subcommittees meet regularly, including at an away day in Aylesbury in June 2022. Board minutes are published on our website.

Culture, Staff, and Diversity

- » We recently completed our annual equality monitoring survey, with employees free to provide as much or as little information as they choose against a set of predetermined questions. The results will now be fully analysed and translated into positive action.
- » We created a 'New Starter's Equality Monitoring Questionnaire'. This is optional for people to complete, but it will help keep NCS up to date and show new employees that NCS celebrates and welcomes diversity, making it psychologically safe for people to ask for reasonable adjustments and share their needs right from the start.
- » We re-evaluated our Performance Excellence Toolkit and have made this a resource for everyone as a part of our new Leadership Development Programme learning initiative — which sits on the intranet site alongside all information and process-related forms and templates for line managers.
- » We launched a Leadership Development Training Programme. This is a year-long blended-learning programme including workshops, self-led e-learning, reflection and discussion, peer-led learning, and optional topical workshops on various subjects responding to employee needs. A version of this programme for the whole organisation will launch in October 2023, seen through the lens of a team member and focusing on emerging leaders.
- » The Government Campus, previously known as the Civil Service Learning Platform, was made available to employees in 2022. As part of our Leadership Development Programme, every line manager completes several identified modules from the 'Management Fundamentals' course on the platform.
- » We continue to work closely with the Employee Voice Forum and its newly-elected cohort and chair. The monthly meetings cover topics from immediate issues such as organisational projects and announcements, to longer term ones like diversity and change. The Employee Voice Forum is a key opportunity for employees to get their voices heard. It has the power to co-opt members where necessary in order to be as representative of NCS as possible — based on, for example, protected characteristics or business priorities. The Employee Voice Forum presents directly to the People and Remuneration Committee when the committee meets, two to three times a year, ensuring that board members hear our employee voice and understand our organisational culture.
- » Focus groups on key topics mean that employee voice and expertise have helped shape the initiatives that will be rolled out over the next three years, including: Values, Flexible working, Learning & Development', and Reward & Remuneration.
- » We developed four key culture development principles: Consistency, Equity, Clarity, and Connection. These principles were based on employee feedback and have helped guide the culture development work.
- » Trust values have been signed off and TRIBE will now be replaced with:
 - Inclusive
 - People of Integrity
 - Empowering
 - Outcomes Focused
 - Accountable
 - Adaptable

Finance

- » Navigated our way through the ongoing commercial and fiscal challenges of COVID-19, ensuring FY 20/21 reports were signed off with a clean audit.
- » Revised the organisation of the finance function in line with the overall business model and the trust transformation in FY 23/24, to drive a new level of fiscal maturity focused on our business change drivers: Strategy, Structure, People, Process and Technology.
- » Sponsored by our Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), we defined our counter fraud strategy, adopting the Government Functional Standard on Counter Fraud. Recognising our privileged position of being funded by the taxpayer, we are committed to ensuring all funding is aligned with the requirements of Managing Public Money.
- » Delivered the second year of our cost optimisation strategy to reshape our infrastructure and realign costs across the organisation, resulting in further reductions in our trust costs of 10% and more spend on frontline services.
- » Built on our vision and strategy to get a successful outcome from the Comprehensive Spending Review. The successful implementation of strategic initiatives in our business case is transforming how we engage with the wider youth sector services and how we contract with our front-end delivery partners.
- » Partnered with the business development team at NCS to design and implement new income streams, reflecting the ambition of the trust to grow independent channels and reduce reliance on the public purse. The income streams which we are pursuing are aligned with our strategic objectives and include schemes such as UK Year of Service.
- » Successfully delivered our finance strategy, enabling the organisation to pivot and navigate commercial challenges as we shape our future strategic direction. Recognising that the needs of young people have changed, after the pandemic, is important for the longevity of the trust. As we enter the penultimate year of our four-year cost optimisation programme, we have been recognised by the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and awarded the AICPA & CIMA Engage Europe Public Sector Team of the Year. This award is given to the team that showed how it used innovation and improvement to continuously provide value to the public.

Commercial

- » Fully redesigned and restructured the commercial team to improve commercial capability and maximise efficiency across contract management and procurement.
- » Successfully navigated the Supplier Request for Change process by leveraging strong commercial relationships across the network, which enabled us to amend supplier contracts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. This resulted in 100% supplier retention, no additional government support to our original settlement, and minimal costs for unfilled places to protect value for money for the taxpayer without financial distress to any suppliers.
- » Contractually introduced two new service lines, Skills Booster and Changemakers.
- » Introduced commercial resources to drive supplier delivery metrics for performance and positive impact, while controlling supplier spend within our spending envelope without impacting quality.

Procurement

- » The Procurement Strategy and Policy has been updated for greater clarity and transparency around approval levels and associated processes. The approved supporting processes are now fully documented and accessible to all, improving both visibility and clarity around accountabilities and ensuring compliance with legislative and policy controls.
- » The procurement business partnering model is now fully embedded within the organisation, facilitating the development of strong stakeholder relationships and well-managed procurement plans.
- » The workflow management tool and wider access to contract documentation means stakeholders have greater visibility of relevant procurements and contracts leading to better stakeholder engagement and improved contract management and control.

Information Technology

- » Refreshed our technology and systems to support a workforce with hybrid working as a default. This included creating a business case to update our current finance system.
- » Continued to support the business with best-in-class data services for ongoing analysis, focusing on reporting requirements for new service lines.
- » Implemented systems to help run the new service lines, including changes to support our new residential offer, grant management processes, and delivery of new digital experiences.
- » Continued to develop an alpha version of MyNCS for the delivery of NCS services including a new digital front end showcasing our experiences.

Transformation

The Transformation Programme was launched following the 2021 Comprehensive Spending Review. It is almost complete and is continually monitored.

- » Delivered a Full Business Case (FBC) to HM Treasury (HMT) for approval in 2022.
- » Delivered a new Operating Model after successful large-scale consultation.
- » Delivered a new blended commissioning model with commercial contracts for our residential offer, grant making for our community experiences offer, and a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the digital experiences offer.
- » Successfully supported the selection and award of partner organisations across three service lines resulting in a diverse and youth-focused network.
- » Successfully delivered a one-year interim property solution and set up a new project to deliver the longer term property strategy.



Key Risks

Key Risks & Issues Faced by NCS During FY 22/23	Key Mitigation Actions & Controls FY 22/23
<p>NCS Trust Employee Attrition An increasingly competitive job market post-COVID-19, a period of transformational change, and a reduced funding envelope at the trust has led to an increase in employee attrition. This has, at times, resulted in resourcing issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Increased focus on performance monitoring, personal development, and recognition. » Ongoing focus on reduction of reliance on single points of failure across the trust. » Ongoing support for personal development.
<p>Ambiguities in Governance Framework The governance arrangements lack clarity in certain areas, and they have consequently caused inefficiency and exposed the trust to potential non-compliance, reputational damage, and potentially reduced support from key stakeholders including government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ongoing reviewing of governance. » Integrated Assurance and Approvals Plan developed with DCMS. <p>Further clarity has been provided through the signing of the new Framework Agreement with DCMS.</p>
<p>Transformation and Commissioning There is a risk that the current timeline for commissioning and approval of business cases is undeliverable. This risks a failure to deliver quality inputs and secure approvals from the board, DCMS and HMT.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Preferred delivery model identified and shared with potential suppliers. » Work ongoing with supply chain consultants. » Programme team well established » Positive outcomes from early market engagement

Risk Commentary

Successful risk management remains a key priority for NCS. The trust operates a robust Risk Management Framework which advocates regular open and transparent conversations with stakeholders at all levels.

NCS Trust has a moderate risk appetite. We recognise that to evolve and ensure that we deliver against strategic objectives, we need to embrace risk and opportunities.

The medium to long-term risk exposure is tied to the evolution of services and transformation. We continue to effectively monitor and manage emerging risks.

FY 22/23 saw further transformation across the trust. Organisational design changes resulted in reduced staff numbers without impact on deliverables.

We go into 2023 with a strong strategy, new ways of working, and new services.

The Corporate Risk Register currently has 14 risks and two issues of varying perceived magnitude, spanning various departments within the organisation. During FY 22/23, there were six risks and one issue added to the CRR — plus 13 risks and two issues closed.

Topical and emerging risks, and top-scoring corporate risks, were reviewed monthly by the Trust Steering Group, ensuring that risks were escalated and mitigated.

Throughout the year, organisational risks were shared with the Audit and Risk Committee, including updates on work carried out within the trust’s risk function.

During FY 22/23 we also focused on the new grant funding service line, resulting in the delivery of a dedicated departmental risk register and sessions held across the organisation identified key risks with subject matter experts and stakeholders.

Risk reporting was improved with the introduction of monthly dashboards, giving executive visibility of their department’s key risks and issues and overall risk exposure across the trust.

Risk Appetite Statements

The trust’s Risk Appetite Statements highlight tolerable risks, as well as ones that are unacceptable. They align with the strategic goals and objectives and set tolerable risk parameters. These are reviewed at least annually by the Trust Steering Group and are part of our Risk Framework Policy.

Risk appetites were reviewed in August 2022, and benchmarked against the government’s Orange Book of Risk Management Principles. As a result, four new risk appetite categories and a clear risk appetite scale were introduced.

The Risk Appetite Statement scores tolerance levels against several categories:

Strategy	Partnerships	
Culture	Transformation	People
Commercial	Operations	
Contract	Reputational	Finance
H&S	Technology	Safeguarding & Wellbeing
Government Relationship	Governance & Compliance	Security

Going Concern Assessment

Under Section 1 of the National Citizen Service Act 2017, the National Citizen Service Trust has a statutory responsibility to provide programmes — or arrange for the provision of programmes — for young people in England with the purpose of enabling participants from different backgrounds to:

- » Work together in their local communities.
- » Participate in projects which benefit society.
- » Enhance their communication, leadership and team-working skills.

The trust is almost fully funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, through a Spending Review envelope set by the HMT and allocated to the trust annually by the Department via a Delegation Letter. The board assesses that sufficient government funding support will continue to be made available to allow the trust to fulfil its statutory responsibilities for the foreseeable future.

Given the status and position of NCS Trust as an arm's length body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport — and the fact that the trust was put on statutory footing via the NCS Act and granted a Royal Charter in 2017 — the board members, including the trust's accounting officer, have agreed that the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

Further disclosures relating to Going Concern

As explained above, as an arm's length body sponsored by DCMS, NCS Trust is almost wholly dependent on receiving annual government funding to fulfil its statutory responsibilities under Section 3 of the National Citizen Service Act 2017 and continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future as a going concern. In October 2021, HMT announced a three-year CSR funding settlement giving further certainty around the trust's ability to continue as a going concern.



Equality of Access

2022/23 Participation Data

- » 21% of NCS participants were eligible for free school meals compared to 19% of state secondary school pupils.
- » 9% of participants had SEND (EHC plan) compared to 2% of state secondary pupils.
- » 33% of participants were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds compared to 26% of state secondary pupils.
- » 4% of NCS participants were in care.

Removing Financial Barriers

14,023 participants accessed the NCS bursary during their NCS signup journey in 2022. A bursary can be claimed if the young person gets free school meals, is care experienced, has an Education, Health or Care Plan, or has caring responsibilities.

To ensure cost is not a barrier to a residential experience, our bursary offer in 2023 will give a 100% subsidy and expand the eligibility criteria. Our community-based provision via our grant-funded programmes and our digital offer will be free of charge.

The NCS Inclusion Fund

The NCS Inclusion Fund provides the NCS delivery network with additional resources to help remove barriers faced by young people at the point of delivery. The fund supported 28 delivery partner organisations to employ 72 additional members of staff to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

One example of a successful funding application was providing funding for a professional translator to support two young refugees to take part in an NCS experience in the North East. Meeting the translator was the first time the boys had met anyone who spoke their language in the UK. Staff said it was a very special moment to observe, saying, "To see the end result was hugely rewarding, not to mention the fact that the boys enjoyed it so much. It's a testament to why it was so important to provide this service". Other successful funding applications included enabling multiple delivery staff to access specialist-accredited training.

Designing and Delivering NCS

We introduced an inclusion e-learning module so that all seasonal staff had the knowledge, skills, and confidence to deliver accessible and inclusive activities. 1,596 staff completed the module via our central e-learning platform, where they engaged in a scenario-based module challenging them to make decisions on a range of topics.



Financial Performance

The trust drew down £69m of grant-in-aid from DCMS in FY 22/23 (FY 21/22: £63m) generating other income of £3.2m (FY 21/22: £1.8m). Unused grant funding was returned to DCMS and arose primarily from reduced operating costs.

Total expenditure for FY 22/23 was £74.8m (FY 21/22: £88.3m). This figure was made up of:

- » Programme delivery: £53.6m (FY 21/22: £67.4m)
- » Staff costs: £10.7m (FY 21/22: £12.4m)
- » Other costs: £10.5m (FY 21/22: £8.5m)

We have continued to reduce our overall cost base to demonstrate strong financial management and minimise costs to the taxpayer. It is worth noting that programme delivery expenditure for FY 21/22 was considerably higher due to the impact of a £13.8m prior period adjustment.

Finance business partners are embedded in the business working with senior managers to review costs incurred and provide forecasts for future efficiencies. A key part of their role is working alongside budget holders to ensure that all pipeline contractual spend is challenged well in advance of renewal dates.

Requests to recruit are subject to a high level of oversight and are limited to replacing key existing roles or roles which are aligned with new strategic paths. This means the trust's average FTE has reduced by 20.2% over FY 22/23 and now stands at its lowest level since 2016 — despite new functions and significant in-house transformation which will drive further material cost savings in the years ahead.

These combined efforts have played an essential part in ensuring the trust can continue with its ambitious transformation plans to make it leaner and more efficient whilst helping and supporting more young people than ever.

Long-Term Expenditure Trend

The most significant area of expenditure for the trust relates to payments made to delivery partners who facilitate NCS programmes on behalf of the trust.

A trend analysis of programme expenditure is detailed in the table below. Please note that figures for FY 18/19 are not available as that was the year when the trust changed status from a Community Interest Company to a Royal Charter body.

Programme Expenditure	FY
£53.6m	FY 22/23
*£67.5m	FY 21/22
**£49.2m	FY 20/21
£119.2m	FY 19/20

*Expenditure was increased by £13.8m due to the impact of a prior period adjustment.

**Expenditure was decreased by £13.8m due to the impact of the prior period adjustment mentioned above.

In FY 20/21, the trust renegotiated its programme delivery contracts which allowed for a significant reduction in this area of expenditure.

Future Plans and Annual Strategic Plan

Future Plans: FY 23/24 and Beyond

The world is now a different place for young people than when NCS was founded in 2009. A long shadow was left by COVID-19, while advances in technology and an evolving labour market are speeding up the pace of change. The new NCS strategy for 2023–2025 responds to the changing needs of young people, the context of the youth sector, and government priorities. It outlines the impact that NCS aims to achieve, our priority objectives, and how we will meet them.

Young people across the country face significant challenges — including a mental health crisis, an employment skills gap, a challenging job market, inequality in life outcomes, and a divisive society. Yet these young people are the future, they want to be heard, and they can make a positive difference in the world.

NCS supports young people to overcome challenges, by offering them a choice of experiences: away from home, online, and in their local community. These experiences:

- » Develop life skills and support independent living
- » Build employability and work-readiness
- » Provide opportunities for volunteering and social action
- » Enable social mixing of young people from all backgrounds

Young people are now able to choose how they engage with NCS. They can sign up for a five-day adventure away from home, attend their local community experience, or engage in online activities. This variety of experiences puts young people in control, giving them more choice than ever before. On each experience, young people take part in fun activities, develop skills for life and work, and make new friends from different locations and backgrounds.

NCS experiences account for a significant portion of the government's National Youth Guarantee — a commitment that, by 2025, every young person in England will have access to trips away from home, regular activities, and opportunities to volunteer.

Delivering this new strategy requires new ways of working, internally at NCS Trust and with our partners. The new delivery model uses a tailored combination of procurement and grant funding. NCS will be an outcomes-based commissioner giving greater flexibility to partners and young people. We will deliver our strategy in partnership with the youth sector, recognising the rich heritage and expertise in existing provision and enabling a range of organisations to partner with us.

NCS will continue to be a universal programme but some experiences will be targeted to ensure those most in need will benefit. Targeted community experiences through grants will increase the provision of services to underserved young people. Our away from home places will be prioritised for 53 Priority Areas on the government's indices of multiple deprivation (IMD). Our bursary scheme for away from home experiences will offer free places to young people most in need, while all community and online experiences will be free.

For FY 23/24, four strategic priorities will guide our focus:

- » Demonstrate impact and prepare for the future
- » Provide a new NCS offer for young people
- » Build external partnerships and positive collaboration
- » Operate as an inclusive and agile trust

**A country of connected,
confident and caring citizens
where everyone feels at home**

IMPACT

Through engaging in NCS we want young people to **be world-ready and work-ready**; have greater **confidence, resilience and wellbeing**; feel better able to **have an impact on the world**, and feel a sense of belonging with **respect and tolerance** for difference and diversity.

OFFER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Enable **social mixing** of young people from all backgrounds

Develop **life skills** and support **independent living**

Build **employability** and **work readiness**

Provide opportunities for **volunteering** and **social action**

Community

Away from home

Online

SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

Deliver in partnership with the youth sector – drive engagement, expand reach and local relevance, enable best practice

Shape the government's ambition for young people – engaging across government and informing public policy as a thought leader

Build a platform for future growth – developing new ventures, broadening our offer, diversifying income

ENABLERS

Enabled by a **Transformed NCS Trust**

Youth Voice

Data & Technology

People, governance & culture

Commissioning & contract management

Sustainability, Environmental, Social, and Governance Disclosure

Sustainability Report

NCS Trust is committed to minimising damaging environmental impacts. We explore and implement ways of working which help us enhance environmental sustainability, minimise harm to our ecosystem, and continually improve our environmental performance. We use our position to encourage stakeholders and suppliers to adopt environmentally responsible practices.

Baseline Paper Usage

Ten reams of recycled A4 paper were purchased during FY 2022/23 costing £55. (In FY 21/22 we purchased five reams.)

Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

NCS Trust has invested in technology to support hybrid working. This reduces emissions from commuting to work and work-related travel. A Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) has not been undertaken but may be considered in future.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions, Waste, and Finite Resource Consumption

Employees are based mainly at home and we have no leased office premises. To ensure staff have the option to come to an office, the trust has licence agreements to occupy small areas in buildings in London (47m²) and Manchester (4m²).

As only a handful of staff attend these premises, it has not been possible to ascertain the gas, electricity, water usage, and waste disposal figures for these small office areas. The costs and any emissions associated with this usage are likely to be small and the environmental impacts negligible. We will work with our landlords to ensure this information is available for FY 23/24.

Domestic Travel

Total expenditure on domestic travel in FY 22/23 was £154,920 with approximate emissions of 24 tCO₂e. Of these figures, there were only 11 domestic flights covering an estimated distance of 4,762km. The trust does not own or lease any vehicles, and only eight hire cars have been used during the year. None of the vehicles hired were categorised as ultra-low emission vehicles.

Procuring Sustainable Products and Services

We will commit to continue to buy more sustainable and efficient products and services, with the aim of achieving the best long-term value

for money for society. Departments will report on the systems they have in place and the actions taken to buy sustainably.

We will comply with Government Buying Standards in departmental and centralised procurement contracts, within the context of the government's overarching priorities of value for money and streamlining procurement processes.

We commit to understanding and reducing supply chain impacts and risks.

As the trust buys goods and services that adhere to the minimum mandatory Government Buying Standard from the CCS framework agreements, compliance with these standards is met as suppliers will have to demonstrate meeting these standards as a minimum to be part of the CCS framework. The Trust will also include additional sustainability questions in relevant tenders wherever possible.

Reducing Environmental Impacts from Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Digital

Our headline commitment is that departments should report on the adoption of the Greening Government: ICT and Digital Services Strategy and associated targets.

NCS Trust is committed to delivering a sustainable service and reducing our carbon footprint by optimising the IT Infrastructure and applying sustainability criteria in the procurement of goods and services within the ICT supply chain.

Signatory

This Performance Report was approved by Mark Gifford, CEO and Accounting Officer:

Signed 

Date 14 November 2023

Accountability Report

Corporate Governance Report

This corporate governance report has been prepared using the Governance Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) which is based on public expenditure guidelines and applicable Companies Act and Corporate Governance requirements as adapted for a public sector context.

Board of Directors

The NCS Trust Board of Directors is composed of a chair, CEO, nine publicly appointed non-executive directors, and two youth advisors who sit on our board as invited guests. Our current youth advisors, Lamin Tarawally and Jess Evans, joined the board in March and December 2022 respectively. NCS Trust also has a government representative who sits on the Audit and Risk Committee, and the People and Remuneration Committee.

HARRIS BOKHARI OBE, INCOMING CHAIR (appointed in July 2023)



Internationally acclaimed youth leader Harris joins NCS Trust from Patchwork Foundation which he founded in 2010. He is a social entrepreneur, public engagement advisor, and chartered accountant. His range of roles include serving on the boards of the Natural History Museum (chairing the Audit and Risk Committee), The Royal Parks, and the Prince's Trust Mosaic Initiative. He is also an elected council member of the National Trust. Harris will help lead NCS Trust as it delivers its new strategy of providing greater choice and opportunity for young people while driving the government's National Youth Guarantee.

BRETT WIGDORTZ OBE, OUTGOING CHAIR (term ended July 2023)



Brett has a wealth of knowledge from a career spanning policy, management consulting, and educational reform. In 2002, he founded Teach First — one of the country's leading movements tackling education inequality — and he led it for 15 years. Teach First is the UK's largest graduate recruiter, running an accredited world-class teacher training programme that supports more than one million children in classrooms across England and Wales. In 2018, Brett co-founded Tiney.co to improve childcare for parents, practitioners, and children.

MARK GIFFORD, CEO



Mark has been the chief executive officer of NCS Trust since 2020. Previously, Mark worked in significant roles across the John Lewis Partnership, including as the director of shop trade for Waitrose & Partners. As a people-oriented leader, Mark is known for creating and nurturing high-performing teams, change management, and improving productivity and impact.

As well as having a strong operational background, Mark has a passion for developing the skills of young people. An active school governor, academy director, and chair for over 20 years, Mark is passionate about ensuring that young people fulfil their potential.

Outside of work, Mark is a father and husband who actively engages in his local community. Although a self-confessed proud Mancunian, Mark has spent many years passionately working with communities across the country.

RT HON NICK HURD



Nick served as a Member of Parliament for 14 years before standing down in December 2019. He served three different prime ministers and held several ministerial roles including Minister for Civil Society. A lifelong member of the Privy Council, Nick continues on a voluntary basis as the UK Prime Minister's Independent Adviser on Grenfell. Nick spent 18 years in the private sector, working in investment banking and the development of young growth businesses. He is a chair and senior adviser to a number of companies and campaigns that are looking to make a positive social or environmental impact.

SIR IAN LIVINGSTONE CBE



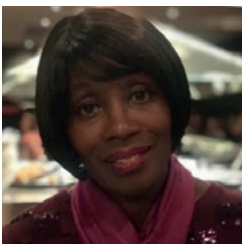
Sir Ian is one of the founding fathers of the UK games industry, co-founding the iconic games company Games Workshop in 1975 and launching many hugely successful games. He was ranked the 16th most influential person in the UK's digital economy in the Wired 100 list in 2012. He chaired the Next Gen Skills campaign, working with the government to introduce a new computing curriculum in schools in 2014, and he also co-authored *Hacking the Curriculum* in 2017.

TRISTRAM MAYHEW, Chair of the Safeguarding Committee



Tristram served as a tank and infantry commander in the Royal Dragoon Guards, retiring as a captain in 1997. He spent three years with Coca-Cola and GE Capital before founding Go Ape in 2002, a multi-award-winning forest adventure business with 50 locations across Britain and the USA. The vision of Go Ape is to 'create adventures and encourage everyone to live life more adventurously'. Tristram is an alumnus of the University of Edinburgh and London Business School. He is also responsible for youth sailing at Bosham Sailing Club.

JACQUIE NNOCHIRI, Chair of the Impact Committee



Jacquie is an educational leader who has worked in education for over 20 years. She is currently head of department and head of year 11 at a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) in West London where she is responsible for the pastoral and career needs of students in their final year of statutory education. Jacquie is passionate about ensuring young people have access to educational tools to improve and enhance their further education and future work opportunities. Jacquie has strong links with her local community and serves as a Referral Order Panel Member with the Harrow Youth Offending Team. Jacquie also serves on her local Safer Neighbourhood Panel.

NDIDI OKEZIE OBE



Ndidi is a seasoned social advocate who is passionate about youth voice and access to quality development opportunities for all young people. After working as a teacher and school leader for ten years, she spent six years as the executive director of Teach First before joining Pearson PLC to lead on their digital and customer voice strategy. Ndidi is currently the CEO of UK Youth, a leading charity with a movement of over 5,500 youth organisations which reach 1.6M young people. She is a board director of the Mulberry Schools Trust and CentrePoint UK.

ASHLEY SUMMERFIELD



Ashley has experience across a range of sectors, including finance, commercial property, marketing, sustainable technologies, commodities, and private equity. Along with several colleagues, he co-founded Central Europe Trust, a corporate finance advisory business specialising in Central and Eastern Europe, with former Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson. He currently leads Egon Zehnder's global Board Consulting Practice, having been with the firm for more than 20 years. Ashley has an MA from Cambridge University, an MPPM from Yale University, and he volunteers as a biology teacher for Teach First/Teach for All.

DEBORAH TAVANA, Chair of the People and Remuneration Committee



Deborah started her career with Legal & General and has held executive roles in Williams & Glyn Bank, Resolution, Swiss Re, and General Electric. She has experience in a range of leadership roles covering human resources, communications, governance, legal and operations, and is a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD. Her career has always been guided by a belief in the importance of creating organisation cultures that value the whole person, whether colleague, customer, or client. Deborah now works independently as an executive coach and management consultant. She also serves in a non-executive capacity as a trustee on the Board of United Response.

AMANDA TIMBERG



Amanda has dedicated her career to improving access to opportunities so that young people have the tools they need to lead fulfilling lives. She currently leads digital skilling education for Google, enabling opportunity by creating relevant and engaging content and programming. As part of her role she founded and leads the global apprenticeship programme. Before Google Amanda spent fifteen years in education charities in the UK and the US, working to develop and equip teachers and leaders to make an impact towards educational equity. Amanda started her career teaching primary school in Compton, California and worked at both Teach For America and the Los Angeles Unified School District in southern California. She holds an MSc in Voluntary Sector Management from the Cass Business School.

DARREN XIBERRAS, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee



Darren is currently the chief financial officer of Cardiff University and a member of the University Executive Board. He is a trustee of the Difference Education Limited which works to reduce exclusion from mainstream schooling and was also a co-opted member of the National Citizen Service Audit and Risk Committee from 2019 to 2022. He brings a wealth of experience in finance, previously holding the post of chief finance officer at the University of South Wales and at Teach First. Darren sits on the Executive Committee for the British Universities Finance Directors Group (BUFDG) and trained as an accountant with South Wales Electricity PLC.

Youth Voice Forum Co-Chairs and Youth Advisors to the Board

LAMIN TARAWALLY



Lamin is a student at University College London, where he is studying History, Politics and Economics. He chairs and advises on a variety of youth boards and panels, encompassing youth work, economic policy, and employability. In his role as an advisor, he aims to act as a link between the critical work that organisations do and the communities which they serve. As a member of the Bank of England Youth Forum and the chair of the London Academy of Excellence Alumni Board, Lamin has developed the capacity to not only communicate, but also to provide practical solutions to the vast spectrum of challenges that young people face. Lamin intends to better integrate the voice of youth within NCS Trust as co-chair of the Youth Voice Forum and ensure that each member has a valuable experience.

JESS EVANS



Jess has been involved with NCS since she went on an NCS programme in 2018. She is passionate about creating meaningful opportunities for young people and ensuring youth voice is embedded effectively across all levels of decision making. Having recently graduated from the University of Cambridge with a degree in Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, Jess has worked across several access initiatives to support pupils from underrepresented backgrounds to apply and succeed in higher education. She is also a non-executive director at Youth Futures Foundation, the What Works Centre exploring equitable access to high-quality employment for young people, where she helps ensure that youth perspectives are embedded in strategic decision making.

Term Ended During the Financial Year²

LORD IAIN MCNICOL



Lord McNicol of West Kilbride is a British Labour politician and trade unionist. Between 2011 and 2018, he was General Secretary of the Labour Party and was previously the National Political Officer of the GMB Union. He began his involvement in political organising as president of the Student Union at Dundee Institute of Technology in 1991. Since then he has worked with both Scottish Labour Students and The National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS).

² Two outgoing board members were replaced after the FY 21/22 reporting period. Up to date information on the NCS board members can be found on the NCS website.

Government Representative

LAURA JACKSON



NCS Trust has a government representative who is a member of the Audit and Risk and People and Remuneration Committees. Laura left the executive team of a global social enterprise to join the civil service in 2015, attracted by the opportunity to help deliver the government's English devolution agenda. She brought with her fifteen years of skills and policy expertise from charity campaigning and commercial lobbying in London and Brussels, including a stint at one of the UK's biggest membership charities, Art Fund. Laura is now the deputy director for arts and libraries in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport having first joined the department to run the 2019 Spending Review. Under her leadership, the strategy team coordinated the 2020 Spending Review and multiple budgets, as well as supporting the department's efforts to secure COVID-19 recovery funds, such as the £1.57bn Cultural Recovery Fund. Laura is the co-champion of the department's Social Mobility Network, an issue about which she is passionate.

External Committee Members

Sam Freedman



Sam sits as an external advisor on the NCS Impact Committee. He is also a senior adviser to Ark, an education charity, and a senior fellow at the Institute for Government. Previously he was CEO of Education Partnerships Group, an international education charity, executive director at Teach First, and a senior policy adviser to the Secretary of State at the Department for Education. He is on the board of the Holocaust Education Trust, Ambition Institute, and the Teacher Development Trust, and is also a governor at Woodside High School.

Jakira Motala



Jakira is a chartered accountant with over 14 years of experience as both an internal and external auditor for a variety of public sector organisations across healthcare, local and central government, higher education, and housing whilst working within the big four accounting firms. Jakira is currently working at Homes England within the internal audit team, and is a member of the Homes England Shadow Board. Jakira is passionate about championing social mobility for underrepresented groups and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and helping young people to access new opportunities and supporting them in becoming the talent of the future.

Natalie Perera



Natalie sat as an external advisor on the NCS Impact Committee but resigned from this position during October 2022. Natalie is the chief executive of the Education Policy Institute, an independent research institute which she co-founded in 2016.

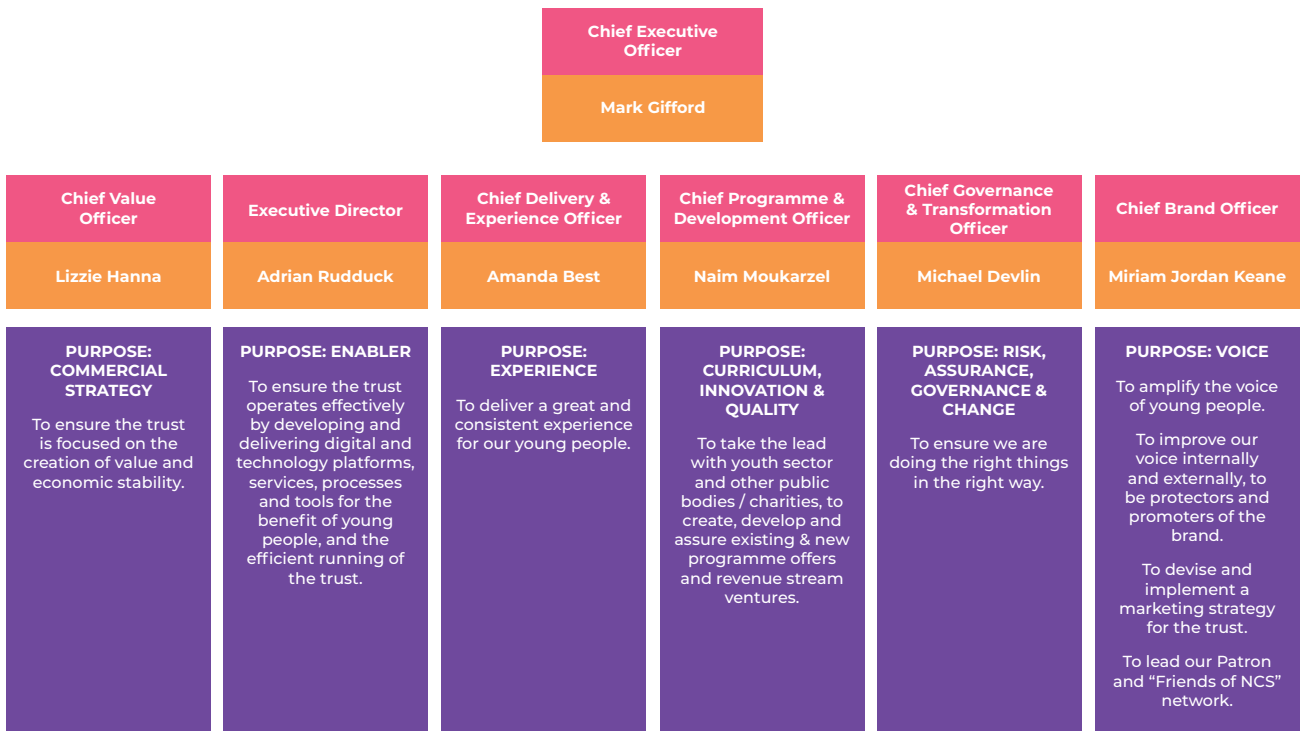
Executive Directors

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for the day-to-day management and running of the NCS programme. The table below outlines the structure of our SLT as of the end of FY 21/22. During the course of the year, the structure of the team changed and was renamed the Trust Steering Group (TSG) in November 2022. As some of our chiefs left, this created an opportunity to introduce executive directors that fitted better with our smaller and less hierarchical trust.

The table includes all directors who held posts during the financial year. At the time of publication, the executive directors are as follows:

- » Executive Director of Finance (post filled but individual has not started)
- » Executive Director of Strategy
- » Executive Director of Operations and Transformation
- » Executive Director of IT
- » Executive Director of Digital
- » Chief Delivery and Experience Officer

For governance purposes, only the CEO is an executive director on the board.

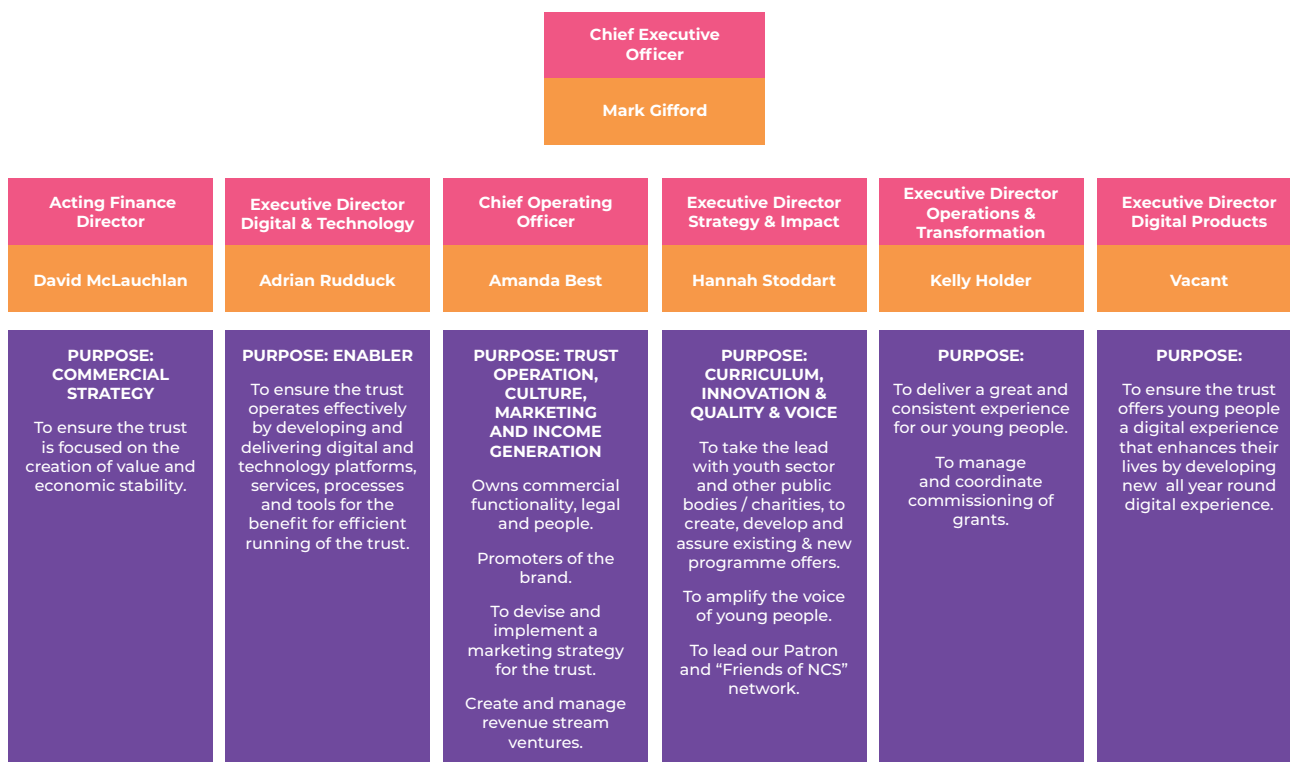


Organisational Structure

NCS Trust is led by the NCS Trust Board, within the parameters of the overarching policy direction set by DCMS. The NCS Trust Board oversees the activities of the trust. On a day-to-day basis, the executive manages the trust’s affairs. A high level summary of the trust’s structure for FY 22/23 is included below.

The Trust Steering Group also includes three Head of Departments who are subject matter experts, as advisors, relevant to the trust’s operating activity. This membership can change as required and the head of roles do not carry decision accountabilities. (note: the finance director was also in a non decision making capacity between March 2023 and September 2023 whilst the recruitment of the executive director for finance was underway).

Outside of the level of executive director, the trust operates with directorates and cross-functional service teams. This new matrix working policy was introduced in February 2023.



Collaborators

Activate

APM

Barclays

Barking and Dagenham Local Authority

Be Kind Movement

BF Adventure

Birmingham 22 Commonwealth Games

BMG Research

British Youth Council

Careers and Enterprise Company

Catch 22

Childline

CO-OP

D2N2 LEP

Department of Education

Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities

Discover Economics

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

EFL Trust

EliminHate

Exeter City

Faith and Belief Forum

Flying Futures

Foster Care Associates

GirlGuiding

GLA - Greater London Authority

Groundwork

Groundwork London

Groundwork North East

Greenpeace

Guide Dogs For The Blind Association

Headliners

Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC)

Ingeus

Inspira

Jewish Lads and Girls Brigade

Just Like Us

Kooth

Learn by Design

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

London Councils

Marine Conservation Society

Mental Health Foundation

Multiverse

MyBNK

National Youth Agency

North East Local Enterprise Partnership

NSPCC

Onside Youth Zones

Petroc

Plymouth Argyle

Princes Trust

Reboot The Future

Reed

Regional Youth Work Units

Revolution Hive

RSPCA

RWE Sofia Offshore Wind Farm

Salam Project

Savanta

Scouts

Shaw Trust

Skills Builder

South West Lakes Trust

Stonewall

Streetgames

Tees Valley Combined Authority

The Centre for Education and Youth

The Growth Company

The Royal Horticultural Society

Twin Training

Young People Cornwall

UCAS

UKYouth

UniConnect | Office for Students

UpSkillMe

Weymouth College

YMCA

YMCA George Williams College

Young Minds

Youth Employment UK

Youth United Foundation

External Business Interests

NCS Trust is conscious that our directors must be free of any conflicts of interest. We have policies in place for the declaration and management of conflicts of interest for all employees as well as for board members.

Each board member is under obligation to declare any external interests or changes to actual or potential interests as these arise. Each financial year, board members review and update their external interests. New interests must be declared and all board meetings begin with a declaration of conflicts of interests. A register of interests is kept up to date and refreshed on the [website](#) annually.

Board Effectiveness Review

The effectiveness of the board was subject to a review under two lenses:

- » Board member performance and one-to-one feedback conducted by the chair (by end December 2021).
- » A scan of skills when identifying suitable candidates to replace the two vacancies on the board.

Reviews were conducted in Autumn 2022 and reported back to the board. As per government guidelines, a departmental appraisal of the chair was carried out.

Director Attendance at Board and Committee Meetings of the Trust

During the year ending 31 March 2023, the members of the NCS Trust Board of Directors attended meetings as follows:



Director Attendance at Board and Committee Meetings of the Trust

During the year ending 31 March 2023, the members of the NCS Trust Board of Directors attended meetings as follows:

Director	Board (Ordinary)	Board (Extraordinary)	Audit & Risk Committee	Impact Committee	Safeguarding Committee	People & Remuneration Committee
Brett Wigdortz	5/5		4/5	3/4	1/3	2/2
Mark Gifford	5/5		5/5	3/4 ³	3/3	2/2
Nick Hurd	3/5		1/5			
Sir Ian Livingstone	4/5			2/4		
Tristram Mayhew	5/5				3/3	
Jacquie Nnochiri	5/5			4/4	3/3	
Ndidi Okezie	4/5					2/2
Ashley Summerfield	5/5					2/2
Deborah Tavana	5/5					2/2
Laura Jackson	4/5		2/5			1/2
Amanda Timberg	2/5		4/5	3/3		
Darren Xiberras	4/5		5/5			

- » Brett Wigdortz OBE, a member of the ARC, People and Remuneration Committee, and Impact Committee, was invited to attend all other meetings as a guest. He stepped down from his post as chair and member of the ARC, People and Remuneration Committee, and Impact Committee on 12 July 2023.
- » Mark Gifford is not an elected member of any committee but is invited as an attendee. His attendance is included on this basis.
- » Amanda and Darren joined the board as NEDs in May 2022. They both joined ARC in June 2022 and Amanda also joined the Impact Committee at that time. As our government representative, Laura Jackson is a member of the Audit and Risk Committee and People and Remuneration Committee but is an observer of the board.

³ On 14 July 2022, Mark had an immovable commitment necessitating his late arrival to this meeting.

Governance Statement

The trust has robust governance, risk and compliance arrangements in place for the year under review. As a Royal Charter body founded by the NCS Act, the trust is required to comply with its governing legislation of the National Citizen Service Royal Charter 2017 and National Citizen Service Act 2017. As a public sector ALB sponsored by DCMS, the trust is required to comply with the requirements set out in its Interim Framework Agreement, and latterly, Full Framework Agreement and its appendices (live 01 August 2023) which set out its working relationship with its sponsor department, together with our Delegation Letter and Ministerial Directives. In particular we are also required to comply with the relevant principles set out in HMT's Managing Public Money (2015) which includes the Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice (to the extent that its application is relevant to public bodies) and public sector FREM. The board and accounting officer gain assurance through a robust system via board and committee reports and letters of assurance from the executive team. Through all of these forms of assurance, the accounting officer has concluded there were no matters considered very significant weaknesses.

Effectiveness and Assurance

As accounting officer, I, along with the NCS Trust Board, am responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of our performance management and internal control system, informed by both internal and external audit and the operation of the internal control framework. The board, and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARC), have provided support and challenge in keeping the effectiveness of our system of internal controls under review throughout the year. The non-executive directors also provide me with an independent view of our performance at board level and in their roles on the board committees. I have full assurance on the maintenance of a comprehensive system of assurance and controls to support me as accounting officer to ensure compliance with the principles in Managing Public Money and in particular those in relation to governance, decision-making, and financial management. In addition to the usual checks undertaken during the year, I have received assurance that we comply with the mandatory requirements under the relevant government functional standards. On the basis of the evidence received from the executive directors, the non-executive chair of the board, and the non-executive director chairs of the committees,

particularly ARC, I am satisfied that I have the necessary level of assurance to discharge my responsibilities effectively with respect to the period covered by this governance statement.

Fraud and Error

There are no known incidents of fraud or error during the reporting period.

Board and its Committees

The board currently has four committees to support it in discharging its duties. Board committees make recommendations to the board and have delegated responsibilities as outlined below. Each committee has responsibilities in respect of monitoring and leading on aspects of risk management across NCS in accordance with their Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference of each committee is reviewed annually to ensure they remain relevant to the responsibilities and objectives of the trust. Changes that are made to the Terms of Reference are subject to board approval following appropriate consultation and agreement.

» Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

The chair of the ARC is Darren Xiberras (he became chair in June 2023 and took over from interim chair Brett Wigdortz OBE — who succeeded Paul Cleal in December 2021). The ARC is responsible to the board for providing an independent view of financial reporting, corporate governance, and risk management. The committee is responsible for the relationship with the internal and external auditors of the trust. ARC duties include ensuring the organisation is meeting its regulatory obligations and legislative requirements, reviewing systems of internal control and the risk management framework, and monitoring the integrity of the financial statements of NCS Trust.

The ARC receives instructions from the board of directors on areas where additional assurance is required. The ARC formally reports to the board, and it comprises of two non-executive directors, a government representative, and one external member. The ARC is also attended by representatives from internal and external auditors.

» **Safeguarding Committee**

The chair of the Safeguarding Committee is Tristram Mayhew. The Safeguarding Committee is responsible to the board for providing an independent assessment of safeguarding procedures. Incident reporting and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of NCS participants is at the forefront of organisational decision-making. The Safeguarding Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving the trust's safeguarding policies and procedures and supporting the SLT in having a robust process to ensure that all incidents relating to safeguarding are thoroughly investigated and inform necessary improvements to policy and procedure. The Safeguarding Committee is composed of two non-executive directors and a youth representative.

» **Impact Committee**

The Impact Committee is chaired by Jacquie Nnochiri. The Impact Committee is responsible to the board for providing an independent assessment of the NCS programme. The committee scrutinises the impact of the trust, particularly how it delivers on its objectives whilst ensuring good value for money. The committee challenges the trust to ensure that the voices of young people are appropriately reflected in its strategy. The committee is composed of three non-executive directors, a youth representative, and two external subject matter experts.

» **People and Remuneration Committee**

The People and Remuneration Committee is chaired by Deborah Tavana (who took over from Ashley Summerfield in December 2022). The People and Remuneration Committee is responsible for providing an independent assessment of all workforce responsibilities and makes recommendations to the board about the remuneration policy, senior management remuneration and performance assessment, organisational health, culture, values, ethical standards, diversity and inclusion, and organisational design. It also serves as a Nominations Committee when necessary, with specific responsibilities around board structure, composition, succession planning and appointments, especially in relation to the CEO and monitoring succession planning for the SLT Team. The committee comprises of five non-executive directors and a government representative. Under the NCS Charter, the government representative must be a member of the Remuneration Committee and holds a casting vote on the approval of the remuneration policy.

Reports from Board Committees

The minutes of all committee meetings are circulated to the board of directors and the relevant committee chairs give verbal updates on matters discussed. Updates are captured in the board minutes, available on the NCS website. Further details on matters discussed at the committee meetings during the reporting period are included below.

» **Audit and Risk Committee**

The Audit and Risk Committee was updated on external audits, approval of the Annual Report, cybersecurity, internal audit evaluations and lessons learned — with particular emphasis on change management — data privacy, and governance. The committee discussed the future of the internal audit contract and did deep dives into governance, compliance and internal control, as well as updating on audit recommendations, data breaches, and policies under review. The committee reviewed matters related to counter fraud, anti-bribery, anti-money laundering, intellectual property licences, health and safety policies, and procurement.

» **Safeguarding Committee**

The Safeguarding Committee focused on policy and procedural review and continuous improvement. This included discussions on the NCS Trans Policy, summer residential practices, and a legal review of guidance materials. An essential aspect of the work of the committee was monitoring incidents and finalising improvement plans for the 2023 programme, drawing lessons from past experiences.

» **Impact Committee**

The Impact Committee made significant strides in evaluating performance and programme impact. Its work covered a wide range of areas, including assessing key performance indicators, agreeing evaluation expectations, and long-term impact assessment. The committee examined the impact measurement framework, performance across service lines and evaluation processes, and developed strategies for influencing and thought leadership. It continued to gather findings from evaluations, workforce data, and programme reviews, and the committee also shaped plans for monitoring and evaluation, feasibility studies, and building expert partnerships.

» **People and Remuneration Committee**

The People and Remuneration Committee continued to focus on organisational culture, remuneration approach, and people-related matters. Discussions specifically included pulse surveys, pay reviews, and the development of the Annual People Report. The committee monitored gender pay gaps, conducted pay benchmarking and market rate analyses, and addressed topics related to organisational design. Additionally, the committee reviewed succession planning — particularly for board appointments — ensuring the organisation's leadership remains robust and aligned with its objectives. The committee heard regularly from the Employee Voice Forum.

Risk Management and Internal Control

The board of directors, with the support of its committees, has a key role in ensuring a robust risk management system is in place. NCS has a transparent culture with risk being managed at all levels. The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) assists the board with an annual review of the effectiveness of risk management activities — supported by the internal auditor's annual work, report, and view of the effectiveness of internal control. The ARC meets five times a year when proposals for improvement and details of corporate risk activity are shared and discussed. During 2022–23, the trust improved reporting dashboards for corporate and directorate level risks, resulting in greater visibility of risk performance across the trust. Other process improvements have included a benchmarking of risk appetite categories and statements to The Orange Book: Management of Risk — Principles and Concepts (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/orange-book>). NCS Trust continued to use Mazars LLP as its internal auditors, approved by the ARC, with their programme of work aligned to the key risks on the trust's risk register. Key audit topics included workforce planning, commercial strategy, counter fraud, and business continuity planning. NCS Trust will work with Mazars in FY 23/24 to identify further areas for organisational improvement. The ARC will refine this scope to reflect any changes in principal risks, and the committee will commission additional audit assignments if needed. The results of the Independent Assurance Review are included below.

Accountability Issues or Breaches

There were no known reportable breaches during the reporting period.

Information Security and Data Privacy

NCS Trust takes its responsibilities for maintaining the security of data and managing information security risks seriously. We process a significant amount of personal data on NCS participants, including sensitive or 'special category data', in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Physical, technical, and administrative safeguards help protect information assets and prevent unauthorised access, disclosure, use and modification of information. NCS Trust provides guidance to staff on appropriate handling of information and regularly reviews security procedures, and new technologies and methods. Staff get annual refresher training on GDPR and information security. In FY 22/23 the trust did not inform the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) of any data protection incidents. NCS is continuously working towards demonstrating compliance with GDPR principles. We have incorporated the recommendations from our last internal audit and have a data protection Compliance Development Plan to ensure robust policies and procedures are in place to protect personal data. For more information on how NCS processes personal data please see our [Privacy Policy](#).

Whistleblowing

NCS Trust is committed to establishing an environment where all staff, at whatever level, know that it is safe and acceptable to raise concerns. It offers whistleblowing so employees can report issues of concern to either the head of people or the chair of the People Committee. A separate whistleblowing facility is available to participants, providers, parents, guardians, and carers, and the general public who have concerns or issues arising from any NCS experience.

There were no instances of whistleblowing during the reporting period.

Auditors

The National Citizen Service Act 2017 requires the Comptroller and Auditor General of the National Audit Office to be appointed as the auditor of the Royal Charter body.

Independent Assurance

Internal audit services by Mazars provide the accounting officer and the board — through the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) — with an independent, objective view of risk management, control and governance, and the effectiveness in achieving the agreed objectives of the trust.

- » Substantial assurance: The framework of governance, risk management and control is adequate and effective.
- » Moderate assurance: Some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance.
- » Adequate assurance: There are significant weaknesses in the framework of governance such that it could be, or could become, inadequate and ineffective.
- » Limited assurance: There are fundamental weaknesses in the framework of governance such that it is inadequate and ineffective or likely to fail.

For FY 22/23 Mazars provided an overall opinion of 'moderate assurance'. This opinion is based on four internal audit reviews, resulting in three 'adequate' and one 'limited assurance'. The 'limited assurance' related to Business Continuity Planning (BCP), with three priority-one observations issued. In response, management has agreed to put three action plans in place.

Data Reported to The Board

NCS Trust reports data regularly to the board through Management Reports circulated in advance of every board meeting. Data is provided in a timely manner to support discussion, challenges, and questions on key metrics such as participation vs target, actual costs vs budget, and NPS — all supported by in-depth narrative and explanation. Minutes show robust challenges by board members having had time to prepare and having balanced information on strengths and areas for improvement. The board rarely requests further information, indicating that the information provided enables robust challenge and decision-making. This can be evidenced through board minutes available on the NCS Trust website.

Priority-One Theme	Summary of Recommendation	NCS Commitment
Key Supplier Assurance	NCS should undertake a formal exercise to seek assurance from its critical suppliers that there are appropriate business continuity arrangements in place, giving confidence that BCP can be delivered in a timely manner.	A process will be put in place ensuring due diligence over key supplier BCP and is performed at the point of onboarding and periodically thereafter.
BCP Roles and Responsibilities	NCS should seek to find a permanent owner for BCP with a systematic process in place for overseeing BCP arrangements.	Roles and responsibilities of the BCP lead will be formally documented, detailing process ownership and key tasks.
Identification of Critical Functions	NCS should review its Business Impact Assessments (BIA) to confirm that all critical functions have been identified. BCP should then be updated in accordance with the critical functions, ensuring there is sufficient preparation for a potential incident.	The NCS BIA will be reviewed and updated to ensure completeness and accuracy. Ongoing review of the BIA will be included in the roles and responsibilities document.

Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under the National Citizen Service Act 2017, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) — with the consent of the relevant authority — has directed National Citizen Service Trust to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of National Citizen Service Trust and its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position, and cash flows for the financial year. In preparing the accounts, the accounting officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government FReM.

- » Observe the Accounts Direction issued by DCMS, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, applying suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis.
- » Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis.
- » State whether applicable accounting standards, as set out in the Government FReM, have been followed — and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements.
- » Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

The Permanent Secretary for DCMS has appointed me, the Chief Executive, as the accounting officer of National Citizen Service Trust. I am responsible for the propriety and regularity of the public finances, keeping proper records and safeguarding NCS Trust assets, as set out in Managing Public Money published by HMT.

- » I have taken all necessary steps to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors of NCS Trust are aware. As far as I know, the auditors are aware of all relevant audit information.
- » I have complied with all requirements of the Government FReM.
- » I confirm that this Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced, and understandable. I take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced, and understandable.



Mark Gifford, Chief Executive

Remuneration and Staff Report

This section provides details on the NCS remuneration policy, pay, benefits and staff numbers.

Remuneration Committee

The board has established a People and Remuneration Committee, which includes a representative of the government. The committee has approved Terms of Reference from the board, and the government representative has power of veto over approval of remuneration at the trust.

Civil Service Pay Guidance

NCS Trust, as an ALB of DCMS, is bound by the annual [Civil Service Pay Guidance](#). Issued in April, it sets out the percentage of the pay bill that can be spent on pay increases that year and the parameters within which this can be performed. Any annual pay increase or decision to award performance-related pay at chief and director level must be considered according to the same principles that apply to Senior Civil Service pay, with DCMS responsible for enforcing this.

Remuneration Policy

The Remuneration Committee will consider information from management as context for accepting or rejecting a suggested remuneration policy. This information includes:

- » The current financial position of the organisation.
- » Existing or emerging risks that may impact financial stability.
- » Comparing the competitiveness of salary banding and benefits against credible independent market benchmarks.

The CEO will not be involved in deciding their own remuneration. The appropriateness and relevance of the Remuneration Policy will be reviewed annually by the Remuneration Committee, referencing relevant comparisons so that NCS Trust remains sensitive to the broader issues within its sector (e.g. pay and employment conditions elsewhere) alongside Civil Service pay guidance.

Pay and Benefits

The organisation will refer to relevant benchmarks, inflationary indexes, and annual Civil Service pay guidance in determining salaries of NCS employees including the chief executive. The intention is that salary provides an incentive to encourage performance and, in a fair and responsible way, rewards individual contributions to success. The Remuneration Policy covers salary, promotions, role changes, allowances, other benefits and arrangements at the end of employment.

The chair and the People and Remuneration Committee, and the government representative, have responsibility for agreeing the terms and remuneration of the CEO. The decisions of the chair and the People and Remuneration Committee will be in accordance with the Civil Service Pay Guidance published by HMT. The CEO's base salary is benchmarked annually so they are paid appropriately.



We offer a competitive benefits package to our people.

- » Cycle to work scheme. A tax-efficient government initiative to buy a bicycle and kit.
- » Employee assistance programme. Confidential service for our employees.
- » Enhanced maternity and adoption pay. Full pay for six months after one year of service.
- » External learning. Company sponsored through a business case approval process.
- » Eye care. Paid eye exams every two years via Specsavers Corporate Eyecare Vouchers.
- » Learning days. At least three paid days to attend internal learning courses.
- » Life assurance. Four times employee's annual basic salary.
- » Edenred discounts portal. Gym, healthcare, and dental discounts.
- » Paid jury service with full pay for the duration of service.
- » Paternity and non-birthing partner pay. Full pay for two weeks after one year of service.
- » Payroll giving to charity. Tax-effective monthly deduction from pre-tax earnings.
- » Sabbatical leave. Subject to approval of a sabbatical leave application.
- » Volunteer days. Company-matched time off to a maximum of five days.

NCS Trust does not offer any long-term incentives to its employees.

Non-Executive Directors' Remuneration

The chair of the board is appointed by DCMS and is expected to commit a material amount of time to our business. The chair is remunerated for this at £400 per day, capped cumulatively at £40,000 per annum. The cap covers the contractual year from July and equates to a time commitment of around two days a week. The chair is not an employee of the trust and receives no other benefits. The non-executive directors are appointed by DCMS and are not remunerated. We are grateful for their significant voluntary commitment to NCS. The chair and non-executive directors can claim expenses incurred on business for the trust, subject to limits contained in the trust's travel and expenses policy.

Senior Executive Pay in 2022/23

Names and roles of the board of directors and senior leadership team are set out in the Directors' Report. All are considered 'directors' in the report, so we provide the information needed under the Government FReM 2022/23. The following tables cover the year 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2023. A number of the senior leadership team have since left or changed roles with new executive directors appointed.

This information is subject to audit.

	Annualised Salary	Salary	Bonus	Employer's Pension Contributions	Benefits in kind	Total
	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)	(To nearest £100)	(£'000)
	2022/23 (2021/22)	2022/23 (2021/22)	2022/23 (2021/22)	2022/23 (2021/22)	2022/23 (2021/22)	2022/23 (2021/22)
Brett Wigdortz OBE Chair	Up to £40k⁴ (Up to £40k)	35-40 (35-40)	NIL (NIL)	NIL (NIL)	NIL (NIL)	35-40 (35-40)
Mark Gifford Chief Executive Officer	145-150 (145-150)	145-150 (145-150)	NIL (NIL)	10-15 (10-15)	NIL (NIL)	160-165 (160-165)
Miriam Jordan Keane⁵ Chief Brand Officer	140-145 (140-145)	20-25 (140-145)	NIL (NIL)	0-5 (5-10)	NIL (NIL)	25-30 (150-155)
Simon Sharkey Woods⁶ Chief Digital & Information Officer	115-120 (115-120)	5-10 (115-120)	NIL (NIL)	0-10 (5-10)	NIL (NIL)	5-10 (125-130)
Amanda Best⁷ Chief Operating Officer	115-120 (115-120)	115-120 (115-120)	NIL (NIL)	5-10 (5-10)	NIL (NIL)	125-130 (120-125)
Naim Moukarzel⁸ Chief Impact & Development Officer	110-115 (110-115)	70-75 (110-115)	NIL (NIL)	0-5 (5-10)	NIL (NIL)	75-80 (120-125)
Lizzie Hanna⁹ Chief Value Officer	135-140 (135-140)	135-140 (135-140)	NIL (NIL)	5-10 (5-10)	NIL (NIL)	145-150 (145-150)
Michael Devlin Chief Governance & Transformation Officer	105-110 (105-110)	105-110 (105-110)	NIL (NIL)	5-10 (5-10)	NIL (NIL)	115-120 (110-115)
Hannah Stoddart¹⁰ Executive Director - Strategy & Impact	100-105 (NIL)	50-55 (NIL)	NIL (NIL)	5-10 (NIL)	NIL (NIL)	55-60 (NIL)
Kelly Holder¹¹ Executive Director - Operations & Transformation	105-110 (NIL)	30-35 (NIL)	NIL (NIL)	0-5 (NIL)	NIL (NIL)	35-40 (NIL)
Adrian Ruddock¹² Executive Director - Digital & Technology	100-105 (NIL)	85-90 (NIL)	NIL (NIL)	5-10 (NIL)	NIL (NIL)	90-95 (NIL)

Gender diversity based on FTE number of staff

	At 31 March 2023		At 31 March 2022	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Executive Team	3	3	4	3
Permanent and fixed term staff (excluding Executive Team)	56	92	88	3
Total permanent and fixed term staff	59	95	92	115

⁴Cumulative fee capped at £40,000 per annum and equates to a time commitment of around two days per week

⁵Changed role from Chief Brand Officer to Public Affairs Advisor on 06 June 2022

⁶Left 14 April 2022

⁷Changed roles from Chief Delivery & Experience Officer to Chief Operating Officer on 20 February 2023

⁸Left 04 November 2022

⁹Left 10 March 2023

¹⁰Appointed as an Executive Director on 26 September 2022

¹¹Appointed as an Executive Director on 14 November 2022

¹²Acting Executive Director from 06 June 2022 and officially appointed to the role on 18 November 2022

Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay

We addressed gender pay gaps within the last pay review in June 2022 which, along with consistent attention to pay equality, has led to marked improvement. We run monthly snapshot reports and an annualised report in April.

Comparison data

(Industry comparisons from Xpert HR no longer available, data taken from Gov.uk comparison tool)

Measure	NCS Trust 05 April 2021	NCS Trust 05 April 2022	The Scout Association 2022	The Prince's Trust 2022	Sport England 2022	All employees (National Statistics) 2022
Mean gender pay gap	8.2%	8.81%	7.8%	6.9%	13.5%	N/A
Median gender pay gap	9.4%	13.54%	7.7%	1.8%	7%	8.3%

Staff Costs

(The following tables are subject to audit)

Costs	Permanently Employed Staff	Others	2022/23	2021/22
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Wages and Salaries (including performance related pay)	9,073	-	9,073	10,464
Pension Costs	580	-	580	710
Social Security Costs	1,086	-	1,086	1,192
Total Staff Costs	10,739	-	10,739	12,366

Average Number of Staff During the Year - FTE

NCS Trust Staff	2022/23	2021/22
Employees	170	213
Other Staff (includes agency/seconded staff)	-	-
Total	170	213

Apprenticeship Levy

The government introduced the Apprenticeship Levy on 01 April 2017. NCS Trust contributed £30,480 in FY 22/23 with £3,900 of claims to fund apprenticeships made. (In FY 21/22, the trust contributed £38,396 with £0 of claims).

Staff Composition

In March 2022, we ran an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring Survey to capture data about the diversity of employees to inform a

plan of activities to progress our diversity and inclusion. We will populate and collate the data by collecting responses to questions on protected characteristics through a voluntary new joiner form, which will be shared in Annual Reports. Our 2023 Equality Monitoring Survey took place between 19 April and 25 May, aligned to the newly launched Annual Performance Review process.

The following figures are based on the NCS Equality Monitoring Survey. The sample size was 115 respondents in 2022 and 80 in 2023.

2022 Results		2023 Results	
Age		Age	
16 - 24	4.30%	16 - 24	5.70%
25 - 34	32.20%	25 - 34	27.30%
35 - 44	23.20%	35 - 44	35.20%
45 - 54	23.50%	45 - 54	21.60%
55 or older	2.60%	55 or older	9.10%
Prefer not to say	5.20%	Prefer not to say	1.10%
Ethnicity		Ethnicity	
White - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	72.20%	White - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	70.50%
White Irish	2.60%	White Irish	2.30%
White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%	White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%
White - Roma	0.00%	White - Roma	0.00%
Any other White background	6.10%	Any other White background	12.50%
Mixed Multiple Ethnic Groups - White & Black Caribbean	1.70%	Mixed Multiple Ethnic Groups - White & Black Caribbean	1.10%
Mixed Multiple Ethnic Groups - White & Black African	0.90%	Mixed Multiple Ethnic Groups - White & Black African	1.10%
Mixed Multiple Ethnic Groups - White & Asian	0.90%	Mixed Multiple Ethnic Groups - White & Asian	1.10%

2022 Results		2023 Results	
Any other Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	1.70%	Any other Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	0.00%
Asian/Asian British - Indian	2.60%	Asian/Asian British - Indian	0.00%
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	0.00%	Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	1.10%
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	2.60%	Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.00%
Asian/Asian British - Chinese	0.00%	Asian/Asian British - Chinese	1.10%
Any other Asian background	0.00%	Any other Asian background	0.00%
Black/Black British/Caribbean/African - Black British	2.60%	Black/Black British/Caribbean/African - Black British	2.30%
Black/Black British/Caribbean/African - African	1.70%	Black/Black British/Caribbean/African - African	2.30%
Black/Black British/Caribbean/African - Caribbean	0.90%	Black/Black British/Caribbean/African - Caribbean	1.10%
Any other Black background	0.00%	Any other Black background	0.00%
Other Ethnic Group - Arab	0.00%	Other Ethnic Group - Arab	0.00%
Prefer not to say	3.50%	Prefer not to say	2.30%
European	0.90%	European	0.00%
White European	0.90%	White European	1.10%
Gender Identity		Gender Identity	
Woman	53.00%	Woman	64.80%
Man	43.50%	Man	34.10%
Non binary/ genderqueer/ agender/ gender fluid/intersex	0.90%	Non binary/ genderqueer/ agender/ gender fluid/intersex	0.00%
Prefer not to say	2.60%	Prefer not to say	1.10%

2022 Results		2023 Results	
Sexual Orientation		Sexual Orientation	
Bi / Bisexual	2.60%	Bi / Bisexual	3.40%
Gay / Lesbian	12.20%	Gay / Lesbian	11.40%
Heterosexual / Straight	82.60%	Heterosexual / Straight	84.10%
Pansexual	0.00%	Pansexual	0.00%
Prefer not to say	2.60%	Prefer not to say	1.10%
Disability		Disability	
Yes	12.20%	Yes	17.00%
No	85.20%	No	81.80%
Prefer not to say	2.60%	Prefer not to say	1.10%
Religion		Religion	
No religion	56.50%	No religion	56.80%
Christian	29.60%	Christian	36.40%
Buddhist	0%	Buddhist	0%
Hindu	0.00%	Hindu	0.00%
Jewish	0.90%	Jewish	3.40%
Muslim	2.60%	Muslim	1.10%
Sikh	0.90%	Sikh	0.00%
Mixture of Paganism and other beliefs	1.80%	Mixture of Paganism and other beliefs	0.00%
Spiritual	0.90%	Spiritual	0.00%
Prefer not to say	7.00%	Prefer not to say	2.30%

We are unable to split out senior executive data because we have a 'Rule of 10' approach when sharing sensitive data and there were not 10 or more senior executives in FY 22/23.

The figures may not represent the whole workforce as they are taken from our ED&I survey which is not mandatory.

Sickness Absence

NCS Trust has policies and procedures in place to monitor long and short-term sickness absence and this information is reviewed by the management team. During FY 22/23, sickness absence averaged 4.30 days per person. (FY 21/22 saw an average of 1.80 days per person.)

Staff Turnover

Staff turnover to 31 March 2023 is 46.36%. In the 2021–22 period, staff turnover was 21.41%, calculated on a 12-month period based on the average number of employees in that period. FY 22/23 has been a time of change and ambiguity, with 75 roles placed at risk of redundancy. In such an environment, it is not unusual for some people to seek more certainty elsewhere or to reconsider their career options. In smaller organisations, there will always be a certain amount of attrition, as vertical promotion opportunities are not as available as in bigger businesses. Younger generations in the workplace often want to build portfolio careers rather than remain with one company.

Staff Policies Applied During the Year: People with Disabilities

The following policies applied to all employees of the trust — including members of the SLT — during FY 22/23.

- » Disability. We give full and fair consideration to applications for employment by people who have disabilities. We are actively looking to raise awareness around available support under the Access to Work Scheme. We are currently looking into what needs to be put in place to become a 'Level 2 Disability Confident Employer'. If an employee becomes subject to a disability during their employment, we will continue employment if possible while making all reasonable adjustments. We offer training, career development, and promotion opportunities for people with disabilities as appropriate. Our recruitment processes are frequently reviewed to proactively encourage applicants with disabilities.
- » Diversity and Inclusion. We have a policy setting out our approach to D&I which we actively promote through a number of staff-led networks.

- » We have signed the Race at Work Charter and the Mental Health at Work Commitment. We are currently discussing becoming a recognised Living Wage Employer with the Living Wage Foundation. We are registered with the Good Youth Employment Charter and accreditation badges were used on ads for entry level roles as well as our Kickstart and UKYoS ads..
- » Health, Safety, and Security. Our formal policy offers all employees safe working conditions to ensure their personal safety and security.



Staff Engagement

We communicate with our employees regularly at company-wide meetings which can be accessed remotely. These meetings include company-wide updates, information about priorities and who's doing what, and the opportunity for Q&A. We share news via bespoke communications. We will consult with employees where there are material changes that affect their work location or present any risk to their employment. In 2020, we created an Employee Voice Forum (EVF) with fair representation from across the organisation. This forum enables employees to share their feedback via elected representation. A senior leader attends each meeting and acts as the conduit to the SLT. In 2023, we ran a new EVF election to complement our new operating model and staff structure. The CEO hosts regular informal catch-ups with groups of employees as well as attending EVF meetings.

In May 2021, the trust undertook its second People Focus Survey — 86% of employees took part. Given the deep transformational change during 2022, it was deemed inappropriate to repeat the survey at this time and it was replaced by targeted pulse surveys. We plan to conduct a full survey in September 2023, repeating it annually, the results of which will be included in the next Annual Report.

Areas for improvement were clear:

- » Explain the impact of decision making on NCS employees.
- » Ensure people know how to access development and take time for it.
- » Make more NCS employees feel recognised when they do a good job.



Diversity and Inclusion

During 2020, a D&I working group was established. It included subject matter experts and members of the people team and CEO office. The group connected with representatives from staff bodies including the Employee Voice Forum, Black Women's Network, LGBTQ+ network, and Young Professionals Network and formulated a D&I strategy. In 2021, the trust offered inclusion training to all employees through facilitated sessions, with a separate session for leaders. Two D&I project consultants were internally seconded who focused on a D&I diagnostics exercise which asked all employees to share information. Combining this with feedback from the EVF, a series of recommendations were made. In response, we concentrated on the following to develop and embed diversity & inclusion:

- » Created a clear strategy for the NCS wellbeing champions, looking at the role and purpose of the group and enrolling members on a mental health first aid course.
 - » Developed a comprehensive internal communication strategy around D&I.
 - » Supported and advised senior leaders and EVF about D&I.
 - » Developed and delivered workshops and learning opportunities for all employees with an initial focus on upskilling managers and building awareness and psychological safety through open discussion and learning groups/spaces.
 - » Reviewed and improved recruitment processes and practices with the people team. We became a Good Youth Charter employer, which — alongside our Mental Health at Work Commitment and Race at Work Charter membership — helped shape our practices.
 - » Addressed all gender, ethnicity, and disability pay gaps.
 - » Developed stronger links with EVF with training and discussions around D&I.
- We continued to build on this in FY 22/23 with the following:
- » Launched a trust-wide diversity focused video series called This is Me, which showcases employees across the trust. Diversity at its best is when we recognise and celebrate our differences, learn from each other, and understand ourselves, each other, and the world we live in a little better. The video series is open to anyone in the trust who would like to share their experience of anything they choose. We want to continue to build a workplace of psychological safety, peer-led learning, and creating space to discuss and share our experiences, ideas, and passions. We plan to run optional discussion spaces based on the content of the This Is Me videos which are co-facilitated by the person in the video and the people & culture development lead. We hosted a similar pilot space in 2022 for LGBTQ+ which was warmly received and well attended.
 - » Launched two networks which were both set up by employees and sponsored by a director:
 - » Parents & Carers for the under 5's
 - » The Neurodiversity Network
 - » Began rolling out the Leadership Development Programme which includes a significant module on E,D&I. This educational piece will help embed a culture of equity as understanding of the issues, challenges, and possibilities in the area of diversity grows.
 - » Reviewed the questions in our annual Equality Monitoring Survey in order to ensure language, terminology, and content reflects the latest developments and legislation. A key change was adding trans to the gender section, which now reads 'Women (including Transwomen)' and 'Men (including Transmen)'.
 - » Working on becoming a Living Wage employer is in progress with Living Wage Foundation as we combine the London and national pay bands.

Expenditure on Consultancy

In FY 22/23, expenditure on consultancy at the trust was £1,446,497 (FY 21/22: £384,344). Consultancy costs in FY 22/23 were significantly higher than the prior year due to additional spend on grant making strategic planning and network partner strategy.

Off-Payroll Engagements

Table 1. Highly Paid Off-Payroll Engagements.

Table 2. All highly paid off-payroll workers engaged at any point during the year and earning £245 per day or greater.

	As of 31 March 2023	As of 31 March 2022
All off-payroll engagements as of 31 March 2022, which are paid more than £245 per day and last for longer than six months.	0	3
Of which...		
The number that have existed for less than one year at time of reporting.	0	0
The number that have existed between one and two years at time of reporting.	0	0
The number that have existed for between two and three years at time of reporting.	0	2
The number that have existed for between three and four years at time of reporting.	0	0
The number that have existed for four or more years at time of reporting.	0	1
Confirmation that all existing off-payroll engagements, outlined above, have at some point been subject to a risk based assessment as to whether assurance is required that the individual is paying the right amount of tax and, where necessary, that assurance has been sought.	N/A	Yes

	FY 22/23	FY 21/22
The number of temporary off-payroll workers engaged during the year ended 31 March 2022.	0	3
Of which...		
The number not subject to off-payroll legislation.	0	0
The number subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as in-scope of IR35.	0	0
The number subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as out-of-scope of IR35.	0	3
The number of engagements reassessed for compliance or assurance purposes during the year.	0	0
The number of engagements that saw a change to IR35 status following review.	0	0

Table 3. Off-payroll engagements of board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility.

	FY 22/23	FY 21/22
<p>The number of off-payroll engagements of board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility during the financial year.</p> <p>The number of individuals on payroll and off-payroll that have been deemed 'Board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility', during the financial year. This figure should include both on-payroll and off- payroll engagements.</p>	0	0
	<p>On payroll: 11. Comprised of: Chair CEO COO Chief Brand Officer Chief Impact & Development Officer Chief Governance & Transformation Officer Chief Value Officer Chief Digital & Information Officer Executive Director of Strategy & Impact Executive Director of Operations & Transformation Executive Director of Digital & Technology</p>	<p>On payroll: 8. Comprised of: Chair CEO Chief Brand Officer Chief Impact & Development Officer Chief Delivery & Experience Officer Chief Value Officer Chief Digital & Information Officer Chief Governance & Delivery Officer</p>

Exit Packages

(Subject to Audit)

There were no exit packages paid during FY 22/23. (FY 21/22: Nil) However, in FY 22/23, there were statutory redundancy payments made totaling £44,799.50. (FY 21/22: £3,576)

Fair Pay Disclosures

(Subject to Audit)

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the median, 25th percentile, and 75th percentile remuneration of the organisation's workforce. Total pay and benefits includes the employee's full-time equivalent salary, allowances, performance pay or bonuses payable and noncash benefits, but excludes pension benefits.

	FY 22/23	FY 21/22
Band of the highest-paid director's salary, bonus, and benefits in kind	£145,000 to £150,000	£145,000 to £150,000
Percentage change from the previous financial year for highest-paid director	0%	0%
25th percentile of workforce	£37,053	£32,620
Median equivalent of workforce	£47,000	£41,402
75th percentile of workforce	£62,000	£58,179
Pay ratio (highest-paid director to 25th percentile)	4.0	4.6
Pay ratio (highest-paid director to median)	3.2	3.6
Pay ratio (highest-paid director to 75th percentile)	2.4	2.6
Average percentage change in salary and allowances from the previous financial year for all trust employees (excluding the highest paid director)	+10 %	-4.3 %
Remuneration range	£23,400 to £150,000	£18,385 to £150,000

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits-in-kind, but not severance pay or employer pension contributions. Neither the highest-paid individual nor other trust employees received performance pay or bonuses during FY 22/23 (FY 21/22: Nil). There are no non-salary components in the total pay and benefits figures disclosed in the table above for the median, 25th percentile, and 75th percentile (FY 21/22: Nil). Since FY 21/22, the 25th and 75th percentiles and median figures have increased. The changes in the pay ratios from the prior year are attributable to changes in the remuneration of the pay and benefits of the trust's employees taken as a whole, as the remuneration banding for the highest paid director is unchanged. The average percentage change in salary and allowances from the previous financial year for all trust employees (excluding the highest-paid director) is calculated based on the average salary of staff in post at the year-end compared with the average salary of those in post at the prior year-end. Average salary in FY 22/23 was 10% higher as a number of employees on lower pay grades left during the year.

Other Disclosures:

Compensation for Loss of Office

(Subject to Audit)

There was no compensation paid on early retirement — nor for loss of office — to any director during the year. (FY 21/22: Nil)

Payments to Past Directors

(Subject to Audit)

There were no payments to past directors during the year. (FY 21/22: Nil)

Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report

Regularity of Expenditure

(Subject to Audit)

In this report, the trust is required to report on the regularity of expenditure including losses and special payments in line with Managing Public Money requirements.

For the twelve month period to 31 March 2023, NCS Trust did not incur any losses nor make any special payments. (FY 21/22: A constructive loss of £0.9m was reported.)

During this reporting period there are no matters to report in relation to non-IAS 37 contingent liabilities nor irregular expenditure.

Signed



Mark Gifford
CEO and Accounting Officer

Dated 14 November 2023



The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

Opinion on Financial Statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the National Citizen Service Trust for the year ended 31 March 2023 under the National Citizen Service Act 2017.

The financial statements of the National Citizen Service Trust comprise of the following:

- » Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2023
- » Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended
- » Related notes including the significant accounting policies

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK-adopted International Accounting Standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- » Give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of National Citizen Service Trust as at 31 March 2023 and its net operating expenditure for the year then ended.
- » Have been properly prepared in accordance with the National Citizen Service Act 2017 and Secretary of State directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on Regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for Opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law, and Practice Note 10 Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2022). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2019. I am independent of the National Citizen Service Trust in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions Relating to Going Concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the National Citizen Service Trust's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

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

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the accounting officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the National Citizen Service Trust is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in the HM Treasury Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements nor my auditor's certificate and report. The accounting officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on Other Matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions issued under the National Citizen Service Act 2017.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- » The parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions made under the National Citizen Service Act 2017.
- » The information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on Which I Report by Exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the National Citizen Service Trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report or Accountability Report.

- » I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:
- » Adequate accounting records have not been kept by the National Citizen Service or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- » I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or

- » The financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- » Certain disclosures of remuneration specified by the HM Treasury Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- » The Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the Financial Statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the accounting officer is responsible for:

- » Maintaining proper accounting records.
- » Providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters.
- » Providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for the audit.
- » Providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the National Citizen Service Trust from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- » Ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
- » Ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view and are prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions made under the National Citizen Service Act 2017.
- » Ensuring that the Annual Report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, is prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions made under the National Citizen Service Act 2017.

- » Assessing the ability of the National Citizen Service Trust to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the accounting officer anticipates that the services provided by the National Citizen Service Trust will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify, and report on the financial statements in accordance with the National Citizen Service Act 2017.

My 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 a certificate that includes my 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.

Extent To Which the Audit Was Considered Capable of Detecting Non-Compliance with Laws and Regulations Including Fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations — including fraud — is detailed below.

Identifying and Assessing Potential Risks Related to Non-Compliance with Laws and Regulations, Including Fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- » Considered the nature of the sector, control environment, and operational performance including the design of the National Citizen Service Trust accounting policies, key performance indicators, and performance incentives.

- » Inquired of management, the head of internal audit at National Citizen Service Trust and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the policies and procedures of National Citizen Service Trust on:

- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations.
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud.
- The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the controls of National Citizen Service Trust relating to the compliance of National Citizen Service Trust with the National Citizen Service Act 2017 and Managing Public Money.

- » Inquired of management, the head of internal audit at National Citizen Service Trust, and those charged with governance whether:

- They were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- They had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud.

- » Discussed with the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the National Citizen Service Trust for fraud, and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas:

- » Revenue recognition
- » Posting of unusual journals
- » Complex transactions
- » Bias in management estimates.

In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of the National Citizen Service Trust's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the National Citizen Service Trust operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the National Citizen Service Trust. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included the National Citizen Service Act 2017, Managing Public Money, employment law and tax legislation.

Audit Response to Identified Risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- » I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having a direct effect on the financial statements.
- » I enquired of management and the Audit and Risk Committee concerning actual and potential litigation and claims.
- » I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the board, and internal audit reports.
- » In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, I tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessed whether management's judgements in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluated the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members, and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my 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 my certificate.

Other Auditor's Responsibilities

I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control which I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General

Date 15 November 2023

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP

Financial Statements and Notes

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	FY 22/23 £'000	FY 21/22 £'000
INCOME			
Other Operating Income	3	(535)	(592)
Service User Contribution Income	3	(2,674)	(1,232)
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME		(3,209)	(1,824)
EXPENDITURE			
Other Expenditure	4	64,106	75,921
Staff Costs	5	10,739	12,366
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE		74,845	88,287
NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE		71,636	86,463
Other Comprehensive Expenditure		-	-
COMPREHENSIVE NET EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR		71,636	86,463

All income and expenditure relates to continuing operations.
The notes on pages 66 to 72 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position at 31 March 2023

	Notes	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, Plant and Equipment	6	39	-
Intangible Assets	7	-	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		39	-
CURRENT ASSETS			
Trade and Other Receivables	8	532	4,046
Cash and Cash Equivalents	9	4,719	16,749
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		5,251	20,795
TOTAL ASSETS		5,290	20,795
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and Other Payables	10	(6,436)	(19,300)
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		(6,436)	(19,300)
TOTAL ASSETS LESS TOTAL LIABILITIES		(1,146)	1,495
TAXPAYERS' EQUITY AND OTHER RESERVES			
General Fund		(1,146)	1,495
TOTAL TAXPAYERS' EQUITY		(1,146)	1,495

The notes on pages 66 to 72 form part of these accounts



Mark Gifford
CEO and Accounting Officer
National Citizen Service Trust
Date: 14 November 2023



Harris Bokhari
Chair
National Citizen Service Trust
Date: 14 November 2023

Statement of Cash Flows

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	FY 22/23 £'000	FY 21/22 £'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Net Operating Expenditure		(71,636)	(86,463)
Adjustments for Non-Cash Transactions	6,7	1	46
Trade & Other Receivables - (Increase)/Decrease	8	3,514	10,700
Trade and Other Payables - Increase/(Decrease)	10	(12,864)	(4,245)
NET CASH OUTFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		(80,985)	(79,962)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of PPE		(40)	-
NET CASH OUTFLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		(40)	-
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Grant-in-Aid Received	2	68,995	63,036
NET CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		68,995	63,036
NET (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR		(12,030)	(16,926)
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR		16,749	33,675
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR		4,719	16,749

The notes on pages 66 to 72 form part of these accounts

Statement of Changes in Equity

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers Equity for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	General Fund £'000	Taxpayers' Equity £'000
BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2021		24,922	24,922
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year		(86,463)	(86,463)
Grant-in-Aid Received	2	63,036	63,036
BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2022		1,495	1,495
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year		(71,636)	(71,636)
Grant-in-Aid Received	2	68,995	68,995
BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2023		(1,146)	(1,146)

The notes on pages 66 to 72 form part of these accounts

Notes to the Accounts

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

1.1 Accounting Policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2022/23 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HMT and on the basis of the Accounts Direction issued by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with the approval of HMT, in accordance with section 4(2) of the National Citizen Service Act 2017, a copy of which can be obtained from NCS Trust at 1st Floor, 48 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1JF.

The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of NCS Trust for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The policies adopted by NCS Trust are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

1.2 Going Concern

Under section 1 of the National Citizen Service Act 2017, the National Citizen Service Trust has a statutory responsibility to provide or arrange for the provision of programmes for young people in England with the purpose of enabling participants from different backgrounds to work together in local communities to participate in projects to benefit society, and enhance the communication, leadership and team-working skills of participants. NCS Trust is almost fully funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, through a Spending Review envelope set by HMT and allocated to the trust annually by the department via a Settlement Letter. Given the status and position of NCS Trust as an arm's length body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, which was put on statutory footing via the NCS Act and granted a Royal Charter in 2017, the board members, including the accounting officer, have assumed in making their going concern assessment that sufficient government funding support will continue to be made available to allow NCS Trust to fulfil its statutory responsibility for the foreseeable future. In October 2021, HMT announced a three year CSR funding settlement providing further certainty around the ability of the trust to continue as a going concern. Accordingly, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

1.3 Accounting Convention

When material, the accounts are prepared on a modified historical cost (MHCA) basis in which the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure reflects the consumption of resources at their current value and the Statement of Financial Position shows the value of non-current assets, current asset investments, and (if material) inventories at their value to the business by reference to current costs. No entries have been made in the current year as adoption of MHCA would not have a material impact on the accounts. Without limiting the information given, the accounts meet the International Accounting Standards issued or adopted by the International Accounting Standards board and HMT guidance on accounts of non-departmental public bodies insofar as those requirements are appropriate. The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of NCS Trust. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £'000, except where otherwise indicated.

1.4 Use of Estimates and Judgements

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires management to make key judgements, assumptions, and estimates that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant.

Programme expenditure required a layered assurance approach to estimation. Layered assurance methodology uses multiple sources of operational data such as Salesforce reports, supply chain management meetings, and contractual requirements to substantiate when services have been received and match expenditure accordingly.

The extent of estimation for programme expenditure is not material for FY 22/23. Programme expenditure estimation and the layered assurance methodology will no longer be required in FY 23/24 due to changes in contractual arrangements with delivery partners.

1.5 Grant-in-Aid

Grant-in-aid received towards resource expenditure is regarded as a contribution from a controlling party. It is recognised on a cash basis and credited to Taxpayers' Equity.

1.6 Income Recognition

Operating income

Operating income relates to the operating activities of NCS Trust and includes both budgetary and non-budgetary income and is recognised in accordance with the FReM and IFRS 15.

Revenue from contracts with customers

- » **Service User Contributions.** This is income received from a parent/guardian/carer towards a young person's attendance on a programme, and is deferred at year end. The recognition of this income is based on the satisfaction of performance obligations and an assessment of when control is transferred to the customer. In the case of NCS Trust, income is recognised in the month in which a young person attends an NCS programme.
- » **Operating income.** This includes procurement income for merchandise purchases made on behalf of the programmes charged at a mark-up. This type of income falls outside the scope of IFRS 15 and is recognised at the point that it is earned.

Under IFRS 15, this income is recognised at the point in time the goods are transferred to the customer.

1.7 Programme Expenditure

Programme expenditure (delivery partner costs) is accounted for when services are received on an accruals basis. Our partners do not track all of their activity and costs between programme seasons, however we have a layered assurance model which provides sufficient information for accruals purposes.

1.8 Accommodation Expenditure

Payments for accommodation are made in advance and treated as prepayments in the Statement of Financial Position. The prepayments are released in the month where the accommodation is utilised as young people attend an NCS programme.

1.9 Property, Plant, and Equipment

The assets of NCS Trust are computers, leasehold improvements, and other office equipment. All assets are stated in the Statement of Financial Position at depreciated historical cost as proxy to current value in existing use, as the useful economic lives are short and are a realistic reflection of the consumption of the assets.

» Fixtures & fittings
Straight-line over one to five years

» Computer hardware
Straight-line over three years

Items are capitalised on a unit basis, whereby individual items over the value of £1,000 are capitalised. A full month's depreciation is charged on the month of acquisition with no depreciation charged in the month of disposal. Gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sales value and the carrying amount of the asset and is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year.

1.10 Intangible Assets

Intangible assets are recognised at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives.

Software is amortised using straight-line over five years with a capitalisation threshold of £1,000.

1.11 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand.

1.12 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when NCS Trust has a legal or constructive present obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the organisation will be required to settle that obligation, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting end date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value. When a provision is measured at present value the unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure (SoCNE) in the year it arises.

1.13 Leases

The trust has licence agreements rather than leases and hence no disclosures have been made in relation to IFRS 16.

1.14 Financial Instruments

The trust is not exposed to significant financial risk factors arising from financial instruments. Financial assets and liabilities are generated by day-to-day operational activities rather than being held to change the risks facing NCS Trust in undertaking its activities. The financial assets of the trust are cash, trade receivables due from related parties, and other trade receivables. All are classified as 'financial assets at amortised cost' and denominated in pounds sterling.

The financial liabilities of the trust are trade and other payables due to related parties, other trade payables, taxation, and social security. All are classified as 'other financial liabilities' and denominated in pounds sterling. The carrying values of short-term financial assets and liabilities (at amortised cost) are not considered different from fair value.

1.15 Standards Issued but not yet Effective

IFRS 17 insurance contracts are expected to replace IFRS 4 from 01 April 2023. The scope of this standard covers insurance contracts issued and reinsurance contracts issued or held. The trust does not have any insurance contracts it recognises under IFRS 4 and does not expect to under IFRS 17.

2. Grant-in-Aid

	FY 22/23 £'000	FY 21/22 £'000
Revenue Received from DCMS	68,995	63,036
TOTAL	68,995	63,036

3. Other Operating Income

	FY 22/23 £'000	FY 21/22 £'000
Other Operating Income	535	592
Service User Contribution Income	2,674	1,232
TOTAL	3,209	1,824

4. Expenditure

The operating result is stated after charging the following:

	FY 22/23 £'000	FY 21/22 £'000
Programme Delivery Costs	53,576	67,453
Communication, Marketing and Media Costs	3,056	2,500
IT Services	3,123	3,459
Other Professional and Legal Fees	1,437	931
Consultancy Fees	1,446	384
Recruitment and Staff Development	242	184
Facilities and Office Costs	232	387
Other Expenditure	567	318
Travel and Subsistence	274	135
External Auditor's Remuneration for Audit Work*	85	75
Amortisation	-	37
Internal Audit	67	49
Depreciation	1	9
TOTAL	64,106	75,921

*No amounts are due to external auditors for non-audit work.

5. Staff Costs

	Permanently Employed Staff £'000	Contract & Agency Staff £'000	FY 22/23 £'000	FY 21/22 £'000
Wages and Salaries (including performance related pay)	9,073	-	9,073	10,464
Pension Costs	580	-	580	710
Social Security Costs	1,086	-	1,086	1,192
TOTAL STAFF COSTS	10,739	-	10,739	12,366

Details of staff numbers can be found in the Remuneration and Staff Report.

6. Property, Plant and Equipment

	Furniture and Fittings £'000	IT Equipment £'0000	Total £'000
COST OR VALUATION			
AT 01 APRIL 2022	656	113	769
Additions	-	40	40
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	656	153	809
DEPRECIATION			
AT 01 APRIL 2022	(656)	(113)	(769)
Charged in Year	-	(1)	(1)
AT 31 MARCH 2023	(656)	(114)	(770)
NET BOOK VALUE AT 31 MARCH 2022	-	-	-
NET BOOK VALUE AT 31 MARCH 2023	-	39	39
ASSET FINANCING			
Owned	-	39	39
NET BOOK VALUE AT 31 MARCH 2023	-	39	39

7. Intangible Assets

	£'000
COST OR VALUATION	
At 01 April 2022	848
Additions	-
AT 31 MARCH 2023	-
AMORTISATION	
At 01 April 2022	(848)
Charged in Year	-
AT 31 MARCH 2023	-
NET BOOK VALUE AT 31 MARCH 2022	-
NET BOOK VALUE AT 31 MARCH 2023	-
ASSET FINANCING:	
Owned	-
NET BOOK VALUE AT 31 MARCH 2023	-

8. Trade and Other Receivables

	FY 22/23 £'000	FY 21/22 £'000
Trade Receivables	113	5
Other Receivables	102	158
Prepayments	317	3,706
Accrued Income	-	177
TOTAL	532	4,046

9. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	£'000
Balance at 01 April 2021	33,675
Net Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(16,926)
BALANCE AT 01 APRIL 2022	16,749
Net Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(12,030)
BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2023	4,719
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	
Government banking service	2,366
Commercial bank accounts	2,353
TOTAL	4,719

10. Trade and Other Payables

	FY 22/23 £'000	FY 21/22 £'000
AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Trade Payables	2,501	1,786
Other Payables	697	747
VAT Payables	121	-
Taxation and Social Security	262	346
Accruals	2,682	14,450
Deferred Income*	173	1,971
TOTAL	6,436	19,300

* The amount of £1,971m included in deferred income as at 31 March 2022 has been recognised as revenue in FY 22/23 (FY21/22: £0,694m). Deferred income was significantly less in FY 22/23 due to programme recruitment starting later than the prior year. This led to less young people having paid service user contributions to attend programmes as at 31 March 2023.

11. Financial Instruments

The basic financial instruments of NCS Trust — in both years — comprise cash in hand, receivables, and payables that arise directly from its operations. NCS Trust has no long-term borrowings or other financial liabilities besides payables.

Currency Risk

NCS Trust is a domestic organisation with the great majority of transactions and all assets and liabilities being in the UK and denominated in sterling. The trust has no overseas operations and is therefore not exposed to currency rate fluctuations.

Interest Rate Risk

NCS Trust is not permitted to borrow and therefore is not exposed to interest rate risk.

Credit Risk

NCS Trust will assess its debtors for recoverability on an individual basis and make provisions when considered necessary. In assessing recoverability, management takes into account any indicators of impairment up until the reporting date. As such, the trust is not materially exposed to any credit risk.

Liquidity Risk

As the trust has no borrowings and relies mainly on departmental grant-in-aid for its cash requirements, the trust is exposed to minimal liquidity risk.

11.1 Financial Assets

	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
	£'000	£'000
Trade and Other Receivables	215	163
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4,719	16,749
TOTAL	4,934	16,912

11.2 Financial Liabilities

	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
	£'000	£'000
Trade and Other Payables	3,378	2,533
TOTAL	3,378	2,533

12. Other Financial Commitments

	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
	£'000	£'000
Financial commitment obligations comprise:		
SALESFORCE LICENCES		
Not later than one year	1,420	1,132
Later than one year and not later than five years	2,485	-
Later than five years	-	-
PROVIDERS		
Not later than one year	15,717	32,847
Later than one year and not later than five years	-	-
Later than five years	-	-
TOTAL	19,622	33,979

The financial commitment for providers relates to contractual payments due to delivery partners who facilitate the 2023 NCS programmes on behalf of NCS Trust.

13. Capital Commitments

As at 31 March 2023, NCS Trust had no capital commitments (FY 21/22: Nil).

14. Contingent Liabilities

As at 31 March 2023, NCS Trust had no contingent liabilities (FY 21/22: Nil).

15. Related Party Transactions

NCS Trust is an arm's length body whose ultimate parent is DCMS. In the year ended 31 March 2023, NCS Trust had various material transactions with DCMS and HMRC, and immaterial transactions

with other government bodies, including Cabinet Office, Information Commissioners Office and TV Licencing.

Details of payments to the SLT team can be found in the Remuneration Report in the Accountability Report.

No minister, board member, nor other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with NCS Trust during the year.

16. Events after the Reporting Period

There were no reportable events after the date of the Statement of Financial Position. The accounting officer authorised the accounts for issue on the date the Comptroller and Auditor General certified the accounts.



